

**USING SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION IN PROMOTING NATIONAL
INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA – PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES**

BY

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Abstract

Nigeria is a nation of many ethnic groups with diverse cultures. Efforts at integrating these ethnic groups and cultures yield minimal result as evident in the series of ethno-religious crises with attendant loss of lives and properties. Education, Social Studies Education to be precise has been seen as a panacea to all forms of discrimination, intolerances and ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. Though, the subject is not without its own challenges weakening its strength. This is the reason this article looks into these challenges and ways out in order to strengthen the subject in achieving its objectives. The paper uses analytical approach as its research method with secondary sources of obtaining data. It was discovered, among others, that the cultural and value-laden methods which promote team spirit, cooperation, tolerance and ethnic pluralism among students in a multi-cultural class, as well as evaluation in the affective domain are rarely used in teaching and evaluating the subject. The study therefore recommends the use of cultural and value-laden methods in teaching Social Studies, and evaluation of its contents done using affective evaluation instruments such as observation technique, socio-metric scale, anecdotal record, interview, among others to develop and sustain in students attitudinal behaviours which support ethnic pluralism, team-spirit, tolerance, peaceful coexistence and consequently, national integration.

Keywords: National Integration, Social Studies Education, Cultural and Value-Laden Methods, Affective Evaluation.

The world is culturally diverse and pluralistic. Cultural pluralism is a constant feature of human societies.

Almost every modern society includes groups whose ways of life are different from that of the mainstream

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society. People have different cultural orientations and backgrounds, in the same way as they have different beliefs, races and languages. Being a natural trait, difference generates pluralism in all aspects of life, and is known in international literature as cultural diversity (Altwaijri, 2015). According to the cultural pluralism reflects the national identities of people and nations; the more diverse identities are, the more varied cultures will be. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind.

In Africa, diversity is not a new thing because African societies are intrinsically multiethnic and multireligious in nature. African states were formed by colonialism, usually to serve the interests of the colonists and, therefore, with little attention paid to the precolonial ethnic allegiances and other forms of belonging (Appiah, Achemfuor and Adeyeye, 2018). Nigeria as the most populous country in black Africa is heterogeneous and multi-cultural state (Paulley, 2012). This implies that Nigeria is made up of many ethnic groups with diverse cultures. Her cultural diversity is no doubt a factor of her linguistic disparity that equals to the number of her ethnic groups. The various ethnic and cultural groups that made up the country existed as an autonomous political entities before the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates in 1914 which led to the birth of Nigeria under the Lugard's administration. In fact, Nigeria has over 300 ethnic groups and each group has with it, its

own valued culture distinct from others (Paulley, 2012). In terms of size and political influence, there are three major ethnic groups: Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. Within these groups, there are minor groups with different languages, culture and life styles.

The implication of this multiplicity of culture and ethnic groups in the country is that, it has made group's cohesion or national integration a lot more difficult for the state to be genuinely united and remain united. The heterogeneous nature of Nigeria tends to produce a kind of foreigner relationship among the sub-units, devoid of commonly shared values, interests, goals and national consciousness which are necessary and inalienable attributes of national integration. Conflicts have become part of every Nigerian's life (Akintunde, 2012). Nigerian society experiences various forms of civil unrests ranging from boundary disputes, ethnic conflict, religious crisis, political unrest, among others, which have led to killings, maiming and destruction of properties. Jegede (2015) gave a list of conflicts in Nigeria to include: Ife/Modakeke conflict in the South-West; the Ijaw/Urhobo/ Itsekiri conflicts in the Niger-Delta; Umuleri/Aguleri conflict in the South-East; the indigene/settler conflict and the many religious conflicts in the North. The Boko haram insurgency in the North-East; and the Tiv/Jukun ethnic crisis in the North Eastern part of Nigeria; the agitation for actualization of Biafra by Movement for Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and

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Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB); the Southern Kaduna crisis; the clash between herdsmen and farmers in Benue, Plateau, Adamawa, Taraba, Enugu, Oyo, Ekiti, Ondo, among others. Religious differences and ethnic allegiance of the people have significantly been responsible for series of crises threatening peaceful coexistence and unity of Nigerians right from the time of independence (Enu, 2016).

