

The challenges of teaching for human rights in Nigeria: knowledge, pedagogy and activism

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Abstract: Human rights promotion continues to elude Nigeria, despite the many human rights instruments ratified and the various human rights initiatives taken. The key question behind this paper is: Why is human rights behaviour poor and human rights violations high despite numerous measures to address these issues? To examine this, the study investigates teachers' awareness of curriculum contents and pedagogies for cultivating human rights, drawing on a survey of 170 social studies teachers in Enugu State. We find challenges to teaching for human rights, including teachers' poor knowledge of human rights content; a lack of awareness of human rights pedagogies; a reluctance to engage in activism; and little engagement with participatory pedagogies. We explain these challenges with reference to conservative teacher education, entrenched patriarchal values, a strong nationalistic-oriented curriculum, and authoritarian school structures. We recommend transforming Nigerian social studies teacher education programmes and policies to enable social justice and human rights.

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Introduction

Human rights are basic human entitlements founded on the dignity of human persons and the inherent human right to life and freedoms. These rights (not necessarily guaranteed in the extant laws of a state) do not infringe on the rights of others or national or global security, broadly defined. Human rights are also 'derived from human struggles' for justice (Osler, 2015). Nigeria, an ethnically diverse emerging democratic nation, has ratified many international human rights instruments, developed agencies for the protection of human rights, and introduced many of these rights provisions into domestic law.

Nevertheless, there remain huge inconsistencies between the everyday lived realities of most citizens and their formal rights entitlements. In Nigeria, and across sub-Saharan African countries, the degree of human rights abuses and violations is alarming, with some groups being particularly affected (Onwuazombe, 2017). Existing data show that Nigeria's human rights record is regressive (National Human Rights Commission, 2016, pp. 119-139). Post-war and post-military-rule Nigeria is replete with varying forms of human rights violations resulting from internal conflicts, direct violence and terrorism (Campbell, 2018); structural violence,

including an unjust patriarchal culture; unjust eviction of people from their homes; unlawful killings and violations of citizens' rights by government security agents; and government engagement in and toleration of violations of religious freedom and terrorism (Amnesty International, 2018; United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, 2020; Akinkuotu, Aluko, & Oyewale, 2020). Furthermore, rights are undermined by interpersonal violence underpinned by structural violence such as criminality, child labour and domestic violence (Nnadi, 2012). Notably, people from low socioeconomic backgrounds suffer more injustice and human rights violations. For example, poor people in Africa are twice as likely to be extorted than their rich counterparts (Transparency International, 2019) and children from rich homes are more likely to complete secondary education (UNESCO, 2020). However, human rights activism is low in Nigeria, due to repression from authoritarian governments, which has caused citizens to retreat from protesting human rights violations (Obiagu & Ajaps, 2019). Long-term experience of and resiliency to human rights violations in Nigeria has made it difficult for citizens to even recognise them as inhumane.

Given the inadequacy of domestic human rights laws, a human rights education (HRE) model, grounded on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948), has been introduced in Nigeria to promote pro-human rights behaviours. HRE, according to the United Nations (2011) in the Declaration of Human Rights Education and Training (UNDHRET), is:

All educational training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting *universal respect for and observation of all human rights* and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing inter alia to the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribution to the building and promotion of a *universal culture for human rights* [emphasis added]. (UN, 2011, Article 2(1))

Article 2(2) of UNDHRET, notes three components of HRE: education *about* (political, civil, socioeconomic and cultural) rights, *through* rights, and *for* rights. Education *about* human rights involves 'providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values for their promotion, and the mechanism for their protection'; education *through* human rights includes 'learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners'; and education *for* human rights includes 'empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others' (UN, 2011). As discussed below, the human rights content of various school subjects in Nigeria covers some of the topics anticipated to promote the realisation of these UNDHRET goals. Despite this, students-just like some adults-exhibit anti-social behaviours, such as bullying, which are against human rights norms, (Olumide, Adams, & Amodu, 2016). Why then is human rights behaviour poor and human rights violations high despite the number of human rights instruments and the presence of human rights education available in the country? Based on an assumption that the problem is partly due to the implementation of the human rights curriculum and the ways in which schools model or fail to model these rights, we composed an 18-item questionnaire on instructional readiness for HRE implementation. Our respondents were 170 teachers engaged in

teaching social studies, since some human rights content is infused into social studies. Based on our findings, we make suggestions for effective human rights education in Nigeria. In the next section, we present the nature, purpose and contents of HRE in Nigeria.

