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**DEMANDS OF A NEW TEACHER FOR NEW SOCIAL  
STUDIES IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*The primary concern of this paper is to highlight the prerequisites for a new Social Studies teacher and experiences in teaching and learning Social Studies at different levels. This is to advance modalities that may enhance the tapping of its full benefits for the teaching and learning system in Nigeria as a whole. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to examine the concept of a new Social Studies teacher, qualities and roles expected of a new Social Studies teacher. It further investigated the concept of inquiry and expository methods appropriate in a Social Studies classroom and their advantages for both the teacher and learners. It was concluded that the desired success to be achieved in galvanizing the advantage of incorporating new Social Studies teachers has become pertinent that students and the society will understand the composition, structure and socio-cultural orientation of Social Studies.*

**Keywords:** Social Studies, Teacher, Innovative methods, Effective teaching and learning.

**Introduction**

The most important resource especially in the field of professional teaching is related to the quality of teachers who perform the tasks of implementing the school curriculum. The National Policy on Education stressed that no system of education can rise above the quality of its teachers. Similarly, various scholars, committees and conferences in the history of education in Nigeria have stressed the significance of the teachers. Eboutou (2018) stressed that teachers are the hub of any educational system. He concluded that it is upon their availability, quality, efficiency and effectiveness that the success of the educational system and indeed the future of the nation depend.

The problem of quality teachers in all fields of disciplines especially in the area of Social Studies seems to be acknowledged among educators, policymakers, curriculum planners, researchers and the general public. Effective teaching and learning of Social Studies can only be enhanced by well-trained and qualified teachers. Hence, the need to recruit and utilize professionally qualified new Social Studies teachers to facilitate the enhancement of effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum in schools is essential. According to Njeru and Orodho (2013) teachers' experience and educational qualifications have a significant influence on the attainment of educational goals and objectives in Nigeria. Therefore, Social Studies teachers have been seen as an effective instrument towards facilitating the realization of this noble desire geared toward self-realization, better human relations, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity, as well as cultural, economic, scientific and technological progress in Nigeria. It is pertinent to state that ineffective and poor teaching and learning of Social Studies in schools has continued to cause some havoc by shattering the hope and aspiration of some students, especially by helping them to make informed and reasonable decisions for the public as good citizens of culturally diverse and democratic society in an interdependent world.

According to the National Policy on Education (2004), the minimum acceptable qualification for teachers in the teaching

profession should be the National Certificate of Education (NCE). The NCE qualification for teachers in schools is the most common qualification among Social Studies teachers today. This qualification again is no longer adequate and relevant at this level of the technological era and rather the National policy on education recommended that NCE will untimely become the minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession. The changing phases and paves of education in Nigeria required that the new Social Studies teachers must change if they will continue to be relevant and also serve as an appropriate key that will open doors for citizens and create a better world for all Nigerians.

The professional development of Social Studies teachers puts a direct impact on the achievement of the aims and objectives of Social Studies in Nigeria. Many Social Studies teachers are not able to apply modern information technologies in the teaching of the subject due to computer illiteracy hence they mostly rely on the lecture method of teaching. Eboutou (2018) stated that no proper trainings were conducted to update the knowledge of these Social Studies teacher while still having low qualification and still adopt the typical style to teach the students without understanding the new concepts, facts or generalization in line with the current trends and disturbances in the contemporary society and also forgetting the fact that Social Studies plays a very vital role in the development of critical and national thinking ability of the citizens for practical social life, promoting of political literacy and encouraging democratic values and principles in tackling dynamic problems in the society.

The recruitment of new Social Studies teachers should be those who can manage the process of teaching and learning of Social Studies in schools effectively which will also be a reflection in their behaviours and it will enable citizens to develop positive attitudes towards other people and towards citizenship, and also to contribute their best towards the welfare of the society and nation building. What goes on in Social Studies classroom depends on the quality of the teacher, their number and devotion to the success of educational system. This paper therefore, emphasizes that the new Social Studies teacher should guide the students to inculcate the right type of virtue through united and interdisciplinary study

of man and also to instill in students or pupils the ideas, knowledge skills attitudes and actions as a dynamic body of knowledge in a discipline which deals with man and his interaction with his physical and social environment through the use of innovated methods and strategies that enhances better understanding and motivation of Social Studies lesson.

