

**INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION ON  
ACTUALIZATION OF NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL GOALS  
AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN NIGERIAN  
UNIVERSITIES**

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**Abstract**

*This study examined the influence of Social Studies instruction on actualization of Nigerian educational objectives among undergraduates in Universities. The objectives of the study was to examine the adequacy of Social Studies objectives at graduate level, awareness of Nigerian educational objectives through social studies instruction, relevance of Social Studies objectives to Nigerian educational objectives and influence of Social Studies instruction on actualization of Nigerian educational objectives. Social Studies undergraduates in universities in the state was the study population. A descriptive survey design was employed. The study adopted a descriptive survey design, 250 Social Studies undergraduates were sampled through purposive sampling technique. The researcher's designed questionnaire titled Social Studies Instruction and Actualization of Nigerian Educational Goals Questionnaire [SSIANEGQ] was used for data collection. Construct validity of the instrument with a reliability coefficient of*

*0.83 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation was obtained. In the study, findings showed that Social Studies adequately cultivated in undergraduates' social skills for the survival of the individuals, capacity for acquiring certain basic skills essential for sound judgment and relevant body of knowledge and information necessary for personal development and contributions to the betterment of mankind and actualization of Nigerian educational goals. The findings also showed that Social Studies undergraduates were aware of Nigerian educational goals. Findings revealed that objectives of Social Studies are essential to Nigerian educational goals and Social Studies influenced the actualization of Nigerian educational goals especially among undergraduates. Based on the findings, it was therefore recommended that Social Studies should be made a compulsory subject to be taught at all levels of educational system for effective attainment of educational goals and the teacher-trainees should internalize the contents of Social Studies so as to interpret its contents and encourage its learning experiences.*

**Keywords:** Social Studies instruction, Actualization, Nigerian educational objectives, Undergraduates.

### **Introduction**

Social Studies instruction plays a crucial role in promoting citizenship education among Nigerian undergraduates. It provides students with information, knowledge about right values, skills, attitudes that make them responsible as well as appreciate the importance of active participation in civic affairs. Citizenship education is integral to the development of informed and responsible citizens who will have positive impact on the socio-political development of Nigeria. It helps undergraduates develop an understanding and appreciation of Nigeria's diverse cultures and history. By incorporating value systems of Nigeria into the curriculum, Social Studies instruction contributes to the preservation of cultural values and the promotion of a strong national identity among students.

Students when adequately trained in the societal norms and values contribute to effective future development and advancement of the society, and education is the only indispensable tool for training learners on the societal norms and values. Education is seen as the corner stone for individual and societal development. Through education, right attitude and values are transmitted to young ones. It also helps to reduce social problems which affect the value system and enhance attainment of the educational goals. The teaching of right sorts of qualities and frames of mind for the endurance of the individual and the Nigerian culture are extensively addressed in Social Studies (Mezieobi, 2013). With all these targetable roles of education, Nigeria is still currently facing several socio-economic and political problems which range from rural-urban migration, environmental pollution, deforestation, collapse infrastructure of social amenities, insecurity, acute poverty and cybercrime among others. Nigerians are indeed living a state of utter apprehension characterized by insecurity of lives and properties. The country is thus facing the challenge of how to overcome these persistent problems of which no meaningful development can take place where these problems persist (Kolawole, 2011). The curriculum of Social Studies often emphasizes the importance of social and moral values. Through instruction in Social Studies, undergraduates learn about ethical decision-making, empathy, and social responsibility. This not only contributes to their personal development but also aligns with the broader goal of instilling moral values in the educational system. It encourages undergraduates to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The curriculum often involves analyzing real-world issues, discussing societal problems, and proposing solutions. These skills are essential for students to actively engage in addressing the challenges faced by Nigeria in various domains.

Mike (2019) refers to Social Studies instructions do not merely have students repeat information that they have heard or read, rather, it engages them in thinking about ideals, concepts, people, places, events and facts. This indicates that the goal of Social Studies purely revolves around citizenship education, education for national

integration, nation building and sustainable living. Social Studies as a discipline which attempts to modify or change the learners' behaviours in the directions of acceptable values and attitudes through a process of studying human relationship with his or her environments and with the desire to provide solutions to various complementing problems in order to ensure his or her survival (Lawal, 2003). Social Studies education can enhance undergraduates' understanding of economic principles, fostering economic literacy and entrepreneurial awareness. This aligns with the goal of equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed to contribute to economic development and sustainability in Nigeria. While Social Studies instruction has the potential to contribute significantly to the actualization of educational goals, challenges such as inadequate resources, outdated curriculum, and the need for teacher training may hinder its effectiveness. Addressing these challenges and exploring opportunities for curriculum improvement are essential for maximizing the impact of Social Studies on undergraduates.