Human Rights Education in Nigeria

In Nigeria, HRE is limited and it is not a discrete subject. Human rights issues are to be found scattered across subjects such as social studies, civic education, government, health education, Christian religious studies, Islamic studies, and English language teaching, at different levels of the education system. This is a consequence of the interdisciplinary nature of human rights and the situation is not dissimilar from that in other countries (see for example, Parker, 2018). Our focus is on HRE at pre-higher education level. The introduction of HRE can be linked to the introduction of a senior secondary social studies programme (that was never implemented) and an elective subject, government. These were developed post-1969, following the restructuring of Nigeria's education system to a 6-3-3-4 education system¹ (Nigerian Educational and Research Development Council [NERDC], 1985) on the recommendations of the 1969 National Curriculum Conference (NCC). The recommendations were geared towards restructuring and decolonising education (Fafunwa, 1995). With Nigeria's restructuring of its educational system in 2000, to a 9-3-4 system², following the review and re-adoption of the UNESCO Education for All initiative, school curricula were reviewed and new subjects introduced with contents that reflect the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014; NERDC, 2018a, 2018b). These contents, rooted in human rights principles, became part of compulsory education. This marked the establishment of compulsory HRE (mainly in social studies and civic education curricula) in Nigeria, an initiative that extends the curriculum beyond the original emphasis on civic responsibilities to incorporate the concept of human rights.

Purpose

The purpose of HRE in Nigeria is rooted in key educational goals reflected in various recommendations of the 1969 Nigerian National Curriculum as reported by Adaralegbe (1972, recommendations 3, 4, 7, 18, 48). These goals promote self-realisation, better human relationships, national values, effective citizenship, civic responsibility, social and political awakening, and privileges and responsibilities. These goals, especially self-realisation, national values, national consciousness and national unity, are reiterated in different National Policy on Education (NPE) statements (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). These purposes of HRE reflect some of the HRE goals highlighted in UNDHRET and represented as HRE for values or for co-existence focused on interpersonal and intergroup relationships (Bajaj, 2011, p. 498-490). Even though education is also seen as an instrument for social change and the realisation of a free, democratic, just and egalitarian society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014), national consciousness, values and unity are given greater emphasis in the NPE and in social education curricula. Yet, as Osler (2015) notes, proclaiming national values and human rights as one and the same thing could lead to a process of Othering. However, the colonial legacy, the legacy of the 1967-1970 Nigerian civil war, and ongoing post-independence ethnic divisions are reasons why Nigerian education gives such emphasis to national unity, national values, and national consciousness. This is largely because grievances arising from the civil war have not

been addressed (most post-war nations engaged in peace and reconciliation activities that deal with emotional scars and grievances) but live on in the psyche of many Nigerians. This emphasis is intended to promote value re-orientation, poverty eradication, human rights, and peace and dialogue (NERDC, 2018a, 2018b) among culturally diverse Nigerians, and create an enabling environment for human rights promotion and self-realisation.

Contents

The above purposes are reflected in the human rights themes and content emphasised in Nigeria. These include more direct human rights principles (expressed in universal and/or national terms) that have been introduced into civic education and social studies curricula since 2007: rights and duties of citizens, the rule of law, the constitution, democracy, pillars of democracy, protection of rights, the rule of law, supremacy of the constitution, separation of powers, and so on. (NERDC, 2018a, 2018b). Systemic human rights issues such as social injustice, gender discrimination, harmful traditional practices (female genital rituals and widowhood practices), electoral malpractice, social conflict, ethnocentrism, poverty, HIV/AIDS, and human trafficking have been included in social studies curricula since 2007 (NERDC, 2018a, 2018b). Surprisingly, child labour and abuse are missing from the pre-higher school curriculum, despite such practices having been prohibited in Nigerian law. This could be due to a fear of causing tensions at home between elders and children since these practices are rampant and frequently seen as necessary to child-rearing.

Values that underpin human rights, such as respect, kindness, honesty, tolerance, discipline, courage, cooperation, contentment, integrity, unity, and justice, are mainly covered in the civic education curriculum while mechanisms for protecting human rights (such as peaceful co-existence, conflict management and resolution, understanding culture and cultural diversity, unity in diversity) are mainly covered in the social studies curriculum. In some cases, these contents are repeated in the two subjects (see NERDC, 2018a, 2018b). HRE that empowers learners to claim their rights in the context of deeply rooted inequalities and human rights violations (Osler & Yahya, 2013), protect human rights, and take action against systemic injustice is also contained in senior classes' civics and government curricula where issues relating to pressure groups, strikes, UDHR advocacy via both online and offline platforms, and petitions are taught.

Obviously, these topics are focused on Nigeria's peculiarities and needs. They consider and incorporate Nigeria's cultural differences, although there is a focus on the dominant cultures. They also take into account learners' ages and educational stages. However, the contents are not chronologically organised so that one piece of knowledge precedes or connects with others. This appears to be a problem in the HRE curricula of virtually all countries (Parker, 2018). However, using these contents to realise the goals of HRE in Nigeria and those defined in UNDHRET requires that human rights educators master criteria and content for the effective teaching of human rights.

What are the criteria for effective HRE implementation?

In this section, drawing on propositions in extant HRE literature, we highlight four criteria necessary for the effective practice of HRE and realisation of its goals. These four criteria are: knowledge of human rights and HRE purpose and content;

understanding and experience of human rights issues; familiarity with HRE pedagogical debates, including HRE evaluation techniques; and commitment to a caring ethics and relationships. Adoption of these criteria, although here associated with the pre-higher education curriculum, applies to HRE in general. These criteria are individually discussed below.