### **Conceptualizing the Social Studies Teacher**

The word “teacher” crudely connotes undifferentiated meaning to the extent that any individual that transmits ideas of whatever nature that cause a change or influence the behavioural pattern of the recipient is called a “teacher”. There is an erroneous believe that anybody who acquired or attained a higher educational qualification, handle chalk, communicate with students in an organized classroom situation and also transcribed his words on the chalk board for students to copy is regarded as a teacher.

In a strict professional sense, Orstein (2015) sees a teacher as someone that must be professionally trained in a teachers’ training institution or faculty of education in the university, at the end of which he/she is certified to teach and is actually engaged in teaching. He was also of view that the quality of any education system depends on the quality of teachers. Quality in this respect refers to the step taken by higher education institutions responsible for producing teachers to make sure that they are able to perform their jobs or or render their services effectively. In other words, the steps they take to ensure that they produced quality teachers instead of the more traditional qualified teachers who just meet certain certification requirements. commenting on the quality of the present day teachers, one of the vice chancellor in a Nigerian universities stated that, the teacher of today is hardly a teacher because teachers are not as knowledgeable as they ought to be and that they cannot transmit knowledge as they ought to (Orstein, 2015).

Therefore, a professional Social Studies teacher is an educationist who underwent some pedagogical training in the department of education or faculty of education with the good knowledge of aim and objectives, content, methodology and

learning experience appropriate for teaching and learning of Social Studies. It is imperative to state that for any success to be recorded in Social Studies, the issue of teachers' professionalism and qualification must not be handled with levity hand. There is need to assess the characteristics of the new Social Studies teachers in terms of qualification, experience and teaching methodology in order to ensure quality of education given to the pupils. The Social Studies teachers should be in-serviced where gaps are identified to enable them to cope with the requirements of the dynamic school curriculum (Murunga, 2013).

### **Qualities Requirements of an Effective New Social Studies Teacher**

Teaching is such an important and noble profession, but there are some characteristics that can really help a new Social Studies teacher to be more effective in the teaching profession. These include:

**Adequate knowledge of Social Studies content:** A new Social Studies teachers' knowledge must cover all the themes and topics stipulated in the Social Studies curriculum issued by the appropriate curriculum authority.

**Adaptation of adequate methodology approach:** The new Social Studies teachers should have critical understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the various strategies that are most suitable for specific situations through innovations and global best practices in the methodologies of teaching, assessing and monitoring student performance in Social Studies.

**Embraces Change:** In life, things don't always go according to plan. This is particularly true when it comes to teaching of Social Studies. A new Social Studies teacher should be flexible and go with the flow when change occurs. An effective teacher does not complain about changes when a new principal arrives. Instead of stressing about change, embrace it with both hands and show that you are capable of hitting every curve ball that comes your way!

**Empathy:** As a new teacher, it's important to be able to empathize with what students are feeling, even if it may not seem like a big

deal. Children and youth need to have their emotions validated in order to understand and process them well. This is crucial in helping them become emotionally mature.

**Drive for self-improvement:** A new Social Studies teachers should be able to look at themselves objectively and see where they can improve. That can be in teaching methods, subject matter, or people-skills. The new teachers can review themselves and know where to place their attention, they can become even better. New teachers should also be willing to engage in lifelong learning, whether going back to school for advance degree, attending conferences to help them learn more about education, or reading books and articles about their field.

**Communication:** New Social Studies teachers need to be good communicators in other to meet the needs of their students. They can't effectively assess the needs of students if they can't communicate openly with them. Communication is key for new teachers to be successful in their profession.

**Enjoys Teaching:** Teaching is meant to be a very enjoyable and rewarding career field (although demanding and exhausting at times!). As a new teacher You cannot expect the students to have fun if you are not having fun with them! If you only read the instructions out of a textbook, it's ineffective. Instead, make your lessons come alive by making it as interactive and engaging as possible.

