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SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM: A DISPOSITION TO  
CITIZENSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR NATIONAL  
GROWTH

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*Abstract*

*This study reiterates the importance of Social Studies as an effective tool for producing effective citizens for nation-building. The study adopted a quasi-experiment design to establish that the Social Studies curriculum is a panacea for effective citizenship development. The influence of several variables such as values of the teachers. Teaching values education, cultural values influencing the individual behaviour of morality, environment influencing the values of the individual, social, political, and religion exerting great influence on individual values were examined and it was revealed that students exposed to Social Studies Curriculum are more likely to become good citizens. Three research questions and three hypothesis were set forth. The population of the study was 9,000 students proportionate sampling technique was used in the selection of students from the three senatorial districts of the Delta State. Krejcie and Morgan's table for determining sample size was used in other to select the appropriate sample size based on the population figure. A research instrument tagged structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The data were analysed using chi-square statistics for*

*hypothesis one and an independent samples t-test for hypothesis two and three. The findings revealed that students exposed to Social Studies Curriculum are more likely to become effective citizens and develop critical democratic values. This enhances their harmonious living and development. The study recommended among other things that citizenship education is to run for two-semester instead of one semester as it is the practice now for all students in colleges, this will inculcate values that enhance development, peace, truth, love, respect, and other cherished virtues that will enable them to become useful members of the society and enhance nation-building.*

*Keywords: Social Studies curriculum, Values, Citizens, Citizenship Education*

## Introduction

In contemporary Nigeria, the happenings in recent times have shown a significant change in general attitudes, values for life, and expectations of many citizens in many facets of their social life. There are so much uncertainty and trouble everywhere, trouble in the North, the tension in the South, high scale robbery, banditry insurgency in the North East, farmers and herders clashes and kidnapping in almost all parts of Nigeria. Poverty corruption, environmental pollution, and degradation, increase in incidences of crime, tribal discrimination, favoritism, and the effects of global warming are ravaging issues in Nigeria. There is plenty of trouble all threatening the corporate existence of the country. Nigeria has often been described as a failed State. A society where the quality of services decrease, contract prices are inflated, incompetent workers are promoted, ghost workers are placed on monthly payrolls, offices are burnt down to cover frauds, examiners collude with students to carry-out examination malpractices, pastors preach materialism and hold special prayers for those that pay the highest tithes and offerings, politicians purchase votes and manipulate results in the name of being in power. All these social vices mitigating against the smooth functioning and development of the Nigerian

state is as a result of dysfunctions of the social structure and the reckless abandonment, neglect, and relegation of Social Studies in the preparation and development of good and effective citizens for nation-building. Indeed, many Nigerians now operate with the logic of “let me quickly grab my share” a strange value that has come to stay (Odivwri, 2019). The clarion call for a change from the present quagmire confronting Nigeria’s stability, sustainable progress, and development calls for an urgent need to ameliorate these long-standing social ills and bring Nigeria to a stable and functioning society. This can be achieved through a well-articulated content of the Studies Curriculum in developing effective citizens, who will play a responsible role in nation-building.

Social Studies is an intellectual enterprise that painstakingly develops effective citizens for societal progress and development through its content (Edinyang, Meziobi & Ubi, 2013). Social Studies is a vehicle that delivers good citizens for sustainable peace and development in society, a social tool used in the preparation of individuals through the acquisition of its content such as; skills, values, attitudes, and understanding of its environment for effective functioning. The entrenchment of basic values and virtues of society is the hobnob of Studies; it will enhance effective citizenship development in individuals for sustainable development (Edinyang, et al. 2013)

Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences that draws its content, concept, methods, and generalizations from disciplines such as Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, History, Geography, Philosophy, Anthropology, Religion, Law, Archeology and appropriate content from the humanities and natural sciences to promote civic competence. Its primary purpose is to help young people develop the ability to make informed, knowledgeable, critical, and reasoned decisions for the communal good as citizens of a culturally diverse society in an interdependent world. It impacts in learners’ role and responsibility to play in the development project of a nation and help develop good citizens for humanity (Isaiah, 2016)

Social Studies through its content in developing effective citizenship, can create in individuals the awareness of their rights,

threats to their freedom and give greater power to control their behaviour in a more constructive manner, help individuals to be more tolerant of diversity, learn to live together in greater harmony, less violence and live a more satisfying life by being a responsible individual. Social Studies is capable of meeting the challenges of modern society, such as moral and values conflicts, ethical principles, and reckless drive for materialism and primitive accumulation of wealth. The study of Social Studies covers some broad areas in economics, political life, religion, culture, the environment, and life experiences, the skills acquired through this study, will enhance an individual's relationship with others and build an attitude that will govern his behaviour in participating optimally in society and protecting the environment.

