
**ROLES OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN CITIZENSHIP TRAINING:
IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract

The focus of this paper is based on an urgent need for citizenship training in Nigeria on account that Nigerian citizens are expected to contribute their own quota to the development of the nation through a good spirit for national consciousness, love for the nation and its noble ideals. These social characteristics are expected to be inculcated in the citizens through Social Studies. Taking a look at Nigerian social and political life one needs to review the efficacy of Social Studies curriculum in achieving national objectives. The social ills in Nigerian society such as Boko Harams (insurgency), child trafficking, child labour, political thuggery, social maladjustment, kidnapping, corruption and corrupt practices and current spates of bombing in private and public places among others in the social life of Nigerians today are attested to the facts. To address these problems, the role of Social Studies for citizenship training cannot be over-emphasized. Also, more concentration should be made on citizenship training as an aspect of Social Studies. Hence, the paper found out that inadequate citizenship training remains the cause of social problems that bring back the pace of development of Nigeria; that adequate citizenship

training through Social Studies will enable the citizens to have knowledge of their fundamental human rights; rule of law and other ideals of democracy and respect same towards national development. The study recommended among others that Social Studies should be taught by qualified teachers (those that read it at NCE, degree, masters and doctoral levels) at all levels of the education system; the Federal Ministry of Education should make Social Studies a core subject at Senior Secondary School level and as an elective course at the tertiary level given its importance in citizenship training for national development.

Keywords: National consciousness, Boko haram, Child trafficking, Thuggery, Citizenship training.

Introduction

Social Studies in many countries of the world is a child of necessity. This may imply that the essence of introducing Social Studies in most countries' curriculum was to heal some social ills towards national development. Adewuya (2010) stated that the term Social Studies as a school subject in Nigeria was first used in 1958 by educators of the Ohio University Project which sought to introduce its teaching into Teachers' Colleges in the former Western Region of Nigeria. While in 1963, Aiyetoro Comprehensive High School experiment was the first attempt to develop Social Studies in Nigeria. Nwoji (2006) described Social Studies as a living subject in that it deals with the matters of the moment as a preparation for now and future. She further adds that it is a discipline that deals with social change, better future and problem solving. According to Ezegbe, Ikwumelu and Okeke (2012) they stated that Social Studies as a discipline that deals with social change and ensure that a meaningful interaction of the recipients with their physical and social environments is attained. This is to enable the nation attain national development.

National development may be seen as advancement in political, economic and socio-cultural lives of the people of a country or state/

nation as a result of advancement in science and technology. This definition is in line with the view of Ogbe (2011) who described national development as: increased capacity, greater effectiveness and efficiency, improved technology, knowledge, initiative and disposition which people in a particular country have acquired overtime. National development involves increase and improvement in social and economic of a country.

To actualize the dream of national development, citizens ought to be made to be aware of their rights, privileges, duties and responsibilities as well as their contributions to enable the state progress. Social Studies education is a subject used for preparing for mobilizing young learners in schools for the purpose of helping them cultivate an awareness and understanding that would transform them into better citizens with skills, competencies, moral values and reasoned judgements to effectively live, interact, interrelate and contribute positively to economic, social, political and socio-cultural development of the nation (Ezegbe, Eskay, Anyanwu & Abiogu, 2014).

Social Studies was introduced by different nations of the world, to help give citizens the right kind of orientation they may need towards national development. However, it appears that in Nigeria today despite the existence of Social Studies in the school system, the values of Nigerians are degenerating, traditional institutions are dying down, Nigerians engage in all sorts of intolerance manifested in ethnic chauvinism, Boko Harams violence, ritual killings, militancy, kidnapping, election rigging, thuggery, child trafficking, terrorism and some others. This paper therefore examined the problems of this study put in question forms as: What role as Social Studies education play in citizenship training? What are the effects of citizenship training for national development? To ensure proper delineation of the subject matter, the topic is divided into the following sub-headings: conceptual framework, role of Social Studies in citizenship training, effects of citizenship training for national development, conclusion and recommendations

Conceptual Clarifications

The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in Babatunde (2012) described Social Studies as the totality of experiences a student goes through having been exposed to such a course based on man's interminable problems in chosen environments with full knowledge of the variable factors such as historical, religious, economic, psychological, cultural, scientific and technological that are normally responsible in man's web of interactions that aid environment.