**Makes a Difference:** There is a saying, "With great power, comes great responsibility". As a new teacher, you need to be aware and remember the great responsibilities that comes with your profession. One of your goals ought to be: Make a difference in their lives. Make them feel special, safe and secure when they are in your classroom and be the positive influence in their lives.

**Gets Personal:** This is the fun part and absolutely important for being an effective Social Studies teacher! Get to know your students and their interests so that you can find ways to connect with them. Also, it is important to get to know their learning styles so that you can cater to each of them as an individual. You will be much happier

if you can find a strong support network in and outside of school.

**Stays Organized:** Never fall behind on the marking or filing of students' work. Try your best to be on top of it and not let the pile grow past your head! It will save you a lot of time in the long run. It is also important to keep an organized planner and plan ahead. Then, make a plan to put those ideas in action. Other qualities include: Having standards, finds inspiration creates reflection, adaptable, open-minded suspension of bias, teaching rather than instructing among others.

### **Role Requirements of a New Social Studies Teacher**

The 21st century classroom needs are very different from the 20th century ones. In the 21st century classroom, teachers are facilitators of student learning and creators of productive classroom environments, in which students can develop the skills they might need at present or in future. Therefore, the following are the expected roles of a new Social Studies teacher.

**The Organizer:** Perhaps the most difficult and important role the teacher has to play is organization of the learning process, methods and learning experience. The success of any teaching- learning activities depend on good organization of the teacher to guide the students in knowing exactly what they are ought to do next. Giving instructions is vital in this role as well as setting up activities.

**Prompter:** When the teacher assumes the role of a prompter, He/ she is giving complete ownership to the students. Teachers give the students a push when they are stuck or have confusion and doubts. In this role, the teachers prompt what the students should be doing and kind of take them through the process.

**A delegator:** As the name suggests is someone who delegates responsibilities and just overviews the overall functioning of the classroom. They are neither highly involved nor show less involvement. They give the students ownership and are mostly seen when learning occurs through group activities and classroom discussions.

**The Tutor:** The teacher acts as a coach when students are involved in project work or self-study. The teacher provides advice and guidance and helps students clarify ideas and limit tasks.

**The Resource:** The teacher is a kind of walking resource center ready to offer help if needed, or provide learners with whatever resources they lack when performing academic activities. The teacher must make her/himself available so that learners can consult her/him when (and only when) it is absolutely necessary.

**The Assessor:** The teacher assumes this role to see how well students are performing or how well they performed. Feedback and correction are organized and carried out by the teacher. It is important to understand that most teachers assume a mix of all the roles or one or more above mentioned roles. No teacher falls into just one category. They might assume two different roles at the same time.

### **Appropriate Teaching Methodology required of a New Teacher in Social Studies Classroom**

To be able to achieve the objectives of teaching and learning of Social Studies in Nigerian society or schools, the new Social Studies teacher must discard the traditional methods of instructions and adopt the modern trends in teaching which are learners-centric in nature. These new approaches require active participation of the learners in the teaching and learning processes such as inquiry and expository methods that are functional and effective to facilitate the development of desirable knowledge, attitudes, values, competence and skills for whole growth of the individual as well as the development of the nation.

**Inquiry Method of Teaching Social Studies:** This according to Meziebi, Fubara and Meziebi (2008) is a problem-solving method. It is the search-oriented techniques of problem solving in which the teacher motivates the students to draw on their past experienced and knowledge, in and outside their environment, to find solutions to problems entered in the society. The inquiry techniques of teaching-learning Social Studies gives a new insight into the causes of the problems and ginger creative thinking geared towards



problems resolution. The inquiry process according to meziebi (2008) involves probing, findings out, investigation, analyzing, discovering, evaluating, questioning, thinking, searching, exploring, experimenting, collecting (with the view of acquiring) updating or validating knowledge and information in Social Studies. However, Ogunsanya (1984) in Utulu (2010) outline steps involved in inquiry process to include; Identification, collection, collection of information or data on the problem, analysis of information or data collected, riving at a solution to the problem from the analysis and using the answer or solutions to make generation.

