
**EFFECTIVE VALUE REORIENTATION FOR NATION
BUILDING AMONGST NIGERIAN STUDENTS:
THE INDISPENSABLE ROLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES**

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Abstract

The whole world is facing a deteriorating value system which has been ascribed to reasons such as globalization, civilization, and technological development among others. Deteriorating value amongst students can be as a result of miseducation, peer influence, parental upbringing, and other environmental factors among others. All these have resulted in the striking and incessant scourge of immoral activities facing our society today. Cultism, robbery, rape, drug abuse, herders/farmers clash, insurgency, terrorism and host of others unpleasant activities disturbing our dear country. Negative value orientation or degeneration of positive values among school age has become very worrisome in Nigeria society because of its devastating implication for nation building in a heterogeneous society such as Nigeria. In line with these scourge of menace and social vices the study put forward two bothering questions to be answered which includes; to what extent is value reorientation necessary amongst Nigerian students in the Nigeria school system? And also in what way is Social Studies and qualified Social Studies teachers positioned for effective value reorientation for nation building in

Nigeria. The paper addressed the two issues by justifying the place of Social Studies in the school curriculum as a subject which is rightly positioned to instill in the learners/ students the needed values, attitude, skills, and knowledge essential for nation building. The paper concluded that Social Studies is virile for achieving value reorientation and Social Studies expert should be engaged in doing such.

Keywords: *Value, Value reorientation, Students, Social Studies, Nation building.*

Introduction

No nation is built in isolation, and nation building is a deliberate effort which requires a lot of conscious actions, and intentions. This means that nation building is not and cannot be a one man show, for any nation to achieve reasonable positive growth and development a lot of effort must be made in achieving such. The citizens particularly the youths/students must be properly groomed to be patriotic and also believe in building the nation. Grooming and nurturing of the young minds towards nation building entails the inculcation of proper values and morals which are key to nation building. It is a known fact that, Nigerian students and youths of today are faced with issues of values degeneration and immorality. This call for urgent need to address such issues which makes it pertinent to awake discussions of value reorientation via viable and sustainable curricula or instrument. Social Studies is multi-dimensional, multi-disciplinary, and a value laden discipline. It means that Social Studies as a subject can be a workable tool to achieve value reorientation amongst Nigerian students of today if properly used. Nigeria society is under heavy bombardment from immoral acts, religious intolerance, fanaticism, and other divisive tendencies. Students are not left out of these vices. Evidence from literature have revealed that immoral behaviours and actions amongst Nigeria students has become one too many. Issues of drug abuse, rape, cultism, examination malpractices, gross indiscipline, and disrespect for constituted authorities and laid down laws are on the rise as reported in dailies and educational institutions. All

these atrocities perpetrated by youths/students which are regarded as unethical and immoral acts can simply be associated to deteriorating values amongst the students. Value is relative as it concerns individual and society, however there are general values which are associated with all human societies. These include hardwork, integrity, teamwork, discipline, honesty, integrity, and tolerance among others.

Any developed society must have successfully instilled in the youths/citizens these general values. The word value reflects the importance, worth, desirability and the respect attached to certain things, relationships, issues in human society (Soykan, 2009). Take a case study of Japan, they have been able to prioritize relationships ahead of everything which makes the citizens value and treat each other in humane manner and do a lot as same team and same citizens before competition. This explains why Japan has been able to achieve so much in technology and development in the present world. They have not just achieved development but been able to take a top rank in league of developed nations globally. Most developing countries are ranked low or account for their high ranking on negative indices of underdevelopment. These indices are as result of negative values which guide actions and inactions of individual citizens. With reference to Nigeria it is a known fact that impunity, greed, corruption, and other societal vices are the clogs in the wheel of development in Nigeria. These issues leaves much to be desired and the rate at which values is fast deteriorating is indeed a thing of concern to the society. It is worrisome that solutions and recommendations proffered by several studies on positive value cultivation for nation building and development remain largely unimplemented. This explains why it is often said that Nigerians are wonderful policy writers and formulators the major problem is implementation. It is a known fact that implementation is a big challenge in Nigeria. Thus, it becomes pertinent for relevant stakeholders and concerned citizens in Nigeria to find a way of achieving effective value re-orientation for students/youths which Social Studies as a discipline becomes handy in this situation for positive value cultivation for nation building and development, hence, this study.

