
ANALYSIS OF VALUES EDUCATION COMPONENT OF
SOCIAL STUDIES AND CIVIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM
OF BASIC 6 TO 9 (JSS 1 - 3)

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Abstract

This paper reviewed both the old and revised Nigeria's Basic 6 to 9 Curriculum to examine its Values Education component. The structure of the 9 Year Basic Curriculum was first reviewed followed by the structure of the Revised 9 Year Basic Curriculum. It was observed that in the old Social Studies Curriculum there were a total of seven themes. In the Revised Curriculum where Social Studies and Civic Education are part of Religion and National Values (RNV), Social Studies and Civic Education Curriculum has a total of ten themes on Values Education, This shows that the themes are well infused in the curriculum but the problem is, the objectives of these subjects which are also the general objectives of Basic 6 to 9 according to the National Policy on Education document are not being achieved. The study, based on available data shows that the most likely reasons are that the right teachers are not teaching the subjects and some of the important resources are not available. The writer therefore recommends among other things that only trained Social Studies teachers that will be able to teach the contents well should be in the Social

Studies/Civic Education classrooms because when contents are not thought well, we get people that are not well informed and we re-direct history.

Keywords: Basic 6 to 9 Curriculum, Social Studies, Civic Education, Values Education, Review

Introduction

The world has undergone many transformations and still undergoing major transformations today. These major transformations are global and multidimensional, affecting the technological, economic, social, cultural and political aspects of human communities most especially those of developing nations like Nigeria. Education in the global and universal context is a critical instrument for social and economic transformation. The focal point of the education system all over the world is to develop a human capital that will be able to meet the present and future challenges of globalization and knowledge economy.

There are concerns in Nigeria whether schools are equipping students with the skills, they need to meet these challenges, in other words, becoming effective citizens. A high-quality values education that includes opportunities for students to engage in activities within the classroom that model what effective citizen processes look like, as well as opportunities to participate in the civic life of their communities and learn from such participation as a formal part of their coursework is highly needed to help this generation of learners.

Education has been and will continue to be a foundation upon which the potentials of members of a society are harnessed for self-fulfilment and social development. This is most likely why different nations have linked both their political ideologies and social investment programmes, and even their national population and economic policies to formal education systems. This is visible in the organization of both the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whereby education is characterized as a useful tool for economic, technological and socio-cultural development (Obioma 2012)

As society continues to emerge with its complications, education is constantly customized to suit the present and future needs of the people. Considering what constitutes an effective values education, its instruction should include a set of practices that together provide students with the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will equip them to participate in Nigeria's democracy.

For this reason, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) believes that Nigeria's economy could only be transformed and sustained through education that empowers the people. In line with this, since 2008 the country has witnessed two major curriculum reform initiatives at the Basic Education level. These are: 1). The 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) (September 2008- August 2014) and 2). The Revised 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum (September 2014 – Present).

Social Studies in Nigeria is supposed to help in the development of responsible citizens in a culturally diverse, democratic society like Nigeria living in an interdependent world. It is supposed to equip the learners with skills that will help them to be able to make sound judgments and take appropriate actions that will contribute to sustainable development of both the human society and the physical environment.

The Social Studies curriculum is designed to build varied competencies in young people, but most importantly according to National Council for Social Studies (2013) it instils in the learners, disciplinary knowledge; inquiry, interpersonal, and critical thinking skills; respect for the underlying values of a diverse democratic society; interest in public affairs and competencies of self-government. And that each capacity contributes uniquely to responsible citizenship.

Nigeria's Social Studies and Civic Education curriculum are designed to equip the learners with these important skills but it is observed that Nigeria is infested with dappled values. Cherished values in Nigerian society; cultural, social, economic, political, religious, education, family values etc are eroding at a very fast rate. It is Important to note that according to Noah (2003) in Okolo (2011) values are the building blocks of the society. Is it possible

that the curriculum content of these subjects does not have the required value education components that is supposed to instil in the learners the important and necessary skills that develops responsible citizens? Or are there others issues like quality of teachers and teaching resources etc. These among other are what this study tried to establish.