Social Studies is a field of knowledge aimed at transforming society, innovating, reforming individuals' conduct, and promoting saleable skills to surmount the challenges confronting mankind in his environment. It is informative and re-orientating areas of studies that inculcate right societal values, the spirit of tolerance for corporate existence, peace, patriotism, honesty among others, and ultimately address man's many problems and challenges. Field of study that prepares young people to become responsible citizens, who are sensitive to their surroundings, understands, respects, and accommodates others as they are obedient to the law. Social Studies reshapes the thinking patterns and social life of individuals and groups; develop saleable skills, sustainable values, and attitudes towards the progressive development of society to overcome the challenges confronting mankind in his environment.

Social Studies is a subject offered in Nigerian schools at all levels of learning. There are several definitions of the subject from different perspectives but there is a consensus on the meaning and concept. Man, environment, and the interaction processes. Mezieobi (2011) defined Social Studies as a reformatory school instruction designed to equip learners with desirable attitudes, values, skills, and knowledge for cohesive social existence in Nigeria society. Ezegbe (2008) defined social studies as the study of man in his environment. Man's environment consists of physical, social, economic, political, and cultural aspects. Ikem (2017) defined Social Studies as a field

of study that sets an agenda and a roadmap on how a man in his life experiences interacts and interrelates with his fellow human to use the resources in the environment to create a suitable condition for his well being and harmonious corporate existence in the society.

Citizenship is a core concept in Studies Studies, effective citizenship development is a major trust in Social Studies, as it helps students develop the values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding, skills and processes necessary to become active and responsible citizens. It creates awareness in students that they can affect positive changes in the environment, socio-economics, and political life as they participate actively and responsively in society (Michalis, Tharrenos & Loanna, 2016).

Citizenship education is an instructive tool to remind the younger population that, issues of security, stability, and sustainable progress should not be taken for granted. It is their social responsibility to effect positive changes as they actively participate in nation-building. The development of this critical segment “citizenship” of society become imperative as the nation is in dire need of development after achieving independence from Britain in 1960. Social Studies was specifically conceived as a direct response to address the problems of common culture and shared values to meet national needs in a multicultural and diversified society.

Through its content, methods, and concept, it transmits to learners’ salient knowledge and values necessary to guarantee the survival of society. Exposing students to these phenomena in their classrooms and school environment, extending it to their community, regions, nation, and the world at large will enhance social justice orientation as young learners will develop understandings of what is meant to be responsible, respectful, obedient, and participatory citizens. This is the hallmark of Social Studies (Anumba, 2013)

Developing good citizenship has been a continuing educational concern for stakeholders in the development of the Nigeria project. Good citizenship will enhance the welfare of others, a moral and ethical manner; consciousness of community obligations, active participation in the affairs of the state, tolerance of others’ opinions and views, and an acceptance of diversity within society. It will enable learners to know that they have rights, responsibility, and duty, and

obedience to the law, protecting the environment, and promote human rights. Green (1997) argued that citizenship development will cultivate national loyalty, patriotism, a sense of belonging, and the commitment to actively participate in the goals of national development.

As society becomes more complex, the concept of citizenship gradually shifted from the dominance of empathy of rights and duties of citizens to values that sustain human coexistence, harmonious living that guarantees societal development. An active citizen must acquire virtues like; respect for self and others, a sense of responsibility, care for others, and obedience to rule of law and democratic principles. These virtues imbibed and internalized in individuals will surmount the challenges of modern society. This is the trust of Values education in the Social Studies curriculum in helping learners become useful and effective citizens in their society. Social Studies content teaches learners the four pillars of learning described by UNESCO; learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together. This is reflected in students' interests in current happenings in the social, political, environmental, and economic affairs of their surroundings (UNESCO, 2014).