Knowledge of human rights

Studies in Scotland and Ireland show that teachers have an insufficient knowledge of human rights instruments and protection mechanisms (e.g. BEMIS, 2013; Waldron et al., 2011), and that teachers and educators have a limited knowledge and understanding of the United Nations World Programme for Human Rights Education (e.g. BEMIS, 2013). Knowledge (content) is indispensable in classroom teaching (Deng, 2018), while an identification with the purpose of schooling is important for effective practice. Given the criticality of knowledge and a sense of educational purpose in promoting the effective teaching of HRE, the teacher does not just need to know about human rights. S/he must be aware of the purpose of HRE and 'critiques', as suggested by Keet (2015). Teachers should also be familiar with human rights instruments and institutions.

Additionally, a sound knowledge of children's rights in education is needed. This includes a respect for children's views, non-discriminatory curriculum contents, and human rights-based and non-violent school disciplinary policies and measures (Lundy & Martínez Sainz, 2018). A knowledge of human rights (including human rights instruments and laws), human rights critiques (for example, Eurocentric, hegemonic, abolitionist), and the purpose of HRE can help the teacher in discarding discriminatory and authoritarian beliefs and adopting an inclusive, transformative and critical practice. Relating this to the human rights contents of social studies, the teacher's unbiased understanding of why some 'cultural practices' or 'traditions' such as female genital mutilation and widowhood practices are classified as barbaric or repugnant to natural justice might be discussed (for example, are they opposed on Eurocentric or humanist grounds). Opportunities to consider such questions might then inform teachers' approaches to such topics.

Understanding and experience of human rights issues

Teaching about, through and for human rights requires knowledge of (and deep reflection on) general and peculiar rights issues that might bedevil a locality, nation, region or the world (for example, extra-judicial killings, child labour, gender-based violence, racism). Knowledge and deep reflection about direct or indirect lived experience of human rights issues/violations through observing and working to liberate victims is necessary if a powerful HRE is to be implemented. Teachers' knowledge of human rights issues in educational contexts (for example, discriminatory enrolment, curriculum and pedagogy, a culture of violence and silencing, corporal punishment) is crucial. This is because 'HRE locates itself within struggles [for rights and against injustice and tyranny], beginning with the personal but often linking up to wider social change processes' (Tibbitts, 2018, p. 68). This is supported by findings that show rights activists draw their motivations from their individual or family experiences of human rights issues (Hall, 2019), and that 'those with more experience of participating in social movements may well teach in more democratic ways and consider a wider variety of actors and acts within their consideration of active citizenship and action for human rights' (Jerome, 2018, p. 57).

Knowledge of this criterion is particularly important given that the context within which HRE is practiced is crucial to realising human rights goals: a culture of human rights must be present and promoted in the HRE environment (Osler & Yahya, 2013). This could also create a greater appreciation of the pains and hopes involved in human rights issues and develop a reflective empathy.

Familiarity with HRE pedagogy and pedagogical debates

Parker (2018, p. 12) has observed the need for HRE epistemological theory (what is meant by human rights knowledge) and pedagogical theory (how to organise that knowledge for learning) that take into consideration learners' ages and stages. Debates on what pedagogies should be employed for HRE suggest that a number of practices are imperative: transformational or emancipatory pedagogy (Bajaj, 2011); the critical and reparative hermeneutical approach (Al-Daraweesh & Snauwaert, 2013; Bajaj, 2011; Zembylas et al., 2017); and narrative approaches (Osler, 2015; Osler & Zhu, 2011). Drawing on Freire's (1974) theory of critical pedagogy, which assumes the purpose of education to be the development of critical consciousness, a critical HRE pedagogy empowers learners to respect, protect and promote rights, and to resist and combat inequalities and other factors that fuel human rights abuses. Similarly, a transformational approach assumes that the learner has had personal experiences of human rights violations and thus could be more motivated to promote human rights (Tibbitts, 2018). The critical hermeneutical approach is particularly useful in addressing contradictions between universal and local human rights values and practices (Zembylas et al., 2017; Al-Daraweesh & Snauwaert, 2013). These pedagogies are seen as indispensable in implementing education *for* human rights. Developing a critical pedagogy is, however, a challenging process for educators since they are required to confront the nature, limits and scope of human rights while persuading learners of their importance and significance (Martínez Sainz, 2018).

For effective HRE, teachers need to understand this range of pedagogies. This is important because of the emotional sensitivities of some topics and the possible change in power dynamics and conflicts or tensions within the classroom, school, family and wider society that can result from the critical empowerment of learners. Effectively, there are structural and institutional constraints (Zembylas et al., 2017; Martínez Sainz, 2018). HRE pedagogical knowledge also includes knowledge of HRE evaluative methods, such as moral dilemma questions and projective test methods. These evaluation techniques involve creating stories (and reaching a judgement) about an assumed or real character (Lilienfeld, Wood, & Garb, 2000). Such an activity, where learners create stories about human rights issues or critique characters in stories of human rights violations, can reveal their human rights dispositions. Knowledge of these dispositions will equip teachers with insights on how to strategise or devise classroom practices that can overcome the general problem of HRE curricula and textbooks, namely an over-emphasis on knowledge and a neglect of human rights dispositions and behaviours (Osler & Yahya, 2013), and resolve students' conflicting perspectives on human rights.