Conceptual Clarifications

Value means what is worthwhile and acceptable to either individual groups or society. It is what the society considers important and give to such the necessary attention. Values are essential needs of individuals, family and the society at large. It is to be rated as the embodiment of good traits such as responsibility, reliability, honesty, obedience, faithfulness, truthfulness decency and discipline. Values are positive ways of life of people that promotes their qualities as individual and as a group. Nakpodia (2010) defined values as those aspects of cultural practices that are cherished with high esteem in the society. Ezegbe (2012) described values as attitudes an individual or the society holds with respect to worth or desirability. Ezegbe (2012) also noted that values are those things which are considered important upon which weight may be placed. Values in human environment today have taken a worrisome dimension and if care is not taking, the long term effect on the entire human race will be more injurious than cancer. In the same vein, Okafor (2004) described values as what determines a whole lot of conducts, attitudes and predisposition of human being. Okafor (2004) also stressed further that societal values influence and affect the total wellbeing of an individual and the nation. Omumi and Jerome (2007) described values as ideas which are shared by people about what is good or bad, right or wrong, desirable and undesirable. Olutayo and Akanle (2007) also agreed that values are the nexus that connects the past with the present and guides the future. Erinoshio (2008) defined values as accepted principles or standards of a person. Hornby (2010) associated high integrity with strict moral values and upright in character. Ndubueze (2013) noted that values indicate a wide range of ideas about the end that human-beings should pursue in live. Egbue & Alawari (2013) posited that values reflect a person's sense of right and wrong or what ought to be. Societal values determines how people behave in such society which means that value is tied to individual disposition and social construction in any human society. According to an ancient Greek philosopher Socrates an unexamined life is not worth living. This assertion was made following the level of moral decadence in Greek period when Socrates flourished. In an attempt to inculcate a good

moral principle on the youths. He advocate for self examination and the impact of one's action and reasons behind it. This morality of an act is central in philosophical ethics. It deals with what ought not to be done. Nigeria society is heavily charged with various social vices in various educational institution such as primary, secondary, polytechnics, and universities among others. Most deviant students hardly take time to reflect on the consequence of their action which are mostly contrary to the values essential for nation building. The moral qualities that are needed by every meaningful society are general values of discipline, hardwork respect, integrity, relationships, and patriotism among other general values which are pointers to nation building.

Instilling of these desirable values into the students is doable through the process of value education. Thus, the need to give "Value Education" to individuals mainly in the place of learning environment, as they spend most of his/ her time and learn many things. Value education can be given or gained in any place like home or in schools, colleges, universities, jails, voluntary youth organizations or at many other places. Value education is a process of teaching and learning about the ideals that a society considers them to be important (Lovat & Toomey, 2007). Value education can take place in different forms, but the main aim of providing it to students in their educational institutions is to make them understand the importance of good values; use and reflect them in their behaviour and attitudes; and finally contribute to the society through their good social responsibility and ethics which results to nation building.

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Value reorientation in Nigeria

The core of every human culture or ethos of any culture is a mark of its fundamental values. The satisfaction of some desires and interests inform the values we placed on things or experiences that arise from them. The objectivity of value is a personal judgment

with pronounced emotional tone (Njoku, 2006). The issue of value reorientation and the call for it is long overdue, this is because concerned stakeholders have expressed shock over the rate of deteriorating values in the polity as expressed in attitude and disposition of youths. This justifies the need for value reorientation in the society. By value reorientation we simply mean that, those cherished values of the society which makes societies developed should be re invented and re instilled into the youths/students so as to turn the negative values they have acquired for themselves over the years via different platform, exposure and experiences into positivity. It then explains why there is a dire need for students to undergo value reorientation in Nigeria if truly we wish to build a better nation with pride in the true sense of the world. Value reorientation entails re educating the youths on values and enlightening them on what values entails as well as making them aware of the values they should possess at any point in time which are considered essential to their personal growth and development as well as building of the nation as a whole. The big question to be asked is how and what curricula or instrument should be used for this value reformation? The above question is indeed a million dollar question which has been hanging in the minds of many over the years. It is crystal clear that our students of today are perpetrators of immoral acts which gives rise to worries as to whether the educational institution is really inculcating values into the students or not and if the school is dully exercising her responsibility what then could be the cause and rise in immoral acts amongst Nigerian students. While stressing the need for early inculcation of patriotic ideals and values in pupils, Abah (2014) was of the opinion that early exposure of students to values would elicit in them a local and national consciousness of societal values and respect for public property. This will help to ensure rounded growth and develop national consciousness in them which will foster their individual as well as collective effort towards nation building. Students/Youths can constitute a nuisance or threat to nation building and stability if they are misguided, unemployed, indisciplined, and allowed to drift away and be morally bankrupt (Egbunefu, 2014). In his own view, Olaopa (2016) disclosed that the whole nation needs widespread reorientation on national values

as basis for re-engineering of fundamental governance institutions to infuse public institutions with cultural and spirituality service. This shows that, values reorientation is key to nation building as the case may be.