Acknowledging the importance of peaceful coexistence in the development of human society, a number of efforts have been put in place by successive governments in Nigeria to promote unity-in-diversity. Such efforts include: Federal character and Quota system for Federal appointments and admissions; establishment of unity schools; introduction of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC); encouragement of National Sports arts and cultural festivals; creation of national symbols; constitutional provisions; call for sovereign National Conferences, to mention but a few. These and many other programmes yielded minimal result as evident in the continuous occurrence of inter ethno-religious crises claiming lives and properties and therefore, creating a kind of foreigner relationship among the sub-units (ethnic groups) that make up the federation (Wahab, 2012).

In the search to finding a lasting solution to ethno-religious conflicts, especially, in preventing its future occurrence, education via schooling has been seen as the only potent tool which can be used to engrave in the minds of the people (especially, the

younger ones) positive attitude to peaceful coexistence and display of actions that promote peaceful coexistence. The overall philosophy of Nigeria is to live in harmony and unity as one indivisible, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2013). This philosophy reiterates the need for a peaceful coexistence among all Nigerians irrespective of tribe, religion, language and cultural diversities.

In virtually every school, one is likely to find students not only from different ethnic groups but from a variety of racial composition and this variety is increasing every day (Gorski, 2020). Corroborating this view, Lustig and Koester (2013) observe that the rich diversity of today's society is clearly evident in many classrooms. School is a major context for academic and socio-emotional development, but also an important acculturative context (Schachner, 2017). This is notably the case in children and youth, which is a critical period for the development of a social and ethnic identity, as well as the development of intergroup attitudes and moral reasoning about issues of fairness, equality and social inclusion (Rutland and Killen, 2015). School is therefore germane in improving intergroup relations and to help students gain the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to take part in cross-cultural interactions.

Social Studies as one of the school subjects is a core subject in the Universal Basic Education (UBE)

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in Nigeria. It is offered right from Basics 1-9. Its objectives are closely related to that of the educational and national objectives. The need for Social Studies education arose following its success in United States of America and Britain in 1921 and 1945 respectively. The U.S.A which comprises many people from different continents was looking for a subject that could socially unite the citizens. Britain on the other hand wanted to integrate her citizens after the end of Second World War in 1945. In Nigeria, Social Studies was conceived as a subject to help in healing the wound of the civil war, eliminate ethnicity and promote national unity, cooperation, good citizenship, among others, using the instrumentality of the school. Social Studies is a corrective study that emphasizes objectives before any content can be of significance (Adediran and Onifade, 2013). The ultimate aim of Social Studies is to equip individuals with knowledge, attitudes and skills for peaceful relationships and living necessary for the sustainability of a peaceful coexistence among people in a society. The subject bothers on skills necessary for adjusting learners' behaviour in accordance with social situations such as skills of tolerance, cooperation, sharing responsibilities, team work, to mention but a few.

Despite the usefulness of Social Studies in developing in learner's knowledge, attitudes and skills for peaceful intergroup relations and by extension, cross-cultural unity, still, the subject is not without its own challenges. It is against this backdrop that this

study examines some of its challenges and how the subject can be strengthened to improve its functionality in promoting national integration in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarifications

Social Studies Education

Social Studies has been defined by different scholars and societies based on different perspectives and environments. For instance, Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2013) define Social Studies as an integrative field of study which probes human's symbiotic relationships with his environment, endows human being with the reflective capacities, intellectual, affective and skills to enable him to understand his world and its problems, and rationally solve or cope with them for effective living in the society. It is believed that Social Studies develops the key values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding, skills and processes necessary for students to become active and responsible citizens, engage in the democratic process and aware of their capacities to effect change in themselves, their communities and the world at large (Nwoye, 2012). Human being in any community creates culture which is influenced or determined by the environmental circumstances that confront him in that community. Human in community, therefore, becomes the central focus of Social Studies. And since human being cannot be isolated from his culture that he has created, it can rightly be said that Social Studies is the study of

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human being and his culture. The belief is that knowledge of this by the students through Social Studies, the issue of national integration in the country will be assured (Paulley, 2012). The contents and objectives of Nigerian Social Studies programme are geared toward the promotion of living together, unity in diversity, cooperation, tolerance and participation (politically, economically and socio-culturally). It is believed that this will enable the child to fit into and make meaningful contributions to the progress, well-being and unity of Nigerian society.