The conceptual framework adopted for this study is value theory by William Stanley Jovons, Leon Walras, and Carl Menger in the late 19th century. The theory examines how, why and to what extent humans value things, ideas, objects among others. This theory is relevant to the study in that, it exposes learners to understand why, how, it is important for the younger generation to respect elders, and constituted authority in a society. The benefits of being obedient, responsible and patriotic, and participating and commitment to nation-building. This being the hallmark of Social Studies. As society becomes more complex, the concept of citizenship gradually shifted from the dominance of empathy of rights and duties of citizens to values that sustain human coexistence, harmonious living that guarantees societal development. An active citizen must acquire virtues like; respect for self and others, a sense of responsibility, care for others, and obedience to rule of law and democratic principles. These virtues imbibed and internalized in individuals will

surmount the challenges of modern society. This is the trust of Values education in the Social Studies curriculum in helping learners become useful and effective citizens in their society. UNESCO (2014) described learning in four ways; learn to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together. This is reflected in students' interests in current happenings in the social, political, environmental, and economic affairs of their surroundings (UNESCO, 2014).

It is safe to say today that honesty, hard work, Godliness have given way to all manners of manifestations of lawlessness and degeneration in our national life. Our value system has been badly eroded over the years. Long cherished and time-honoured, time-tested virtues of honesty, integrity, punctuality, good neighbourliness, abhorrence of corruption, and patriotism have given way in the name of dishonesty, indolence, unbridled corruption, and widespread impunity in Nigeria (President Muhammadu Buhar, September 2016) cited in Adewale 2016. The weakening of citizenship development among the younger generation has created serious social and ethical conflicts in society. We have educated the youths to be more ambitious and progressive, materialistic and selfish, but we have not developed their capacity to protect and care for someone else beyond themselves, we have thwarted their ability to truly love and to share, they have been informed but not aspired to do well. The knowledge and skills acquired have led to the neglect of effective citizenship development in society. Our educational system today have produced informed and knowledgeable individuals who may be matured and emotionally stable, intelligent, and informed but may turn out to be crook, irresponsible citizens or ruthless criminals (Halstead, 1996).

The urgent need to protect the younger generation against these social vices plaguing the country, calls for serious attention in the development of effective citizens through the teachings of Social Studies content. The populace especially children and the youths, who are the leaders of tomorrow, are to learn about society and how to surmount the challenges plaguing man in his environment. Sharp practices in both public and private organizations (corruption), disrespect for constituted authority,

drive for materialism, primitive accumulation of ill-gotten wealth, drug abuse, addiction and trafficking. Child abuse, trafficking, ritual killings, kidnapping, environmental degradation are some common examples of social vices. Social Studies curriculum will cultivate in the younger generation desirable habits, values, attitudes, behavioral patterns, the spirit of nationalism, and patriotism that will instill positive attitudes that bring about positive changes for the welfare of individuals and the country.

#### Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine how Social Studies Curriculum would enhance effective citizenship development among learners and proper sensitization and socialization of citizens on their roles, responsibility, and obligation to themselves, other members of the society and the country at large. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. determine the difference between Social Studies students' effective citizenship and students' from other disciplines.
- ii. examine the relationship between Social Studies content and effective citizenship for nation-building.
- iii. determine the difference between Social Studies students "good citizens" and others students

#### Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

- i. Does Social Studies Curriculum contribute to developing effective citizens?
- ii. Would Social Studies content contribute to nation-building?
- iii. Are Social Studies students better citizens than other students?

#### Hypothesis

Three null hypothesis were formulated to guide the study:

- H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference between Social Studies students' effective citizenship and students' from other disciplines.



H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant relationship between Social Studies content and nation-building.

H<sub>0</sub>3: There is no significant difference between Social Studies students' "good citizens" and other students.