Olaopa (2016) added that National Orientation Agency (NOA) should be elevated to create values, attitude guidelines, and practical initiatives that could be integrated into development policies, planning and programmes. In an attempt to ensure value reorientation for Nigerian citizens, the Federal government introduced National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). NEEDS which was launched on 29th, May 2004 by Nigeria government had value reorientation as one of its four major goals (National Planning Commission (NPC, 2004). The portion reads 'NEEDS will lay a solid foundation for sustainable poverty reduction, employment generation, wealth creation and value reorientation'. The Change Catalyst (2013) opined that 'NEEDS is anchored on the imperative to restore the fundamental values of Nigeria, which have been weakened over the years.

Social Studies as a Rescue

Social Studies as a discipline is an integrated field of study which draws relevant content from other disciplines to build up a worthwhile content for the purpose of citizenship education. Okam (2002) emphasizes that the teaching of Social Studies, unlike the traditional Social Science disciplines, is not to emphasize either a propagation of knowledge or an acquisition of information for its own sake as such. On the contrary, according to Okam (2002), the pedagogical asset of Social Studies is expected to aim at assisting an individual or learner in an acquisition and development of certain social skills and desirable attitudes and values which are germane for nation-building considered within the framework of Nigeria as an heterogeneous society that is growing to become a democracy.

It naturally follows from the above considerations that any serious thoughts about the quest for nation building that is propagated through instructions in Social Studies education is expected to alert and acutely remind the Nigerian about his relationship to vast groups of people from different tribes, races,

religious and classes but share similar values as citizens. According to Okam (2005), this awareness implies a presupposition that an individual is called upon to identify and empathize with others who are faced with conflicting alternatives. In this perspective, it is endorsed that the success of the philosophy behind Social Studies education in this country should be geared towards equipping an individual to cultivate necessary values essential for reformation and effective nation building.

Nation building

In the modern era, *nation-building* referred to the efforts of newly independent nations, to establish trusted institutions of national government, education, military defense, elections, land, registry, import, custom, foreign trade, foreign diplomacy, banking, finance, taxation, company registration, policy law, courts, healthcare, citizenship, citizens rights and liberties, marriage registry, birth registry, immigration, transport, infrastructure and/or municipal governance charters aimed at achieving the status of one indivisible and prosperous geo political sovereign entity, these include the nations of Africa and the Balkans, (Harris, 2012). Karl & Williams (2010) further redefine the populace of territories that had been carved out by colonial powers or empires without regard to ethnic, religious, or other boundaries. These reformed states would then become viable and coherent national entities (Walker, 2011).

At a deeper level, national identity needed to be deliberately constructed by molding different ethnic groups into a nation, especially since in many newly established states colonial practices of divide and rule had resulted in ethnically heterogeneous populations (Harris, 2010). Nation building entails creating a nation to be a viable and sovereign state with political and socio economic sovereignty. Whereas the population of some states (such as China, Germany) already had strong national identities before the attainment of modern statehood, in others (including France and Italy) the emergence of a centralized state preceded the existence of the nation, compelling political elites to develop nation-building strategies. Through the concentration or creation of national identities, nation-building aims to diminish or eradicate pre-existing

ethnic, linguistic, religious and other identities that are seen as contradictory to the national identity. There are many strategies to nation building these include education policies, school curriculum, adoption of national language, and major infrastructure development to trigger economic self reliance and enduring.

However, many new states were plagued by cronyism, nepotism or tribalism and order forms of corruption in the distribution of resources and appointment into position of authority and inter ethnic rivalry which erodes citizen trust and national unity within the nation. These occasionally resulted in crises of national integration such as witnessed in the Nigeria civil war (1967-1979). The continuing demand of the Somali people in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia for complete independence. The Rwandan genocide as well as the recurrent problems experienced in Sudan. It has often proved difficult to unite states with similar ethnic but different colonial backgrounds. Whereas some consider Cameroon to be an example of success, fractures are emerging in the form of the Anglophone Cameroon for self determination aside Francophone Cameroon