Commitment to a caring ethics

Understanding human rights and human rights issues is not enough: knowledge of the issues has to be combined with the practice of care. Noddings (1995) has outlined three aspects of care: caring for self; caring for intimate others; and caring for strangers and global others. She advocates that curricula are selected with caring in

mind, as this can contribute to creating more caring children. A close analysis of the subtopics of the broader theme of values in the human rights contents of the Nigerian curriculum reveals the theme of care. Caring relations involve a dialogic relationship between the carer (teacher) and cared-for (student), whereby the carer places a greater emphasis on the expressed needs of the cared-for. These needs are deduced from their thoughts, ideas, questions, and responses (Noddings, 1995, 2012). Caring fits well with democratic practices in the classroom: giving every child equal treatment, considering their unique needs, strengths and weaknesses; providing learners with opportunities to participate in human rights in a way that emphasises cooperation and empathy across age ranges and between grades; and tolerating and empowering learners' views and dissenting voices (Noddings, 2005; Collins, Hess, & Lowery, 2019). Importantly, consciousness of sociocultural orientations, such as patriarchy and fanaticism, and how these might undermine caring, is critical to the assimilation of human rights principles.

Study context

To our knowledge, no previous research has explored HRE in Nigeria, especially the challenges to its implementation at various levels. Ifegbesan, Lawal, and Rampedi (2017) have analysed the Nigerian College of Education social studies curriculum in order to locate how it promotes the Sustainable Development Goals, which are founded on human rights principles. They conclude that such contents are limited. However, it is important to understand teachers' readiness in implementing the human rights content of the curriculum. Given the high rate of human rights violations in Nigeria, including Enugu State, the specific context of this study, (where child abuse, hate speech, gender violence, violent attacks on religious leaders, unemployment, and so on, are widespread, and where corruption and favouritism deny citizens' access to public goods and an adequate standard of living), our survey sets out to explore the level of readiness of teachers to implement HRE. The teachers investigated teach social studies at primary and secondary school levels: sometimes a teacher may teach both social studies and civic education or combine the teaching of the subjects in the students' timetable. We hypothesise that the preparedness of teachers to teach for human rights is low and is dependent on their educational qualifications. The study specifically addresses the following questions.

1. How aware are teachers of the contents and purpose of HRE in the pre-higher education social studies curricula?
2. How aware are teachers of the pedagogical arguments surrounding the teaching of HRE?
3. What instructional methods are employed by teachers in teaching human rights issues in pre-higher education?
4. What are the challenges to teachers' employing participatory methods?

Methods

We developed a structured questionnaire. Unsolicited comments, responses beyond the items contained in the questionnaire, were also registered. Seven teachers wrote on empty spaces on the questionnaire, while 17 teachers orally stated their reasons for not employing participatory methods in HRE.

Participants

The participants were a random sample of 170 teachers (137 females), teaching social studies at the basic education level (see note ii) in Enugu State, Nigeria. The educational qualifications of these teachers were taken into account (see Table 1 for participants' profiles). Fifty-seven participants (33.5%) did not have an education degree while 113 of them (66.5%) held an education qualification in education disciplines, especially arts education, social science education (including social studies education) or foundational education programmes.

		Frequency		
		Female	Male	Total
<i>Teaching Level</i>	Primary	100	19	119
	Junior Secondary	37	14	51
	Total	137	33	170
<i>Education Qualification (Highest level)</i>	National Certificate in Education (NCE)	10	3	13
	Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)	58	5	63
	B.Ed. Equivalent*	34	19	53
	Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)	28	2	30
	Master in Education (M.Ed.)	5	2	7
	M.Ed. Equivalent*	2	2	4
	PhD	0		0
Total	137	33	170	

Note: 'Equivalent' means non-educational degrees.

Measurement

An 18-item questionnaire developed by the researchers and entitled 'Questionnaire on Teachers' Instructional Readiness for Effective Implementation of Human Rights Education Contents in Social Studies' was used. This had three subscales (awareness of the content and purpose of HRE; awareness of HRE pedagogical debate; and methodology employed by teachers in teaching HRE). The first cluster of the questionnaire, 'awareness of the content and purpose of HRE' (five items), was measured on a 4-point scale (SA- Strongly Agree = 4, A -Agree = 3, D -Disagree = 2, SD -Strongly Disagree = 1). The other two clusters, 'awareness of HRE pedagogical debate' (six items) and 'methodology employed by teachers in teaching HRE' (seven items), were respectively measured by dichotomous items of aware/unaware and yes/no answers. For reliable and valid results, a dichotomous response option was considered best for the last two clusters, since the respondents were considered reasonably professional in their field (Krosnick & Presser, 2010). The instrument was validated by three experts and trial tested on 27 social studies teachers. Reliability was measured using Cronbach Alpha, which yielded an alpha of 0.8. This indicated a high level of internal consistency in the questionnaire items and, thus, an acceptable level of internal reliability (Field, 2013).