Anders (2010) stated that teaching and learning of Social Studies help individuals to cultivate the ability to cope with environment and produce citizens who are loyal, obedient, honest, hardworking, dedicated, committed and painstaking. These virtues are essential in making citizens capable of contributing to the building of a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society, a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens. These are the foundation of the content of Social Studies and are in line with Nigerian goals and aspirations on education for national development (Osalusi, 2010). Nigeria, therefore, recognizes education as the greatest force to be used to foster the much needed unity of the country and correct the imbalance in inter and intra-state development. However, the quality of instruction in Social Studies classes at all levels had to be oriented towards cultivating values of respect for the worth and dignity of individuals; faith in a human's ability to make rational decisions; moral and spiritual values in interpersonal and human relations; shared responsibility for the

common good of society; respect for the dignity of labour; and promotion of the emotional, physical and psychological health of all children.

The quest for actualization of the national goals of education led to the introduction of some school subjects and curricular offerings in Nigerian education system among which was Social Studies education program. Social Studies is widely recognized as one of the subjects introduced to the curriculum to promote effective citizenship education as designed in the national educational philosophy. Social Studies is a field of study which is outfitted towards the advancement of education of individuals. It fosters adequate opportunities of sustaining and preserving various sort of values in the life of learners, for instance, self-discipline, better human interaction, national consciousness, unity and solidarity, social justice, political education, logical, moral and academic adjustment among others (Osakwe, 2012).

The focal centered of this incredible subject is on the advancement of human knowledge, personal capability, environmental interaction, reconciliation of information, aptitudes and attitude in settling cultural issues, global issues and difficulties of the general public, social problems as well as personality development. It is imperative to investigate the circumstance of internalization of content of Social Studies that can promote value system, help citizens to appreciate cultural heritages, prevent harmful traditional practices and promote national consciousness and unity. Therefore, it is not only significant to an individual but also to the whole society because it provides societal awareness and understanding, promotes political education and develops in students loyalty and responsibility to the nation, it also cultivate civic obligations and values in the life of the students, builds in individuals the spirit of social justice and solidarity as well as national consciousness and patriotism etc. (NPE, 2014).

All these important social issues are the target of Social Studies. it also enables the citizens to appreciate the social standards and qualities which the general public values and maintains in every society. This may lead them to identify contrast between their own

culture and that of others. Again, it will encourage citizens to have a greater love to their nations by sacrificing their personal interests in favour of their nation, avoid unlawful activities, uphold the supremacy of rule of law, payment of taxes, showing of commitment towards social justice, appreciation of moral values, cultivating a sense of right judgment towards others. The contents of social Studies at undergraduate level cultivate in Students willingness to develop national consciousness and patriotism habit for nation building, given due respect to the constituted authority and development of cultural heritage (Samalia & Murtala, 2010).

Social Studies has been conceived as a potent course for the actualisation of the Nigerian educational goals. It is due to this fact that it is given pride in the National Policy on Education. However, the society is facing series of social problems and national challenges affect the growth and development of every sectors in Nigeria. In spite of the support system given to the education of university undergraduates by the government and others stakeholders, majority of the students either do not or partially attain the goals and objectives of tertiary education. This can be deduced from the increasing concern of the general public on quality and standard of our educational system that has resulted to the devastated system and inability to internalize the content of Social Studies into their daily activities in the society.

This poor attainment of the educational goals could be attributed to feeble instruction which hinder learning of Social Studies. Many undergraduates are found engaging in one or more social problems which have adversely effect on the Nigerian value system. In order to enhance undergraduates' internalization of Social Studies content and also for effective learning of Social Studies which will bring about great development in nation at large, deliberate efforts have to put in place by the stakeholders with the acquisition and utilization of appropriate Social Studies instruction for actualization of Nigerian educational goals.

Ajitoni and Olubela (2010) researched on Social Studies instruction and found that Social Studies aimed at training the students on responsibilities in meeting the needs of the society now

and in the future. A study conducted by Oyeleke (2011) asserted that fosters acquisition of knowledge, skills, right types of values and attitudes necessary for making rational decision in environment and stimulate in them such behaviours and skills that promote sustainable development of the natural environment. Ogunsanya, Ajiboye and Olubela (2010) discovered that Social Studies has the capacity to change students more from individual beings into social beings. It further explains the transformative roles of Social Studies education through its holistic approaches of integrating acceptable social norms, values, attitudes and skills in the learners.