National Integration

Integration is viewed in terms of the extent to which parts interact and complement each other in order to constitute a viable whole. It is within this framework that national integration is the feeling of togetherness or oneness towards one's own country irrespective of individual differences as regards religion, race, culture or caste (AbdulKalam, 2019). National integration has to do with striking a balance between cultural relations in a multi-ethnic diverse polity as well as sensitizing the citizenry for peace education, cultural accommodation, developing attitudes and values for collective national existence (Osahon, 2013). It is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizens of a country. Usara (2011) defines national integration as the unity of the various ethnic groups in the country or nation in such a way that they see one another as brothers and sisters devoid of tribal sentiments, nepotism and all other

vices that bring polarization of the people. This means the coming together of Nigerian citizens, to speak with one voice, appreciate the circumstances of their nationality, contribute meaningfully to the development of their country and jointly protect the sovereignty of their country. National integration is not only about national spirit. It involves a feeling that brings people from all areas, dialects and beliefs together in a common endeavour. When national integration occurs, individuals are likely to work together to build a system that enhances the prosperity of a country and its people.

Efforts at National Integration in Nigeria

Nigeria as one of the brain children of the British imperial majesty is characterized with a number of diverse cultural groups who have their individual identity in areas such as religions, languages, music, folktales, occupations, dancing steps, dresses, traditions, values, among others. Despite these differences, the diverse ethnic groups were merged together through the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates in the year 1914. By the time Nigeria got her independence from Britain in 1960, its artificial origin, coupled with other factors, had bequeathed it a number of fundamental problems. One of such problems is the challenge of integrating the diverse nations hurriedly brought together by the said "unholy wedlock" into a cohesive socio-political whole (Ekanola, 2006). In a bid to integrate the diverse nations constituting Nigeria, a number of efforts have

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been put in place by successive governments. Some of such efforts are:

- **The establishment of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC):** The introduction of NYSC in the year 1973 by the Federal Government in the year 1973 was with the view of encouraging and developing common ties among the youths of Nigeria and promoting national unity. It was hoped that the exposure of youths to the culture of their area of service would help them to cultivate a more tolerant attitudes toward Nigerians from other cultural and ethnic background (Raji, 2012).
- **The adoption of Federalism:** It was in an attempt to weld together her diverse linguistic and ethno-religious disparities that Nigeria opted for federalism as introduced in 1954 by the British. Federalism is believed to be an effective political-cum-constitutional design for managing complex governmental problems usually associated with cultural and ethno-religious diversity.
- **Encouragement of Sports, Arts and cultural festivals:** The exhibition and celebration of work of arts and culture by different cultural groups serve as a unifying factor as people come together to see and appreciate other people's cultural heritage. Moreso, sporting activities organized at the

local, state and federal levels are meant to unify the diverse cultural groups in Nigeria. For instance, FESTAC'77, Argungu Festival, All Nigerian Universities Games (NUGA), etc have served as avenues for inter-ethnic mixing.

- **Teaching of the Three Major Nigerian Languages:** The teaching of the three major Nigerian languages – Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo in schools has been made mandatory by the federal government. Students are made to offer at least one cultural language in addition to his/her own indigenous language. If this policy is effectively implemented, it will promote greater integration among Nigerians, especially, the younger generation.
- **The establishment of Unity and Federal Schools:** The fact that it is strongly believed that education can solve the problem of national integration, the Federal Government started establishing Federal Unity schools in all the states of the federation. For instance, Federal Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education were established for students from all parts of the country, regardless ethnic affiliation, religion, culture and language. The major reason for this is to make children (students) learn in a multicultural environment. Children learn

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(consciously or unconsciously) socio-cultural differences when interacting with one another.

Other government efforts at national integration include the use of the same constitution, national anthem, pledge, national flag, coat of arms, currency and adoption of federal character/quota system for appointments and admission into national positions and schools respectively.