Data collection and analysis

Participants completed the questionnaire on one occasion. Data was collected by the first author, within two weeks, after seeking and obtaining the consent of 23 (11 primary and 12 secondary) school authorities (Vice Principal/Headperson of each school) and that of the participants. Descriptive analysis of participants' responses was performed by applying simple percentage, mean and standard deviation. The overall mean score of each item in the first cluster is 4 and a mean score less than 2.5 was marked low, while a mean score of 2.5 and above was high. For the last two clusters, scored dichotomously, percentage scores of the participants on all items of each cluster were gathered. A score below 50% was rated low and a score of 50% and above rated high. For variance analysis (hypothesis testing), the average scores of participants on the items for each tested variable (content/purpose awareness, pedagogical debate awareness, and methods employment) were used. The Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to determine if statistical significant differences exist between groups with different levels of education. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the unsolicited responses and generate codes and themes from it.

Findings

Table 2: Mean and SD statistics of teachers' awareness of Basic Education Social Studies Curricular HRE contents and purpose

S/N	Items	No. of Teachers	Mean	SD
1.	Cultural similarities and differences are human rights education contents	170	2.0	0.7
2.	Harmful traditional practices are human rights education content.	170	3.4	0.6
3.	National values such as tolerance, honesty, etc. are human rights education contents.	170	2.7	0.7
4.	Human rights contents of social studies are geared towards the promotion of human rights consciousness among students.	170	3.8	0.4
5.	Human rights contents of social studies are geared towards the promotion of peaceful co-existence among Nigerians.	170	3.3	0.7
	Total	170	3.1	0.6

The data in Table 2 show that social studies teachers have a general awareness of the contents and purpose of HRE in social studies. While they agreed more with the assertions that harmful traditional practices (for example, widowhood practices) (mean = 3.4) and national values (for example, honesty, tolerance, respect, empathy, contentedness) (mean = 2.7) are human rights content in social studies, they disagreed with the statement that cultural similarities and differences (mean = 2.0, SD = 0.7) are human rights content. They agreed strongly that the human rights content of social studies serves the purpose of promoting human rights consciousness (mean = 3.8) and peaceful coexistence (mean = 3.3) among individuals. Educational qualification showed a significant statistical difference regarding the

degree of awareness of the content and purpose of HRE ($F(x^2(5) = 20.7; p < 0.01)$) with a mean rank score of 145.9 for M.Ed., 130.8 for M.Ed. Equivalent holders, 99.3 for PGDE holders, 79.1 for B.Ed. holders, 77.5 for B.Ed. Equivalent holders, and 71.0 for NCE holders. A Dunn Bonferroni test post hoc comparison, however, showed that the mean scores of teachers with M.Ed. differed significantly from those of teachers with NCE ($p = 0.014$) and B.Ed. Equivalents ($p = 0.006$).

Table 3: Percentage representation of teachers' awareness of human rights education pedagogical debates

S/N	Items	No. of Teachers	Aware (%)	Unaware (%)
1.	Narrative methods have been suggested for HRE	170	1.8	98.2
2.	Emancipatory methods have been suggested for HRE	170	0	100
3.	Transformative methods have been suggested for HRE	170	0	100
4.	Critical methods have been suggested for HRE	170	0	100
5.	Participatory methods have been suggested for HRE	170	77.6	22.4
6.	Traditional methods have been decried for HRE	170	74.7	25.3
	Total	170	25.7	74.3

Generally, social studies teachers are unaware (74.3%) of the pedagogical debates surrounding HRE. Table 3 shows that social studies teachers are completely unaware of narrative, emancipatory, transformative, and critical HRE methods. A zero percentage of respondents was aware of the emancipatory, transformative, and critical methods strongly recommended by HRE scholars (Keet, 2015; Zembylas et al., 2017). Of the three respondents who were aware of the narrative method, two were M.Ed. holders while one was a B.Ed. Equivalent holder. Respondents are, however, generally aware that participatory methods are recommended for teaching human rights contents of social studies while traditional methods are discouraged. While respondents with an education background were largely aware of participatory and traditional methods, as indicated by frequency analysis of their responses, respondents without an education background (i.e. B.Ed. Equivalent) are notably unaware of participatory methods; 31 of the 53 B.Ed./Equivalent holders reported not being aware of participatory methods and 33 of this last group were unaware that traditional methods were considered unsuitable for HRE. Educational qualification had a significant statistical difference on HRE pedagogical debate awareness ($F(x^2(5) = 59.69; p < 0.001)$) with B.Ed./Equivalent holders recording the least mean rank of 52.1 and B.Ed. holders recording the highest mean rank of 104.1, followed by PGDE holders (101.4), M.Ed. (99.2), M.Ed./Equivalent (90.1), and NCE holders (86.2). Dunn Bonferroni test post hoc comparison, however, showed that the mean scores of teachers with a B.Ed. Equivalent differed significantly from those of teachers with M.Ed. ($p = 0.04$), PGDE ($p < 0.001$) and B.Ed. ($p = p < 0.001$). PGDE ($p < 0.001$) and B.Ed. ($p = p < 0.001$).