**Expository Method of Teaching Social Studies:** These methods of teaching Social Studies have been misconceived to the age-long traditional style of teaching where knowledge or information is presented, conveyed, imparted or transferred to the learners by the teacher who dominated teaching-learning process, while the learners passively listen to the teacher as a tank of knowledge and have no right to challenges his authority. However, Fubara and meziebi (2008) Viewed the expository method of teaching Social Studies as a two- way knowledge or among learners in a Democratic learning environment in which the child or learners are actively involved in the teaching and learning process, participating in different learning activities team discussion, dramatization, project work, field trip, simulation games and working individually or in group to achieved a common goal.

Indeed, both the inquiry and expository methods of teaching Social Studies at different levels of learning will help the new teachers to move away from the confined four-walled classroom environment into the real-world life situations, where the students are exposed to the physical challenges of their environment and how to solve their problems using the exposure received from the environment.

### **The Advantages of using the Inquiry and Expository Methods of Teaching Social Studies by a New Social Studies Teachers**

The advantages of using the inquiry and expository methods of teaching by a new Social Studies teacher cannot be overemphasized: Effective application and utilization of inquiry and expository methods of teaching and learning of Social Studies will immensely help in developing values in students such as liberty, justice, quality, uprightness, faithfulness and tolerance which are all essential prerequisite for effective citizenship. Using learners-centric methods of teaching and learning of Social Studies such as inquiry and expository techniques will promote learner's civic competence, knowledge, skills and attitudes required for national development such as work ethics, dedication, honesty, national ideals, Democratic principles, decision making process and problem solving strategies.

Inquiry and expository methods of learning and teaching of Social Studies will re-oriented students who are citizens of the country to be useful to themselves and appreciate the cultural diversity of the country and work together in unity and harmony as one Nation. The new Social Studies teachers must bear in mind that training the students using appreciate methods of teaching and learning Social Studies will help them greatly to address issues that are inimical to national development like terrorism, Boko Haram, suicide bombing, pipe line vandalism, Headers- farmer's clashes, rape, among others. There is a general agreement that Social Studies is about the grooming of good citizens to reposition the young people so that they will possess the knowledge, skills and values necessary for active participation in societal activities.

### **Conclusion**

The professionalization of teaching Social Studies in Nigeria is not a mirage but a reality, due to numerous efforts Social Studies has been contributing to the development and growth of the nation. Therefore, it is required that the new Social Studies teachers who are just coming into the teaching line will possess the requisite attributes, adhered to their roles and adopt the appropriate methods

of teaching and learning Social Studies, they by exposing the students to the sociocultural realities, needs, problems and aspirations of the society. The new Social Studies teachers should also enable the students to understand and appreciate the realities of their socioeconomic and political experience, equipped them to solve their problems, face challenges squarely and also become effective citizens contributing their quota to the advancement and development of the nation.

### **Suggestions**

Since Social Studies was recognized in the National policy of education to be taught at primary school level and junior secondary school level (JSS I-III) and also to be taught up to tertiary level is a very good plan and it is a very great achievement but up till now the course was not recognized at Senior Secondary School (SSS) level. Therefore, what remains is to insert the subject into the Senior Secondary School level syllabus so that to be taught from primary to tertiary level of education. The government should look into the problem of general dissatisfaction with the teaching profession such as poor teacher education programme, poor salaries and allowances, poor public image of the profession, and the desire of most teachers to enter another type of work with attractive remunerations. Recruiting candidates of high potentials will make possible the production of effective and adaptive teachers.

Professional and newly practitioners of Social Studies in our schools should display willingness in the selection and use of expository and inquiry techniques in such a way as to inculcate the spirit of political culture, patriotism, National consciousness and National unity among students during classroom pedagogy. Professional and newly practitioners of Social Studies should also have exposed to students a variety of relevant activities during Social Studies programs and made them to display and think about the requisite attributes, skills and values needed to cope with the demands of these activities as required of citizens or prospective citizens.

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