Factors Threatening National Integration in Nigeria

Despite the various attempts in Nigeria to ensure genuine national unity, a lot of problems still confront the country. The following are some of the factors threatening national integration in Nigeria:

- **Inherited Colonial Legacy:** The bringing together of several ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups (who had attained different levels of socio-economic and political development) by the colonial government as a new nation (Nigeria) was not to promote national integration, but, rather for the administrative convenience of the British colonial government. The political arrangement was designed to favour a particular region despite the integration of the regions (Raji, 2014). New national identity, loyalty, unity of purpose and convergence of interests which can “cement” the joining of the diverse groups were not thought of by the

British rule (Peter, 2014). No wonder, ethnic loyalty and clashes had been a problem right from the pre-independence era.

- **Lack of National Leadership:** Right from the pre-independence days, the personal ambitions of nationalist leaders constitute another obstacle to the task of nation building and national integration in Nigeria. Even after independence, many Nigerian leaders compete for power, prestige and associated benefits by seeking support from members of their own ethnic groups by accentuating ethnic differences and demonizing members of other groups. Many do not have the interest of the nation as a whole at heart, rather they pursue policies that favour their ethnic group. This is more evident in the area of juicy and sensitive political appointments, allocation of resources, distribution and execution of government’s establishments and national projects to areas where they are not really needed (Raji, 2014). Moreso, the inter-ethnic struggle for political power and power sharing especially among the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria at the expense of the minority groups may weaken the strength of unity as the undermined groups are not happy for being neglected.
- **Security Challenges:** Under federalism, citizens are free to move around, work and

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settle wherever they desire without any fear. In practice, this is not so in Nigeria as many Nigerians are deprived of their stay in some parts of the country. It is evident in recent times that the so-called non-indigene population suffers one form of discrimination or the other, making their areas of residence uninhabitable. Many federal workers and Serving NYSC members posted to such areas have been killed as a result of insurgency. With this, national integration is threatened.

- **Poverty and Unemployment:** Poor management of state resources and ethnic sentiment by visionless leaders have resulted into widespread poverty and youth unemployment. Despite the acceptable method for distribution of national wealth in Nigeria, problem still arises at the implementation stage, as the areas that produce the resources are left undeveloped (Ibrahim, 2015). The age-long crisis in the Niger Delta area is a reaction to this anomaly. Moreso, job opportunities have become an issue of “who you know” and “son of the soil”. Appointments are reserved for the sons, daughters and kinsmen of those in positions of authority, not minding whether they merit it or not, while majority who do not have relationship with those in power remain jobless and languish in poverty. This

situation tends to intensify hatred among ethnic groups in Nigeria.

- **Negative Impact of Education:** Many educational institutions also tend to serve as grounds for the grooming of sectionists. For instance, the formation of ethnic based students’ unions in higher institutions of learning is an eye sore. For example, Igbo students union, Yoruba students union, Ijaw students union, Hausa students union, among others, promote ethnic loyalty. No wonder, they form ethnic militia groups such as Odua People’s Congress (OPC), Arewa People’s Congress (APC), Igbo People’s Congress (IPC), the Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC), Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Bakassi Boys, Benue/Tiv Youth Movement, and many more after their graduation from school. It is obvious that the formation of ethnic militias in Nigeria is a factor for ethno-communal crises in Nigeria.
- **Regionalization of Political Parties:** This has a historical and constitutional origin. Right from the colonial era, the colonial administration encouraged ethnic and regional loyalty among the people. This was evident in the nature (along ethnic and regional lines) of the political parties formed. Bakari (2017) outlined political parties in

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Nigeria the first, second, third and fourth republics along ethnic and regional lines as thus:

Political Parties during the First Republic

- (i) Northern People's Congress (NPC) – for the Hausa-Fulanis in the North.
- (ii) National Council for Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) – for the Igbos in the East
- (iii) Action Group (AG) – for the Yorubas in the West.

During the Second Republic

- (i) National Party of Nigeria (NPN) – North
- (ii) Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) – West
- (iii) People Redemption Party (PRP) – North
- (iv) Great Nigerian People's Party (GNPP) – North
- (v) Nigerian People's Party (NPP) – East

During the Third Republic

- (i) National Republic Convention (NRC) – North
- (ii) Social Democratic Party (SDP) – South

In the **Fourth Republic**, the two dominant political parties are:

- (i) All People's Congress (APC) – North
- (ii) People's Democratic Party (PDP) – South

With the above, the unity of Nigeria is weakened.