Table 4: Percentage of instructional methods employed by teachers in teaching human rights contents of BESSC

S/N	Items	No. of Teachers	Employ (%)	Don't Employ (%)
1.	I use an explanatory method for HRE	170	100	0
2.	I use a discussion method for HRE	170	4.1	95.9
3.	I use an inquiry method for HRE	170	14.7	85.3
4.	I use a problem-solving method for HRE	170	3.5	96.5
5.	I use a resource person for HRE	170	0.6	99.4
6.	I use computer-instruction including online resources for HRE	170	8.8	91.2
7.	I use role play for HRE	170	4.7	95.3
	Total	170	19.5	80.5

Table 4 shows that social studies teachers do not employ participatory or learner-centred approaches in teaching the human rights contents of social studies. Over 80% of the respondents do not employ a learner-centred approach in implementing human rights content. All the teachers agreed that they use the explanatory method for teaching human rights. A majority of the participants (80.5%) do not employ learner-centred methods for teaching. Educational qualifications had a significant statistical difference regarding knowledge of the content and purpose of HRE ($F(x^2(5) = 21.3; p < 0.01)$), with M.Ed. holders scoring the highest mean rank of 117.2. They were followed by M.Ed./Equivalent holders (105.3), PGDE holders (100.5), B.Ed. holders (87.0), NCE holders (83.9), and B.Ed./Equivalent holders (70.0). Post hoc comparison with the Dunn Bonferroni test showed that the scores of B.Ed./Equivalent holders differed significantly statistically, with the scores of PGDE holders ($p = 0.004$) and M.Ed. holders showing a significant statistical difference ($p = 0.019$).

Qualitative results from the unsolicited responses of teachers who are aware of participatory methods, but do not use them for teaching, revealed four themes, some of which have been observed by Hardman, Abd-Kadir, and Smith (2008) in their examination of the challenges of employing participatory methods for teaching in Nigeria. These themes are:

- (a) A lack of awareness of their existence and strengths: This is especially the case with teachers without an education background when they reported awareness of participatory methods. When they say that these methods are best suited for intelligent students, they show a lay understanding of what participatory methods are. For example, one teacher said methods do not matter because children who are not intelligent are 'naturally unintelligent' and there is nothing he can do to change the situation of 'naturally unintelligent people'.

- (b) A lack of funding and teaching resources: They complained of a lack of electricity, computers, projectors, standard textbooks, school bus and so on. For example, one teacher told how her plan to take her students on an excursion to a marriage registry failed because parents were unwilling to help pay for it. Another said that when he resumed teaching in 2014, no civic education (which he taught before his current subject, social studies) textbook was approved.
- (c) Large class sizes: With a large class of 35 to 50 students, teachers find it difficult to address all of their students' needs in a 40-45 minute period. One social studies teacher, who also doubles as a civic education teacher, said it was difficult to address the many questions her students ask.
- (d) A crowded curriculum and timetable: Schools in Nigeria offer 10 to 13 compulsory subjects. Each subject contains numerous topics and school lasts for 6 hours daily, with a 30-minute break. Classes are sometimes combined, in order to manage time. This results in having over 80 students crowded in one class, sharing few desks. The lecture method becomes their easiest option in cases like this.

Discussion: The challenges of teaching for human rights in Nigeria

The challenges of teaching for human rights in Nigeria, as revealed by the study's findings, include inadequate knowledge, inappropriate pedagogy, non-activism and poor educational planning. These challenges could also explain an increase in anti-human rights behaviour, despite HRE content.

Teachers' inadequate human rights knowledge

Teachers show a greater knowledge of the explicit contents and purpose of human rights, but lack a knowledge of the hidden issues and systemic factors (for example, culture) associated with human rights. The results further show that many teachers are not aware that values are an aspect of human rights. Again, when teachers disagree with the statement that cultural similarities and differences are an aspect of human rights, this suggests a lack of knowledge of the breadth of human rights. This shows a lack of understanding of the connection between cultural misunderstanding and ethnocentrism. And this invariably relates to intolerance, structural violence and conflicts- all indices of rights violations. This indicates a limited awareness of HRE. A knowledge of models of HRE developed by Bajaj (2011) would help to foster social studies teachers' awareness of the relevance of teaching cultural similarities and differences in promoting pro-human rights behaviour. This understanding would help to bring about a more practical approach to teaching the topic.