Hence, the role of Social Studies in citizenship training for national development cannot be underestimated. Citizenship can be seen as a position or status of being a citizen with all the rights associated with it (Ukegbu, Mezieobi, Ajileye, Abdulrahman and Anyaocha, 2009). It is a concept used to ascertain the status of individual who possesses full political and legal rights in a state and his contribution to national development (Ngbendim, Okeke and Njoku, n.d). Oyovbaire, Ogunna, Amucheazi, Coker & Oshuntuyi (1991) in Ezegbe, Eskay, Anyanwu and Abiogu, (2014) they opined that citizenship as the special status which is accorded to citizens by the state. Citizenship is the benefits associated with being a legal and political member of the society which may better be enjoyed by effective and efficient citizens. Citizens are the political, economic and social members of the society or state (Oyovbaire, 1991 in Ezegbe, Eskay, Anyanwu & Abiogu 2014).

Dubey and Barth (1980) in Ezegbe, Eskay, Anyanwu and Abiogu (2014), asserted that the general objectives of Social Studies may include development of good citizenship; upliftment of moral character and promotion of social understanding in the society; promotion of national unity and economic development; preparing students for the world of work and understanding of everyday problems that they may face as adults; development of critical thinking, problem-solving and decision making for the survival and progress of the nation and enhancing socialization and acculturation of citizens in the society. Okam (2011) opined that the main goal of Social Studies education is to generate and develop intelligent, responsible and self-directing citizens who are expected to explore

opportunities to develop their potentials and as well contribute their own quota to the improvement of group living within a social milieu.

Giving reasons for the failure of Social Studies in citizenship training, Permit, Blackmore and Cookey in Okam (2006) argued that the failure of Social Studies to make any reasonable headway amongst learners in terms of transforming them into good citizens is because the subject has not meaningfully received the co-operation of other agents of political socialization like the family in achieving the identified purpose.

Ikwumelu (1994) in Ezegbe, Eskay, Anyanwu and Abiogu (2014) described citizenship education is the type of education that transforms a person into a citizen. The implication of this is that citizenship training inculcates in a citizen right kind of values orientation towards contributing to national development. It aims at inculcating through practical exercises such qualities as public-spiritedness, voluntary service, sense of fair play, honesty, and respect for opposing opinions and views, self-sacrifice for good of others (Ibezim, 2001).

However, Babatunde (2013) added that the main focus of Social Studies education is transformation of the citizens for national transformation. It is an instrument of positive change in terms of knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills required to be responsible members of the societies as equipment for social unity (Utulu and Shaibu, 2011). However, according to Etta (2004) people all over the world have suffered from the mentality of thinking of what their countries can do for them, rather than what they can do for their country. This negative expectation tends to have led to irresponsibility on the parts of citizens towards their societies, resulting in a situation where many took their citizenship only as an opportunity to survive and to make ends meet, instead of an opportunity to make a difference (Jarimi & Danladi, 2013). To make a difference in nation life, the citizens' competences, potentialities, experiences, productivity, creativity and manifestations should be enhanced. Consequently, if the nature of Social Studies is well-articulated; it could enhance citizenship training towards national development.

Role of Social Studies in Citizenship Training

Social Studies could be a veritable tool for Citizenship training towards national development, through the followings: Social Studies inculcate in Nigerian citizens the spirits of patriotism, unity in diversity, respect for fundamental human rights, respect to democratic values, self-reliance and other values; Social Studies Education would help give moral re-armament and rejuvenation the society where there will be fairness, equality, and unity for national development; Social Studies Education could enhance Citizenship Education through respect for rule of law, dignity of labour; hard work and dedication to duty as elements of good citizenship for national transformation; and Social Studies Education the idea is that Nigerian schools should not only train individual to be just and competent individuals, but to function as contributing and participatory members of a free constitutional democratic nation (Abdullahi, 2007).