- **Ethnic Domination:** From independence (1960) till date, a particular region, specifically, the Northern region has produced more Heads of State than the other regions. The northerners (Hausa-Fulani) see the leadership position as their birth-right (Bakari, 2017). Election in Nigeria is always seen as competition between the north and south to rule. The annulment of the June 12, 1993 Presidential election was to prevent power shift from north to the south (Raji, 2014). They claim that they have been ordained by God to rule the country (Nigeria). They believe their ethnic group is superior to other ethnic groups. As a result of this belief, "juicy" and "sensitive" posts are intentionally reserved for the Hausa-Fulani indigenes. Perhaps, this is one of the reasons why Nigerians especially, those from the other ethnic groups and regions are clamouring for restructuring. The Yorubas and Igbos are threatening to secede and operate as sovereign States, with the proposed names-Oduduwa Republic and Biafra Republic respectively, if political power fails to shift to the south.

Social Studies and National Integration

In Nigeria, Social Studies was conceived as a subject to help heal the wounds of the civil war,

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ethnicity, ethnocentrism, cultural intolerance and other socio-political problems which are potent enough to threaten national integration using school as a tool. This explains the reason why some scholars refer to Social Studies as a problem-solving subject. For instance, Chia (2015) describes Social Studies a problem-solving discipline which if properly taught, can help in finding lasting solution to a particular social problem. It is an applied subject which applies the relevant information gotten from social sciences, humanities, arts and even sciences to solve a practical problem in the society. Nigeria is no doubt bedeviled by myriad of problems which despite its oil wealth, inhibit its development and even threaten its continued existence as a sovereign state. One of such problems is a problem of national integration. It is a complex problem that a nation like Nigeria should address with a strong will and spirit for her peaceful coexistence. Thus, the ethno-religious conflicts and other crises threatening national integration in Nigeria can be solved through effective teaching and learning of Social Studies; learners are made to participate actively in finding solution to a number of social problems, especially, those ones threatening inter-ethnic relations and unity in schools, communities and Nigeria as a whole.

At any educational level, one of the aims and objectives of teaching and learning Social Studies is to develop a sympathetic appreciation of the diversity and interdependence of all members of the local

community and wider national and international community and to develop in students positive attitudes of togetherness, comradeship and cooperation towards healthy nations. As students from diverse ethnic groups, religions, languages and even races work together in providing solution to the group assignment given to them, they develop the skill of tolerance which is highly needed for peaceful coexistence now and in the future. It is imperative to state it here that the goals of Social Studies education in Nigeria emanate from the National Policy on Education (Ajiboye, 2009). In the spate of ethno-religious civil unrest in Nigeria, a type of education which can inculcate both in children and adults the appreciation of diversity, values of peace and unity, religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence is highly needed.

One of the attributes of Social Studies Programme is that it is society-oriented and culture-bound. Much of the contents of the subject are drawn from the realities of the learners' environment (Nigerian environment). The inclusion of concepts like culture, cultural similarities and differences in Nigeria, interdependence, peace and conflicts, inter-marriage, national unity and integration, tolerance, living together, social values, among others, in the Social Studies curriculum will help students to appreciate diversity and interdependence of members of different cultural groups in Nigeria, understand and tolerate one another despite their differences, all of

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which promotes inter-ethnic relations and harmonious living in the Nigerian society. Worthy of note is the elastic and dynamic nature of the subject, as it accommodates contemporary issues in the society.

Furthermore, the uniqueness of Social Studies in promoting national integration can be seen in its methodology or teaching strategies. There are a number of student centered participatory instructional strategies in Social Studies which promote team spirit, cooperation and tolerance among the students. Some of such methods are group investigation method, value analysis and clarification method, multicultural approach, educational trip method, buzz-group method, discussion method, dramatization method, to mention but a few. With effective use of these methods, students develop decision-making abilities and promote behaviours that support ethnic pluralism and cultural diversity. Moreover, social and problem-solving skills are developed in the learners through these methods. It should be noted that these skills are life-skills which students apply in their day-to-day interactions outside the classrooms and even, in future when they become adults.