Furthermore, most of the studies found that Social sciences facilitate actualization of Nigerian educational goals likewise in humanity courses such as Civic Education, Economics, Sociology, Social Work, History, Religious Education and Counsellor Education. However, these studies were not only carried out in Social Studies but also not conducted in university level of education and as such this study, therefore, investigated influence of Social Studies instructions on actualization of Nigerian educational goals among undergraduates in universities.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to examine the influence of Social Studies instruction on actualization of Nigerian educational goals among undergraduates in universities. Specifically, the study investigated the:

- (a) adequacy of Social Studies objectives at graduate level.
- (b) awareness of Nigerian educational goals through Social Studies instruction.
- (c) relevance of Social Studies objectives to Nigerian educational goals.
- (d) influence of Social Studies instruction on actualization of Nigerian educational goals among undergraduates.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. How adequate is Social Studies objectives at graduate level?
2. What is the level of awareness of Nigerian educational goals through Social Studies instruction?
3. How relevant is Social Studies objectives to actualise Nigerian educational goals?
4. What are the influence of Social Studies instructions on actualization of Nigerian educational goals among undergraduates?

### **Methods**

Descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. The study population was all undergraduates in Faculties of Education in universities in Kwara State. There are eight universities in the state. The study covered all 300 and 400 Level students studied Social Studies programme in Faculty of Education in the universities where the programme exists as target population. Four out of eight universities offer Social Studies as one of programmes of study. The population consisted of 1,537 Social Studies undergraduates in the year 2022/2023 academic session in the universities. Sample of 250 Social Studies undergraduates was drawn as respondents using a simple random sampling technique.

A structured questionnaire was employed to collect data from Social Studies undergraduates. The questionnaire titled “Social Studies Instructions on Actualization of Nigerian Educational Goals Questionnaire (SSIANEGQ)”. Construct validity of the instrument was determined by giving the questionnaire to three experts in the field of test construction, evaluation and measurement who went through it and made relevant corrections, modifications and suggestions which were incorporated in the final version before the administering of the questionnaire for the research study. To determine the reliability of the instrument test-re-test was adopted, the reliability coefficient was determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient by correlating the two results that was obtained and the coefficient index was 0.83 which was considered appropriate for the study.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** How adequate is Social Studies objectives at graduate level?

**Table 1:** Percentage of the Adequacy of Social Studies Objectives at Graduate Level

S/N	Social Studies Objectives at Graduate Level	Adequate (%)	Fair Adequate (%)	Not Adequate (%)
1.	To be teacher trainers, methodologists, and curriculum developers, inspectors within teachers' colleges, curriculum resource centres and ministries of education.	140 (56.0)	110 (44.0)	0 (0.0)
2.	To be subject specialists at the secondary and teachers' colleges levels.	147 (58.8)	103 (41.2)	0 (0.0)
3.	Outstanding graduates will become future lecturers in colleges, faculties and institutes of education.	152 (60.8)	97 (38.8)	1 (0.4)
4.	To be conscientious and active in helping to mould Nigerian citizens.	158 (63.2)	92 (36.8)	0 (0.0)
5.	To analyze, evaluate and articulate useful social criticism to take a leadership role in examining important social problems.	154 (61.6)	95 (38.0)	1 (0.4)

Results shown on Table 1 indicate that all items that showed the adequacy of Social Studies objectives at graduate level, items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are adequate for actualization of Nigerian educational goals as their percentages are above fifty percent. This indicates that Social Studies cultivates in undergraduates social skills for the survival of the individuals and Nigerian society. It develops the

capacity for acquiring certain basic skills essential for sound judgment concerning social, economic and political issues. and It teaches undergraduates a relevant body of knowledge and information necessary for personal development and contributions to the betterment of mankind and actualization of Nigerian educational goals.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of awareness of Nigerian educational goals through Social Studies instruction?

**Table 2:** Percentage of the Level of Awareness of Nigerian Educational Goals through Social Studies Instruction

S/N	Awareness of Nigerian Educational Goals through Social Studies Instruction	Aware (%)	Fair Aware (%)	Not Aware (%)
1.	a free and democratic society	141 (56.4)	106 (42.4)	3 (1.2)
2.	a just and egalitarian society	149 (59.6)	95 (38.0)	6 (2.4)
3.	a united, strong and self-reliant nation	146 (58.4)	101 (40.4)	3 (1.2)
4.	a great and dynamic economy	146 (58.4)	100 (40.0)	4 (1.6)
5.	a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens	149 (59.6)	96 (38.4)	5 (2.0)

Results shown on Table 2 indicate that all items that showed the level of awareness of Nigerian educational goals via Social Studies instruction, items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are aware for actualization of Nigerian educational goals as their percentages are above fifty percent. This indicates that Social Studies undergraduates are aware of free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a united, strong and self-reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