### Methods

The study adopted an Ex-post-facto design to establish how Social Studies Curriculum enhanced effective citizenship development among students. This type of design was utilized to provide a platform for establishing cause-effect relationships between students exposed to the Social Studies Curriculum in the college of education and those students not exposed to the Social Studies Curriculum. This approach is adopted because it provides an indebted and insight into the understanding of the Social Studies curriculum as a tool for producing effective citizenship for nation-building. Three colleges of education in Delta state were purposefully selected as instrumental cases from other institutions in the state. Three hundred and sixty-eight (368) participants were randomly sampled using Krejcie & Morgan, (1970) sample size determination. The population of the study was 4000 male students and 5000 female students, College of education, Agbor 2500, female participants and 1500 male participants with a total of 4000, College of Education Warri, 1800 female participants and 1200 male participants with a total of 3000; College of Physical Education, Mosoga 1300 female and 700 male participants with a total of 2000. A total population of 9,000 participants. Out of these three hundred and sixty-eight (368), students were sampled using the simple random sampling technique at the three colleges.

Table 1: Distribution of Colleges of Education in the three Senatorial Districts in Delta State

S/N	Senatorial District	Local Govt. Area	No of Instit.	Location of instit.	Total number of students investigated		
					Male	Female	Total
1.	Delta Central	Ethiope West	1	COE, Mosogar,	700	1300	2000
2.	Delta South	Warri South	1	COE, Warri	1200	1800	3000
3.	Delta North	Ika South	1	COE, Agbor.	1500	2500	4000

The questionnaire was the main research instrument and was administered in the three colleges of education spread across the three senatorial districts of Delta State. The services of the various Heads of Department were engaged to assist in the recovery of the research instrument. The instrument contained 16 item questions. These questions were objective test questions structured using a four-point Likert Scale of SA, A, D, SD. The instrument was administered to 368 participants in the three selected institutions in the State between Social Studies Students exposed to citizenship education and non-Social Studies Students not exposed to citizenship education. The main effects on the independent variables were subjected to chi-square and t-test non-parametric inferential statistical methods. Hypotheses were tested using chi-square statistics and independent samples t-test. The analysis was performed under 0.05 level of -significance.

### **Results**

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** This hypothesis states that the proportion of students who developed critical democratic values is independent of Social Studies Curriculum. The test was done using the chi-square for the two-tailed test (Goodness-of-fit test) and it was found that the proportion of students who developed effective citizens were associated with Social Studies Curriculum ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) as shown below.

**Table 2: Analysis of Social Studies Students' Effective Citizenship and Students' from other Disciplines**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Democratic Values</b>	<b>Undemocratic Values</b>	<b>Total</b>
Social Studies Curriculum	150 (13.36)	54 (16.06)	204
Other Curriculums	51 (16.60)	113 (20.00)	164
Total	201	167	368

Since  $\chi^2$  statistic (66.02) exceeded the critical value for 0.05 probability level (3.841), I, therefore, reject the null hypothesis; that says the proportion of students who developed effective citizen is independent of Social Studies Curriculum and accept the alternative hypothesis that states that, the proportion of students who developed effective citizen were associated with Social Studies Curriculum.

$H_0$ 2: This hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between Social Studies content and nation-building. The test was done using the t-test independent sample statistics and it was found that there is a significant relationship between Social Studies content and nation-building at ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) as shown below:

Table 3: t-test Analysis of Relationship between Students on Social Studies content and nation-building

Students	N	Mean	Std. deviation	t. value	Crt. value	Remark
SOS Students	275	13.9	2.05	14.4	2.57	Accept
Non SOS Students	93	9.6	3.44	14.4	2.57	Reject

Table 3 shows that  $t = 14.36$  e" critical value of 2.57, therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between Social Studies content and nation-building was rejected and conclude that there is a significant relationship between Social Studies content and nation-building according to my data. Many of the respondents agreed that, through exposure to Social Studies content, students develop and acquire skills that increase and influence developing positive attitudes, inculcate appropriate values of honesty, integrity, and hard work.

Hypothesis ( $H_0$ 3): This hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between Social Studies students' citizenry and other students.