Teachers' limited knowledge of human rights is a consequence of poor quality teacher education. As noted by Ogunyinka, Okeke, & Adedoyin (2015), quality assurance is low for education programmes. Low scorers in the higher education entrance examination are admitted to study education in Nigeria, while in-service training is haphazardly planned and administered. Moreover, the social science teacher education (SSTE) curriculum (whose graduates largely teach social studies, government and civic education) is not yet updated to reflect changes made to the pre-higher education curriculum. As shown by Ifegbesan et al. (2017), the SSTE curriculum does not adequately cover SDGs. Human rights and citizenship content covered by undergraduate and Master's SSTE programmes is factual and limited to education about rights, despite research suggesting education *about* human rights

may be ineffective in developing rights activism (Hall, 2019). Again, the theoretical and philosophical assumptions of teaching human rights and citizenship are not covered under SSTE (Obiagu, 2019, p. 12). It is difficult to say why this is so. It may be due to an over-emphasis on national consciousness, values and unity in the curriculum, and the production of an obedient and responsible citizenry. There is no direct reference to changing systemic injustice as being a goal of HRE, and this has implications on how textbook authors and teachers understand and implement human rights topics. Teachers may be uncritical in their instructional delivery, or emphasise knowledge and abstract principles while neglecting human rights dispositions and values, as is the case in HRE discourses in Kurdistan-Iraq and Rwanda (Osler & Yahya, 2013), and in Nigerian cultural discourses (Salmon-Letelier, 2019). A lack of research (or lack of high quality research) on HRE in the country that might help improve HRE policy and practice is a further cause of teachers limited knowledge of HRE. Research grants, where available, are reportedly misappropriated by some awardees (The Guardian, 2020).

A lack of awareness of human rights pedagogy

Nigerian teachers teaching human rights contents are not aware of liberatory human rights pedagogies. Like the participants in Zembylas et al.'s (2017) study, who lacked necessary training on how to handle sensitive human rights issues, our participants were unaware of pedagogies for human rights practice. A lack of awareness of pedagogy could explain why teachers are unaware that culture-related topics (and largely unaware that values contents) are human rights-oriented. Although HRE is neither taught as an independent discipline nor as a stand-alone course in faculties and colleges of education in Nigeria, it is taught as a topic in some courses covered in the social studies or political science education programmes of various education faculties and colleges. However, emancipatory and critical theories and pedagogies are not included or taught in any SSTE programme in Nigeria. In SSTE classes, more attention is paid to the rights provisions of the constitution and human rights problems as contemporary issues, with no attention given to the models, critiques, and pedagogies of human rights education. Again, special methods courses offered in all SSTE programmes, as well as those offered in general education courses, focus on cooperative, individualised, discussion, inquiry, role play and problem-solving methods. In the SSTE programme's curriculum and materials there is no focus on any of the underlying critical and transformative theories and pedagogies that can awaken a consciousness of systemic and structural inequalities and violence. This has led to the failure of SSTE programmes to produce pragmatic and conscious social education teachers.

As the study shows, even though social studies teachers know about the strengths of participatory methods in promoting learning and are aware of the limitations of only using traditional methods, they do not utilise a learner-centred approach in teaching human rights. They rely heavily on explanatory methods, which do not promote the critical thinking necessary for human rights consciousness and behaviours. This is a perennial problem in Nigeria and other sub-Saharan African countries, where studies have consistently shown that explanation, teacher-centred, repetition, rote learning and non-democratic methods of teaching dominate classroom practices (Hardman et al., 2008; Obiagu, 2019; Salmon-Letelier 2019). This shortcoming is blamed on the conservative and authoritarian school structure that dominates African schools (Harber & Sakade, 2009), as well as sociocultural

factors such as the expectation that younger people show a total respect for their elders. This is evidenced in teachers' use of (and sense of entitlement for using) corporal punishment and their belief in silencing children's engagement in decision-making (Iroegbu, 2015). Inadequate educational facilities and resources, large class sizes, and a crowded curriculum and timetable are also associated with the non-employment of learner-centred methods by our respondents and other Nigerian teachers (Hardman et al., 2008). Notably, corruption is an obstacle to procurement of quality educational facilities in Nigeria, as educational leaders misappropriate and embezzle education funds (see Alabi, 2020; Samuel, 2018).

A patriarchal culture may also be a reason why emancipatory methods, though not taught in SSTE programmes, are not promoted and adopted by teachers. This is because women, who are treated as inferior and not expected to be pushy (Chigbu, 2015), dominate the Nigerian teaching profession. Women constitute 80.6% of our sample, and this statistic reflects the general teacher population. This is in line with the global tendency of the gradual feminisation of the teaching profession (OECD, 2017). In Nigeria, however, while prospective female teachers are sexually exploited by male lecturers (Bakari & Leach, 2009), female lecturers are mostly politicked out of administrative positions (Bakari & Leach, 2007). This system mitigates against a HRE approach. It is arguably difficult for inferiorised, passive and disempowered female teachers to search for knowledge or practices that challenge traditions. How can they produce empowered students if they themselves are not consciously awakened and empowered?