**Research Question 3:** How relevant is Social Studies objectives to Nigerian educational goals?

**Table 3:** Percentage of the Relevance of Social Studies Objectives to Nigerian Educational Goals

S/N	Relevance of Social Studies Objectives to Nigeria Educational Objectives	Very Relevant (%)	Fair Relevant (%)	Not Relevant (%)
1.	Equipping students with adequate information and experiences to live effectively in modern age of science and technology	153 (61.2)	95 (38.0)	2 (0.8)
2.	Developing and projecting Nigeria culture, art and language as well as the World's cultural heritage	145 (58.0)	102 (40.8)	3 (1.2)
3.	Raising a generation who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour and appreciate those values specified under our broad national objectives	132 (52.8)	111 (44.4)	7 (2.8)
4.	Fostering the national unity and integration	149 (59.6)	98 (39.2)	3 (1.2)
5.	Promoting socio-civic responsibilities in students	143 (57.2)	102 (40.8)	5 (2.0)

Table 3 shows the relevance of Social Studies objectives to Nigerian educational goals. Items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are very relevant Social Studies objectives to Nigerian educational goals as their percentages are above fifty percent. Therefore, the very relevant Social Studies objectives are essential to Nigerian educational goals.

**Research Question 4:** What are the influence of Social Studies instruction on actualization of Nigerian educational goals among undergraduates?

**Table 4:** Mean, Standard Deviation and Rank Order of the Influence of Social Studies Instruction on Actualization of Nigerian Educational Goals among Undergraduates

S/N	Influence of Social Studies instruction on Actualization of Nigeria Educational Goals	Mean	SD	Rank
1.	Social Studies develop an understanding of the society, physical, economic, scientific and technological environment	3.17	0.88	5th
2.	It creates an awareness and appreciation of our cultural heritage, belief, values and skills, for role in the society and to enable them apply such knowledge to new situation	3.25	0.92	3rd
3.	It develops the ability to examine one's own beliefs, values and behavior and relationship among social groups	3.34	0.83	1st
4.	It develops in students self-reliance and democratic values of living among people in society	3.21	0.82	4th
5.	It sensitizes students about social problems and how they can be prevented.	3.30	0.86	2nd

Table 4 shows the influence of Social Studies on actualization of Nigerian educational goals among undergraduates. Items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are the paramount influence of Social Studies on actualization of Nigerian educational goals as their means are 3.00 and above. Therefore, this implies that Social Studies influence the actualization of Nigerian educational goals among undergraduates.

**Discussions**

The study discovered that the Social Studies objectives at graduate level identified in this study were very adequate for actualization of Nigerian educational goals. This is consistent with the findings of Nnamani and Oyibe (2016) that the role of Social Studies in engineering sustainable national development is really a primordial and was highly appreciated in the insights and critical thinking skills gained in Social Studies to fight poverty and homelessness, crime and discrimination, and to make our nation fairer and freer. The fixation observed in the finding of this study and that of Nnamani

and Oyibe (2016) might be due to similarities in the population.

The study revealed that undergraduates are very aware of Nigerian educational goals through Social Studies instruction. This is in line with the findings of Mbaba and Omabe (2012) that the teaching and learning of Social Studies is to cultivate in every learner the national aims of education purposely to ensure that knowledge gained in Social Studies cherished careers is to promote self-efficiency for personal and national development. Ogunsanya, Ajiboye and Olubela (2010) also noted that Social Studies has the capacity to transform learners more from individual beings into social beings.

In this study, it was revealed that there was relevance of Social Studies objectives to Nigerian educational goals. The finding is in support of findings of Mezieobi (2013) who reported that Social Studies play vital roles in the cultivation of national consciousness and unity in students as necessary elements for nation building, the development of social values and skills for active social life, the cultivation of intellectual skills, knowledge and abilities for better interaction in the immediate and remote environment, rational thinking capabilities for practical social life, recognizing and solving problems using inquiry techniques and promoting value awareness, Societal sensitization and utilization of some skills in tackling social problems in the society. The stabilization observed in the result of this study and that of Mezieobi (2013) might be due to similarities in the discipline studied.

The findings discovered that Social Studies instruction has influence on actualization of Nigerian educational goals. This finding is in support of finding of Ajitoni and Olubela (2010) who discovered that instruction in Social Studies was aimed at cultivating in the learners of today right values and skills for their responsibilities in meeting the needs of the society in the future.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that Social Studies objectives at graduate level identified in this study were very adequate for actualization of Nigerian educational goals and undergraduates were aware of the goals. Social Studies instruction

in Nigerian universities has the potential to positively influence the actualization of educational goals by promoting citizenship education, preserving cultural identity, instilling values, fostering critical thinking, and enhancing economic awareness among undergraduates. Further research and continuous improvement in curriculum design and implementation can contribute to the overall effectiveness of Social Studies instruction in achieving educational goals.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Social Studies should be made a compulsory subject to be taught at all levels of education in Nigeria for effective attainment of educational goals. Social studies teacher-trainees should internalize the contents of Social Studies so as to reflect its learning experiences in their behaviours in the larger society. Workshops, seminars and conferences should be organized for Social Studies teacher-trainees on regular basis to discuss issues and prospect that affect national development.

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