**Table 4: t-test Analysis of the difference between Social Studies students' citizenry and other students**

Students	N	Mean	Std. deviation	t. value	Crt. value	Remark
SOS Students	275	12.2	2.8	14.9	2.57	Accept
Non SOS Students	93	7.8	1.9	14.9	2.57	Reject

Table 4 shows the t-test independent sample and it was found that there is a significant difference between Social Studies students' citizenry and other students at ( $p \leq 0.05$ ). Many of the respondents attest that the Social Studies curriculum will serve as an avenue for young people to internalise the spirit of comradeship, honesty, respect, love, tolerance, etc in institutions of learning and society in general.

### Discussions

The findings revealed that the proportion of students who developed effective citizens were associated with Social Studies Curriculum and this will develop critical democratic values among the students. Social Studies students will be more involved in the democratic discussion as they enjoy the rights and assume the duties of membership safeguarded by the constitution. Participation in political affairs is seen as a right and a civic duty of citizens. This active involvement eventually leads to the growth and development of individuals and society in general. Social Studies using an integrated approach to solve problems would be better for the production of good citizens than the separate subjects of the social sciences. According to Mezieobi, 2008 cited by Edinyang (2013) stated that Social Studies is a dynamic course of instruction with a major focus on how to reshape the thinking patterns, social life, skills, attitudes, and values of citizens towards the progressive development of the society.

These are essential prerequisites to personal development as well as a positive personal contribution to the improvement of mankind and the nation in general. This is in line with the objectives of Social Studies at the tertiary level of education according to

Mezieobi and Onyeausi, (2011) among other objectives; to inculcate skills for individual's survival and contribute to national development, to develop productive high-level manpower for national transformation and development and to inculcate the spirit of national consciousness and attitudes for peaceful co-existence. In the same vein Ahmad Abubakar (2013) argued that Social Studies contributes to the attainment of national goals through citizenship education, where citizens understand the diversity among themselves, foster self-reliance and interdependence among citizens leading to developing the consciousness for national development and growth. Social Studies Students' are more obedient to laws and respect authorities, pursue fundamental human rights and respect other people's views. They are more likely not to be involved in heinous crimes, ethnic and cultural divides as they imbibe the spirit of tolerance, corporate existence, and harmonious living. This supports the findings of Edinyang, Tandu, and Gimba 2015 on *The Role of Social Studies in the Promotion of Inter-Ethnic Understanding among the People of Nigeria* where they argued that Social Studies provide ample opportunities for the promotion of the much needed inter-ethnic understanding as it provides young learners problem-solving skills, promote inter-ethnic understanding amongst the people by emphasizing that no man or community is self-sufficient and that for the survival of Nigeria as a nation, we have to depend on the exchange of goods and services, culture and values of different customs.

Social Studies students develop and acquire skills that increase and influence developing positive attitudes, inculcate appropriate values of honesty, integrity, and hard work. These values are easily and quickly internalised through the exposure to Social Studies Curriculum; make them good citizens and contribute the quarter to nation-building.

### Conclusion

The teaching of the Social Studies Curriculum plays an important role in developing young learners to think rationally, develop the ability to participate in practical social life, and promote political culture and literacy. It also promotes democratic values and

principles for good governance and ensuring functional citizenship. It enables citizens to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others in the society as they contribute their best towards the welfare and societal development of Nigeria and Nigerians. The inculcation of national consciousness, national values, and skills for the active social life of young learner serve as a veritable tool for nation-building.

Nigerian state belongs to all of us, what we input into it will produce what we get out of it. When we all bring our energy, experience to bear, society will be best for all. This makes society fairer and more inclusive as we support and participate in democratic activities. As citizenship education, reshape the individuals and provide the opportunity for each citizen to acquire an understanding of the issues of peace, corporate existence, respect, responsive and responsible citizens, and the challenges of modern society, the time is now for Social Studies Curriculum to be taught to younger generation since sustainable development of humans and the world has a link to quality of education in this regards, citizenship education.

### Recommendations

- Social Studies as an effective tool for producing effective citizens for nation-building is hereby recommended to all students in institutions of higher learning to ameliorate the challenges of modern society by introducing Campus Orientation towards effective citizens for nation-building.
- It also recommended that citizenship education runs for two-semester instead of one semester as it is the practice now for all students in colleges of education, this will inculcate values that enhance development, peace, truth, love, respect, and other cherished virtues that enable them to become useful members of the society and enhance nation-building.

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