Teachers' non-activism

Related to a lack of a broad repertoire of pedagogical skills is teachers' non-activism or non-agency. As shown in the response of one of the teachers, classroom method is seen as having no implications for educational performance, since intelligence is assumed 'natural'. This shows the teacher does not understand the purpose of education beyond test scores. This challenge can also be associated with a lack of teacher education or poor teacher training that produces teachers whose 'beliefs are strongly orientated towards the here-and-now and [...] influenced by current policy rather than by more encompassing orientations about the wider purpose and meaning of schooling' (Biesta, Priestley, & Robinson, 2015, p. 638). In Nigeria, 'teachers are not equipped to aim and move beyond performance objectives outlined in curriculum contents [...] even though a policy document that empowers them to [...] act independently] exists' (Obiagu, 2020, p. 11). Given that education about human rights does not produce activism among the educated (Hall, 2019) nor encourage more active teachers teach more democratically (Jerome, 2018), education through and for human rights is crucial and requires activist teachers. Agential teachers (including lecturers) are needed; resourceful and innovative individuals who see beyond test scores and are not overwhelmed by inadequate educational resources.

Poor educational planning

The findings of this study further show that teachers' educational qualifications have a statistical significance on their HRE instructional preparedness and practice; non-qualified teachers lag behind while M.Ed. and B.Ed. holders rank highest. Teachers without an education background are extremely unaware of participatory methods. This result is not surprising, since teachers without an education background

probably do not understand teaching as professional and complex, with some methodologies appropriate for some topics. They possibly share the misconception that teaching is simple and is much like the work of authority figures such as parents, lay teachers in religious schools, leaders of Boy or Girl Scouts troops and employers (Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009). Despite this, the Nigerian government continues to employ unqualified teachers while many qualified ones have no job. This situation is propelled by corruption and favouritism. At the primary level, the effectiveness of teachers is additionally limited by the fact that a lack of resources means that teachers are engaged to teach all subjects, irrespective of their limited knowledge of these subjects.

Conclusions

This study shows a number of challenges to teaching for human rights in Nigeria: inadequate human rights knowledge; a lack of pedagogical knowledge; non-activism; and poor educational planning. Surmounting these challenges is important. In the education literature, the importance of knowledge – from general content knowledge to pedagogical knowledge about students, subject matter and pedagogy – is emphasised (Deng, 2018). Sophisticated knowledge that goes beyond common principles is required for high quality instruction to be assured (Ball et al., 2008). From this lens, the effective teaching of human rights contents requires a sophisticated knowledge of (and training in) human rights, HRE, and their critiques and pedagogy. Hence, Nigeria's SSTE programmes and other courses dealing with human rights must be restructured if the criteria for effective implementation of HRE discussed in the literature review are to be met.

Teacher educators need to upgrade their knowledge of HRE and give more attention to human rights enshrined in the UDHR instruments and the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. They also need to go beyond concepts of human rights, rights provisions, contemporary rights violations and the purpose of HRE and to incorporate rights critiques, HRE pedagogical debates, and the responsibilities of the teacher to care into their programmes. Dialogic pedagogy (and Socratic questioning), a powerful pedagogic tool for increasing classroom interaction and encouraging students' critical thinking (Hardman et al., 2008), would be suitable for sub-Saharan Africa contexts with inadequate educational resources and large class sizes.

If effective citizenship and the social change goals of Nigerian education (FRN, 2014) are to be realised, emancipatory, transformative and critical pedagogies need to be introduced in general teacher education programmes. These pedagogical theories and methods will challenge ill-conceived beliefs about schooling held by teachers, as well as empower them with a sense of purpose to deconstruct systemic injustice through instructional practice. They may also help educators reclaim their place in human rights discourses. Studies of discrimination and abuse against Nigerian women, for example, usually consider that the government, NGOs, the young, men and women are necessary actors in bringing about change (Chigbu, 2015). The role of educators is rarely considered, despite the fact that they are potentially strong transformative agents in social change. Both teachers and children exposed to transformative education have engaged in action that may disrupt an unjust status quo. Importantly, Nigerian education policy needs to begin giving social change and justice as much emphasis as national consciousness, values and unity; the latter cannot be realised in the absence of social justice.

Exposing Nigerian social educators to the criteria of HRE implementation discussed in this article will help them to cope with institutional challenges, such as the lack of educational resources, and awaken the spirit that a rights activist needs to have- a non-activist social educator cannot produce activist students. There is a need to prepare social educators to overcome the *negative form of resilience* that prevents people from challenging asymmetric power relations; they must be enabled to implement education through and for human rights in their classes. As for teachers' complaints that the curriculum is overloaded, we suggest that social education curricula be reviewed so that topics serving the same purposes can be merged. This will reduce teachers' workloads and free-up time for learner-centred methods.

There is a need for public action by government and educational bodies in providing professional development opportunities such as in-service seminars and workshops on the effective implementation of HRE. More training needs to be given to primary school teachers, since they handle many subjects they are not trained to teach. Educational researchers need to take individual action and advocate their findings by liaising with individual schools to organise free seminars for teachers that can enlighten them about the teaching of human rights.

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Notes

¹ The 6-3-3-4 education system represents six years in primary education, three years of lower secondary education, three years of upper secondary education, and four years for higher education.

² The 9-3-4 education system represents nine years compulsory basic education –Primary 1 to Junior Secondary 3, three years senior secondary, and four years higher education.

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