The evaluation techniques used in measuring the extent at which instructional objectives have been achieved in Social Studies in another aspect which draws a line between the subject and other school subjects. Educational objectives cover three domains of learning which are cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitudes) and psychomotor (skills) domains (Bloom

in Ajiboye, 2009). Of all school subjects, students' affective development occupy a special place in Social Studies education (Ajiboye, 2009). The affective learning domain addresses learner's emotions towards learning experiences. A learner's attitude, interest, feelings and values are demonstrated by affective behaviour. Some important affective behaviour which can be developed in the learners through Social Studies and which are directly related to national integration are: appreciation of the fact that people are different from one another, but we all need one another to survive, togetherness, fair play, trust, mutual benefiting relationship, honesty, integrity and chastity. The extent at which a student forms and develops these attitudinal behaviours can only be determined through affective domain evaluation. This thus explains the reason why evaluation of affective domain gains more attention than the other domains in Social Studies. It is when generations of learners continue to imbibe and nurture these attitudes that Nigerian society is assured of peaceful coexistence and national integration.

Another uniqueness of Social Studies amidst other school subjects is that it is being exposed to children right from their formative age when learning is highly receptive. The subject catches them young by laying good and solid foundation which adulthood is built upon. It has been rightly observed by many social psychologists that personality and attitudinal behaviours are formed in the early years of the child's development, and are firmly established and integrated

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by the time the child gets to secondary school. Onuoha and Okam (2011) in line with other Social Studies educators, argue that the most important goal of Social Studies is the development of socio-civic attitude and values in children. A good citizen should not only possess the requisite knowledge and skills that would enable him live a meaningful life in society, he should also imbibe those attitudinal behaviours that would make him interact and live peacefully with others, regardless their differences in culture, language and religion. This thus, makes Social Studies highly important.

Challenges Facing Social Studies Education in Promoting National Integration in Nigeria

Despite the potency of Social Studies in promoting inter-cultural relations among students and the society at large, still, the spate of violence arising mostly from ethnic and religious conflicts is at the high side. The youths according to Enu (2016) are at the heart of most violence conflicts in Nigeria. Then, what could be the inhibiting factors?

The achievement of Social Studies objectives largely depends on its methodology. Ogunyemi and Adetoro (2013) observe that despite the usefulness of Social Studies in enhancing peaceful relationship and inculcating right type of attitudes in children who are the future of the country, its greater problem is poor teaching method. The affective-oriented objective – change in attitudinal behaviour which is the major

focus of the subject is faintly achieved due to the way and manner in which Social Studies is taught in schools. Where Social Studies is taught as purely intellectual and expository discipline as it is the case in majority of Nigerian schools, rather than as problem-solving and value education, students no doubt would find it difficult to appreciate how the knowledge relates to real life situation (Iyamu, 2016). It must be noted that the conventional teacher expository teaching method has been over used at the expense of learner participatory instructional strategies that promote behaviours which support ethnic pluralism, team-spirit, cooperation and tolerance among students in a multicultural class. Cultural and value-laden methods such as value clarification method, multicultural approach, buzz group method, value analysis method, role-play method, among others, are suitable in teaching value and cultural related topics in Social Studies.

Moreover, evaluation in the cognitive and psychomotor domains have continued to dominate instructional evaluation in Social Studies classes to the detriment of affective domain. Moreso, many teachers especially, Social Studies teachers lack adequate training in the application of affective evaluation especially, as it pertains to the making of effective inferences (Ajiboye, 2009). Few that know how to evaluate affective objectives see it as being tedious (Okafor and Arinze, 2011). Infact, many teachers use cognitive evaluation instruments such as objective and

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essay tests to evaluate value-laden and cultural related concepts. This should not be so. The fact that a student can define the concept of “tolerance” correctly does not mean that he is tolerant or that he can tolerate his classmate or others of different culture. So, we have had over the years, Social Studies without social skills (Iyamu, 2016). Thus, affective evaluation instruments such as observation, checklist, sociometric device, behavioural record, interview, to mention but a few can be used to evaluate students’ attitudinal behavior.