The 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC)

In September of 1998, the Federal Government of Nigeria decided to introduce the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, because of this the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) re-structured and readjusted the primary and Junior Secondary School (JSS) curricula into 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum for implementation in Nigerian schools with effect from September 2008. This Curriculum according to the NERDC document stresses value re-orientation, poverty eradication and employment generation capabilities among other things in learners. In the 9-year basic curriculum reform initiatives, science, technology, mathematics, and vocational education and training are particularly designed to provide the contents, learning experiences and skills for the socio-economic transformation of the Nigerian nation.

9-Year Basic Education Curriculum Structure

The structure of the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum was designed such that subjects students are supposed to take ranged between ten and sixteen from Primary I to JSS III and almost every subject was standing alone. Table one below shows the structure. For example, Social Studies, Civic Education, Basic Science, Basic Technology, Physical & Health Education, Computer Studies/ICT, Christian Religious Studies/Islamic Studies, Home Economics, Agricultural Science, and Business Studies were all separate and single subjects.

according to him because Nigeria needed a relevant, dynamic and globally competitive education that will enable learners at the Basic Education level to compete comfortably anywhere in the world. He went further to explain that, the 9-Year BEC addressed value re-orientation, poverty eradication, critical thinking, entrepreneurship and life skills among other things.

The implementation of the 9-Year BEC started nationwide, in Primary 1 and JSS 1 classes in September 2008, while the old curriculum (the 6-3-3-4 Curriculum) was gradually phased out. The first set of JSS students graduated in June 2011 while the set of pupils that gained from the use of BEC at the primary school level entered class one of the Junior Secondary School in September of 2014.

The Revised 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum

The school curriculum is dynamic and not static. It is an open document that is constantly changing to meet the needs, challenges and desires of the society. The feedback from the implementation of the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum and the concerns of the Federal Government on the contemporary global practices led the Nigerian government to revise the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum in 2012. This is also in line with global best practices as in other African Countries like in Kenya with seven subject, Tanzania eight subject, and other Asian countries like Malaysia and Indonesia with nine subject offerings each and United States of America with six subjects (Obioma, 2012).

The curriculum revision process according to Obioma (2012) involved labelling and arrangement of related disciplines such as Christian Religious Studies and Islamic Studies, Social Studies, Civic Education, and Security Education to create a new combination or cluster of Revised Basic Education Curriculum subject called Religion and National Values. Major concepts in the former curricula now form integrating threads for organizing the contents of the new subject into an integrated whole.

The philosophy of this revised 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum is that every learner who has gone through the 9 years of basic education should have acquired appropriate levels of

Values Education Components of Social Studies and Civic Education Curriculum of JSS 1 -3

The following among other things are observable from the revised Basic Education Curriculum; It paid particular attention to the teaching of reading. It is observed that the English Studies curriculum for Primaries 1-3 focused on the teaching of these reading skills: Concepts of Print, Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Comprehension and Vocabulary Acquisition.

The second one is the infusion of Drug Abuse Education, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, Climate Change, Consumer Education and important elements of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) into significant contents of the curriculum. The third observation is on teaching and learning focusing its emphasis on skill development, for example, creative thinking skills, entrepreneurial skills etc. Lastly, the orderly and analytic connection between Primary, Junior and Senior Secondary schools' curricula contents.

When we look at the objectives of Junior Secondary Education according to the National Policy on Education, we will observe the document focused on the relevance of Values Education to our society and the need to infuse it into the curriculum of this level of education. The four objectives of Junior secondary education according to the National Policy on Education document are;

- To provide the child with diverse basic knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship and educational advancement;
- To develop patriotic young people equipped to contribute to social development and the performance of their civic responsibilities
- Inculcate values and raise morally upright individuals capable of independent thinking and who appreciates the dignity of labour.
- Inspire national consciousness and harmonious coexistence irrespective of differences in endowment, religion, colour, ethnic and socio-economic background.

We can see that three of the four general objectives of Nigeria's Junior Secondary Education are also objectives of Social Studies and Civic education, emphasizing the importance of Values Education to our society.