Value Re-orientation and Education among Students

Primarily this paper is concerned with the scourge of moral decadence amongst Nigerian students with attempt to position Social Studies as a virile instrument towards re-orienting these students and instilling better values in the students for nation building. Social vices and other related immoral acts perpetrated by students like drug abuse, prostitutions, cultism, violence, get rich quick syndrome, amrrobbery, indecent dressing, disrespect, indiscipline, malpractices, and corruption among others are really on the increase amongst Nigeria students due to degenerated values. Hitherto, Nigerian students across the world are known for intellectual capacity, bravery, doggedness, and discipline but the table seem to have turn around as Nigerian students now portray bad image in most instances. The mainstream media and other media outlets almost on daily basis reports issues of immoral acts and students are not excused or exempted from such. Some of the students who engage in these acts believe they are morally right because of the values

they might have been nurtured with or influenced with. Some engage in these acts as wanting to be with the bandwagon while others may also engage in immoral acts due to “belong or perish syndrome”. One thing is certain which is the glaring moral decadence amongst Nigeria youths hence to what extent is value education necessary among Nigerian students in the Nigeria school system? And in what ways is Social Studies and qualified Social Studies teachers better positioned for effective reorientation for nation building in Nigeria?

Both questions may appear easy and clear but are definitely not easy to address as they appear. However, value education as it stands is germane amongst Nigerian students of today in Nigeria school system. This is because the values we once cherished seems going to extinct with the disposition and characteristics of Nigerian students of today who do not show elements of those values but rather negative values. It leaves us no choice but to urgently address the gap of value education squarely in our educational system. This corroborate the position of Egwuatu (2013) who maintained that, Nigeria can be a better place, and the system working effectively if Nigerians begin to have a change of mindset/value; get the right people and put them in leadership positions. This makes a case for the place and necessity of value education in Nigeria school system. Addressing the second issue/question as to what ways is Social Studies and qualified Social Studies teachers better positioned for effective reorientation for nation building. It dwells on the fact that Social Studies as a subject is value laden and Social Studies professionals who have gone through the proper training to become Social Studies experts and certified as such are believed to be pedagogically groomed, efficiently equipped, and properly tailored in ways and manner they are to handle as well as instill in the students the values, attitude, knowledge, and skills essential for self and nation building. Another bothering issue is the fact that some teachers hired or engaged to teach value education/civic education/security educations are experts from other single discipline of social science and arts. Such teachers do not have the mastery of the content nor the pedagogical competence to achieve the lesson objectives of instilling and inculcating these values in the students which is also another great problem of achieving value reorientation

and needs to be addressed urgently by bringing in the square pegs into square holes for realizing value reorientation towards nation building.

Value Reorientation for Nation Building through Social Studies

Nation building involves the cultivation of general values, cultural values, and ethos which are societal backed and expected to be imbibed by each and every member of the polity. Nation building requires the effort of all and sundry which means that deliberate effort must be made by individual citizens of the country towards building and sincerely developing the nation. A good illustration is USA where the citizens are patriotic and loyal to the state to the point of willing to pay the supreme price for their country because of the values the country has been able to build in them directly or indirectly. The crisis of value system in Nigeria suggests that the growth and progress of the society is being retarded in many aspects through outburst of materialistic tendencies of our youth and lack of trust in the country/government. There is no doubt that materialism has taken over governance, political institutions, invaded traditional and cultural institutions, religious institutions, and citizens inter personal, intra group and inter groups relations in private and public life in Nigeria. There is therefore the need for the cultivation of values in Nigerian citizens for nation building. This process of cultivating the desired values is known as value reorientation

Value reorientation is not as easy as it sounds this is because the hardest thing there is to do is changing human belief and working on their psychic as it concerns affective domain. This means that it has to be deliberate, well planned, and conscious if we really intend to successfully conduct value reorientation of our students and youths for effective nation building as it were. Adewuya (2002) defines Social Studies as an integration of experiences and knowledge concerning human relations for the purpose of citizenship education. Citizenship education is primarily concern with instilling citizenship values and knowledge in students to become patriotic for nation building. This will only be achieved

through proper classroom instruction by a professional and certified teacher. The right and proper teacher to handle the teaching of value education or civic education as it were is Social Studies professionals. This is because civic education and value education are mere extraction from the content of Social Studies and by this the right person with the wherewithal to deliver this content in the classroom is Social Studies expert. It then position Social Studies experts in the place of propagating and fore front of championing value inculcation and reorientation in Nigerian students within the four walls of the classroom for nation building.

This view is also supported by Onyabe (2003) who argued that Social Studies is a field of study that deals with the integration of knowledge, experiences, and the effective use of resources for the purpose of citizenship education. Social Studies as a subject is with beautiful content and context to be able to instill as well as correct wrong values which students might have imbibe in themselves from other sources. One major role of Social Studies as a discipline is character development which answers the question of affective domain development amongst the three learning taxonomy as enunciated by Benjamin Blooms. These three domains includes cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Cognitive domain deals with developing the mind of the students' while psychomotor in concern with development of skills in the students but affective deals with development of attitude and affection. These three domains are given due attention and premium in ideal Social Studies instruction. Social Studies do not trivialize these learning taxonomy as it guides all her classroom instructions.