Furthermore, the receptivity of Social Studies as a school subject in recent times affects its status. The subject now appears in the school curriculum as a theme with the other two themes – Civic Education and Security Education which were originally parts of Social Studies contents. The three themes are now referred to as National Value Education. This has seriously weakened the strength of Social Studies. It has generated a lot of agitations and sentiments bothering on outright departure from the purposes for which Social Studies was introduced to the schools and has also confused the curriculum implementers (teachers) on which method(s) to use in teaching the isolated themes as a subject – National Value Education. The breaking down and renaming of Social Studies contents has led to certain misconceptions about the subject from the traditional subject school teachers. For instance, the perceived misconceptions that History as a subject teaches national values more than Social Studies and the claim from graduates of

Political Science (Government Teachers), that Social Studies teachers cannot teach or examine Civic Education at Senior School Certificate level are all disturbing Social Studies teachers and Social Studies teacher trainers. Civic Education which is a component of Social Studies has found its way into the Senior Secondary School curriculum even, as a compulsory subject while Social Studies is still restricted to Junior secondary curriculum. Can a part be greater than the whole? All these affronts tend to affect effective teaching and learning, as well as the realization of Social Studies objectives.

Still on the foregoing, teachers’ perception of the efficacy of Social Studies curriculum in promoting national integration is another factor worthy of consideration. According to Nelson and Quick (2007), perception is the process of interpreting information using the sensory organs of an individual. What it means is that the opinion one has about another person or thing largely depends on the amount of information available to him/her, and the extent to which he or she is able to correctly interpret the information he or she has acquired. Social Studies teachers’ perception on the efficacy or otherwise of the subject in promoting national integration has implications for its overall objectives. If teachers of the subject see the subject as being capable of promoting inter-group relations, leading to national integration then, they would work towards achieving its mandate. As such, a positive perception of the teachers towards Social Studies as a

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school subject could result in positive and effective implementation of the subject's curriculum, and consequently attitudinal change in learners' behaviour. It therefore demands that the inter-personal and inter-group social skills which Social Studies teachers want to develop in the learners, have to be present in the teachers themselves as no one gives what he does not have.

Conclusion

The ethno-religious heterogeneity nature of Nigerian society makes the quest for its integration germane. This becomes imperative as the realization and sustainability of meaningful development largely depend upon the level of peace and unity present in a society. Moreso, it is evident that education is an extremely valuable way to effective interactions and elimination of all forms of discrimination and intolerance. Hence, education through school subjects especially, Social Studies is unique in promoting inter-group relations, peaceful coexistence and by extension, national integration through its objectives, contents, methodologies and evaluation procedures. However, the subject is not without its own challenges weakening its strength. All stakeholders as regards the subject should therefore do the needful.

Recommendations

In the course of this study, the following were recommended:

Cultural and value-laden methods which promote team spirit, cooperation, tolerance and ethnic

pluralism among students in a multicultural class should be used by Social Studies teachers in teaching value and cultural related topics in the subject. Examples of such methods are value clarification method, multi-cultural approach, value identification method, role-play method, buzz group method, among others.

Social Studies teachers should be aware of the fact that Social Studies is more of affective than cognitive. In the light of this, affective evaluation instruments like observation technique, checklist rating scale, socio-metric scale, anecdotal record, interview, to mention but a few should be used when evaluating students' attitudinal behaviour especially, those that have to do with interpersonal and inter-group relations.

The absence of Social Studies in the Senior Secondary School (SSS) curriculum is a big gap yet to be filled. Hence, the professional body of the subject – Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN) should not relent in her efforts in making the government approve Social Studies into the SSS curriculum. Also, Civic Education and Security Education which are components of Social Studies Education originally should be incorporated back into the Social Studies curriculum.

Moreso, teachers of the subject (Social Studies) should develop positive perception of the efficacy of the subject in promoting national integration. This would help in the effective

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implementation of the subject's curriculum, and consequently positive attitudinal change in learners' behaviour. Teachers also should display attitude of acceptance and respect for other cultures and religions for students to see and emulate.

Teachers especially, Social Studies teachers should be sponsored to attend seminars, conferences and workshops where newly researched methods of teaching and learning Social Studies, as well as Social Studies affective evaluation techniques would be well discussed as regards their application in the Social Studies classes.

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