In the old Social Studies curriculum of JS 1 -3 there were four themes in Values Education for JS 1, two themes for JS 2 and one theme for JS 3, making it a total of seven themes. In the revised curriculum where we have Social Studies and Civic education as part of Religion and National Values (RNV), Social Studies and Civic education curriculum has a total of ten themes on Values Education, Social Studies has five, JS 1 is three themes, JS2 is one theme and JS3 is also one theme. Civic education has five themes also; JS1 is three, JS2 is one and JS3 is one.

Values Education is included in compulsory courses in many countries around the world because values are one important, especially central component of our self and personality, distinct from attitudes, beliefs, norms, and traits. Values are critical motivators of behaviours and attitudes. Most importantly, our value priorities influence our behaviour and attitudes.

It is observable that Values Education themes are well infused in both the old and new Social Studies and Civic Education curriculum of Junior Secondary School. These themes are designed to achieve three out of the four objectives of Junior Secondary Education as stated in Nigeria's National Policy on Education, that are; to develop patriotic young people equipped to contribute to social development and the performance of their civic responsibilities, inculcate values and raise morally upright individuals capable of independent thinking and who appreciates the dignity of labour, inspire national consciousness and harmonious coexistence irrespective of differences in endowment, religion, colour, ethnic and socio-economic background.

Looking at the Nigeria's situation today, one will conclude that these objectives are yet to be achieved and this could be because of diverse reason. It is an obvious truth that every parent all over the world would want to have the assurance that all their children are being thought in a way to prepare them for college, future work and for a civic responsibility skills. For us to achieve

this, we need to make sure that the teachers that teach our children include the qualities of effective teaching in their professional lives. The bottom line is we need every teacher to be an effective teacher. Teaching effectiveness can be said to be the ability to help students achieve success. Solgado (2003) said that teaching is largely an occupation in which teachers operate both within their classroom and as a member of the larger school organization, something that has been recognized for teachers as a dual loyalty to both the school and students. He went further to say that teaching effectiveness is the degree to which one has facilitated student achievement of educational goals.

The current shift in research and thinking from the concept of a highly qualified teacher in the classrooms and the need for highly effective teachers in the classrooms is a welcomed development and the needed evolution in our understanding of improvements in the way teaching and learning should take place in our schools.

Teaching effectiveness is not a new topic in educational research even though recently there has been a focus on it due to much study and writings on the topic. Even when there are little differences in models and studies for teacher effectiveness but all of them agreed to that fact that the measure for teacher effectiveness is student learning. Effective teachers have the following characteristics; they have a deep understanding of the subject matter and the learning theories, they can reflect and are continuously developing themselves, they understand student differences and classroom instructional strategies among other things.

The measurement of teaching effectiveness according to Layne (2012) is based on two criteria. First is the selection of a good teaching method and second is the suitability of the teaching method with the personality. He went further to explain that in terms of selection of good teaching method that teachers need to focus on the best teaching method in their process of teaching and learning. Roberts, Luo, Briley, Chow, Su and Hill (2017) stated that it is important to select appropriate teaching methods because they determine the effectiveness and quality of the teaching. They

went further to say that teaching methods and instructional strategies used by teachers are the teachers' means and ways to help students clarify and understand the texts.

Way Forward

A teacher of Social Studies and Civic education in Nigerian schools especially those teaching Basics 6 to 9 must be qualified Social Studies teachers who are abreast of the innovations in teaching methods. In order to be effective, he or she has to be a source of information, and a guide, an organizer of opportunities for learning and a person who can stimulate any environment for effective learning using a variety of teaching modes available to Social Studies teachers. They must be emotionally stable and have indisputable moral standards as well as commitment to their jobs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Curriculum is right and the objectives are well spelt out but are yet to be achieved. The two questions we should ask and answer are; do we have the right teachers for these subjects and do we have the required resources to teach them. My answers to the above questions are no we do not have. Social Studies and Civic Education contents are delicate contents that must be handled with care because if we do not teach these topics well, we get people that are not well informed and we re-direct history. As there are school curriculum reforms from time to time, there is need also for reforms in pedagogical contexts at the pre-service teacher education level. These pedagogical reforms should also be infused into capacity building workshops designed for serving teachers.

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