Moreover, the awareness of the rights and obligations of citizens to the government and society reciprocal government responsibility to her citizenry through the followings: make Social Studies could help in preparing Nigerian citizens to be creative, productive and responsive to national development projects or programmes this could also prepares future leaders and followers that will have interest of the masses and the nation at heart in their local and global pursuits. Social Studies helps in social reconstruction of the citizens for national development through: the dynamic nature of Social Studies lies fundamentally in its utilitarian values for social reconstruction (Tijani, Abdulgaffar & Musa, 2013). Social Studies Education inculcates good values to the citizens. It was noted that in area of patriotism in a concept of Social Studies education and as well as the values that Nigerians advocated for are; Citizens' love for their country is an important part of citizenship training which Social Studies education transmits on the young ones. This very patriotism made by Nigerian patriots like Dr. Nnamdi Aizkiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Sarduna of Sokoto (Ahmadu Bello) and Herbert Macaulay among others that fought for Nigeria's Independence. Social Studies education could help reduce the

incidence of corruption and corrupt practices to the barest minimum;

Social Studies education could influence the attitudes of the young (citizens through early inculcation of good values system in their early in life to enhance the spirit of nation building (Onifade, 2006). This implied that when the citizens are exposed early to Social Studies education, they would imbibe positive values that would reduce corruption tendencies in their manifestations. Furthermore, Social Studies Education can help to tackle several social vices and malaise that are pulling down the hand of development in Nigeria which are corruption, indiscipline, dishonesty, prostitution, armed robbery, pen robbery, and child trafficking and electoral frauds among others (Osakwe, 2012).

Implications of Citizenship Training for National Development

According to Ezegbe, Eskay, and Anyanwu (2014), they opined that citizenship training may enhance national development. This is because if citizens are developed through citizenship training, they could contribute to national development. Such citizenship training through Social Studies education could be beneficial in the following ways: If citizens are made to respect democratic values like free and fair election(s), one man one vote, hatred for election rigging, respect for fundamental human rights and respect for the rule of law, the society will be peaceful and crises-free to a high extent and this could lead to national development. Understanding the principle of oneness and indivisibility and indissolubility of Nigeria through unity in diversity value as preached by Social Studies education could enhance national development.

Effective citizenship training through Social Studies education could make Nigerian citizens to imbibe the core values of honesty, justice, accountability, cooperation and patriotism. Effective citizenship training through the Social Studies education such as love for the nation and its noble ideals would help the citizens learn to be defending the nation within and outside its boundaries for a better image of the country which will enhance national development.

Conclusion

The role of Social Studies in citizenship training cannot be neglected. The reason for this contention is that Social Studies as an integrated Social Science was designed towards citizenship moulding for a better society. If citizens are trained on the values norms, aspirations and traditions of the society including the understanding of the environment (social and physical) and how they can be positively manipulated, they are bound to make impact in their lives and the lives of the society members. This suggests that when students are taught their fundamental human rights, democracy and its principles, rule of law and its practical application and they learn and abide by them, there will be peace in the society. Peace on the other hand brings about national development. Hence, Social Studies education helps to enhance national development.

Way Forward

From the findings of this study the following recommendations are made; Social Studies should be taught by qualified teachers (those that read it at NCE, First Degree, Master Degree and Doctoral levels) of the education system. When qualified teachers teach Social Studies at all levels of the education system, effective citizenship training may be guaranteed and the nation will develop. Social Studies should be made a core subject at senior secondary school level and elective at institutions of higher learning given its importance in citizenship moulding for national development. When this is done, the vices and or social malaise in Nigerian society would be reduced to its barest minimum.

Students should try and practice the values they are exposed to through Social Studies education to ensure sound citizenship manifestations among them in the society. Students should inculcate among themselves the knowledge, skills and awareness of the rights of minority and majority groups to co-exist and worship freely. They should respect the law and order; and respect the public and private property of Nigerians and non-Nigerians.

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