Reorientation of Value System in Nigeria through Social Studies requires us to understand how we began our national life and know where we are now and that reorientation is the re-positioning of Nigeria and Nigerians to where we ought to be in the future. The reorientation of value system is conscious development of human resources through ideological appeals, planning, training, productivity and efficiency in achievements through use of Social Studies class instruction. The Indian society shares the similitude of Nigeria nation in multi- religious and cultural diversities but India has undertaken to overhaul her value system (Maheshwari, 2009).

Re-orientation on negative attitudes, love for materialism, and never-ending lust to earn more and more by putting in less and less effort can be exchanged for value based life through inculcation of an attitude that earning money is for living a respectable life and for helping others who are disadvantaged. To effectively achieve value reorientation a tripartite approach should be used which involves family, schools (education) and government. There are other agents and units like media, religion, economy and host of others but all can be tied to the three earlier mentioned as tripod. At the family level being the first agent of socialization parents should be able to instill in the young ones positive values which the society hold in high esteem, they should mentor, and monitor the attitude of the children at home and outside the house. Education which will be carried out through Social Studies education, the reorientation process in education system in Nigeria would lead to redemption and salvaging of our national character and image.

Social Studies teachers who are to implement values content in the classroom should acquire intellectual competence, emotional stability and unquestionable moral standards as well as commitment that our nation needs to be developed by them in their pupils. Making national character reorientation an integral part of the curriculum of teacher education will be necessary to enable teachers internalize values they will develop in students at the long run.

Conclusion

The way forward is for us to go back to the drawing board and take deliberate actions towards instilling positive national values into Nigerian students and youths through effective use of Social Studies as a viable tool for value reorientation and inculcation towards nation building. Social Studies as a subject is sufficient enough to achieve value reorientation because Social Studies has provision for area call new focus where new issues are brought to bear in the classroom discussion. Aside the new focus aspect which address issues of degenerating values system Social Studies in its original form also contains value education, citizenship education, security education and lots more. The only challenge is full implementation of Social Studies curriculum and according it the needed attention

in Nigeria school system. Again, Social Studies expert needs to be treated as such and their jobs should not be thrown to non expert who may not be able to help achieve the aim and purpose of the subject because they lack the rational and philosophy behind the existence and functionality of Social Studies as it were rather they will teach from the perspective of their single discipline. Therefore, we need to have value education properly taught within Social Studies framework as it original content by same Social Studies experts who should equally teach disjointed security and civic education as separate subjects or should be harmonized back to it original source which is Social Studies as a school subject.

Nigeria as a nation needs to be rebuilt and achieving this requires effective value reformation of which Social Studies is a complete package in attempt to achieve this, Social Studies is handy and if judiciously and effectively utilized Nigeria as a nation will flourish and command respect again by acquiring the right values to life. It should be noted that, we do not need to look for new ways of behaviour for Nigerians rather reorientation of the positive values that have once sustained the Nigerian public and private sectors, If Nigerian institutions and individual collaborate in reorientation of value through Social Studies education, the image and character of our national life would be changed.

Suggestions

It will be of value to make certain suggestion to this paper and the suggestions made here are as follows

Social Studies expert should be engaged and given the role of teaching civic education, value education and Social Studies across Nigeria school as their rightful role. Religious institutions should stress those positive values in their teachings. Mass Media should also play the role of educating, entertaining and informing the general public on the overall effect of negative values and need for hard-work, fair play, self employment and law abiding citizens through advertisement, seminars, symposia and other measures as part of it functions. These no doubt would go a long way in repositioning the positive values in Nigerians. Social Studies should be given the right place in our educational system and balkanization

of the subject into different parts should be eschew but rather government should revitalize and implement Social Studies at senior secondary school level as it were.

Government should give priority to funding, training and recruitment to teachers in Social Studies who are saddle and most strategically positioned to teach citizenship education for nation building in the students. There should also be reward for positive values when displayed by students or citizens to challenges others while negative disposition of values by citizens should equally be punished to serve as deterrent for other intending exhibit such dastard actions or disposition. Parents should equally ensure they nurture their wards at home with positive values for good human relation in the society. Social Studies expert and professionals should be conscious and make deliberate effort towards ensuring they make value reformation and inculcation the centre of focus for Social Studies teachers across board and the monitoring of such for effective and optimal outcome.

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