

# ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC REHABILITATION AND RELIANCE

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## **Abstract**

Art and Social Sciences are based on structures which study activities of man through separate disciplines like Economics, Sociology, Geography, History, Social Studies etc. It necessitated that social studies deals with the experiences of man in his physical and social environments. Thus instructors in social studies require information from the various subject areas and disciplines of the entire School curricula and any other form of human experiences. Its development in all facets of the educational system of Nigeria has been encouraging. Today it is regarded as a course that aids in the search for solutions to man's problem of survival. Hence, there is relationship between social studies and the social sciences. The changes in science and technology have equally brought about series of new experiences in the process of man's effort to control his environments. This is why, social studies also looks beyond the social sciences to obtain and use information to gain a deeper understanding of man and his environment This paper examines the nature of Social Sciences, the Arts, the relationship between Social Studies and Social Science education for economic rehabilitation and reliance.

## **Introduction**

Man is a unique creature in the environment. He is an explorer of nature, endowed with free will and capable of rational thinking and actions made possible by his amazingly complex brain. Man has always been concerned about the environment in which he lives. This desire to understand the world in which he lives and perhaps exercise some control over it has elicited different reactions from man overtime. In an attempt to order his experiences, man created theological order to answer questions about life and reduce his anxious thoughts. Similarly, atheistic order and scientific order have all been ways by which man has created order from his experiences in the environment. Today, science has become highly formalized and institutionalized. Science has a stringent verification procedure to explain happenings in the environment. It's is value - free, neutral, impartial and objective. It also has an adoptive capacity, such that assertions can be changed based on new evidence. This is where science has become a viable approach to learning in a rapidly changing world. Knowledge has generally been categorized into the natural sciences and mathematics, humanities and the social sciences. One thing is very clear, and that is, social studies is related to the social sciences through which it borrows ideas and concepts to solve the problems pertaining to the survival of man. The useful aspect of any of the Arts and Social Science education is made use of to solve the problem at hand.

### The Nature of the Social Sciences

Social Sciences refer to the scientific study of human society, (Chambers English Dictionary 1990). They focus man's life with other men in groups.

According to the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, the Social Sciences are those mental or cultural sciences, which deal with the activities of the individual as a member of a group. Similarly,

then are considered as those bodies of scholarly materials which deal with human relationships. They are the products of research, thought and experiences.

The following disciplines constitute the social sciences:

Anthropology.

Geography. , r

Economies.

Political Science,

History.

Sociology.

**Other Social Science disciplines include:**

Religion, Music, Arts, Social Studies etc. The focus of all the Social Science disciplines is man's relationship with his social, physical and cultural environments. However, each of them focuses on a segment of man's life in the environment. For instance: -

Anthropology is the scientific study of man as a whole including development of his body, mind and society, i.e. studying man biologically and culturally.

Sociology is the science concerned with human behaviours in society. It is concerned with human interactions, social relationships and organization of social institutions.

Geography is concerned with the earth as the environment of man. K seeks to study the elements over space, seeking to establish patterns of causal relationships, in other words, how the environment influences man and how he adapts.

Economies is (lie science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce resources that have alternative uses.

Political Science focuses issues of government and politics, analysis of power relations, authority and activities of public administration and government.

History is concerned with records of the past how man has adjusted to changes in UK environments.

History interprets the present through an understanding of the past to cut out a general course of action for the future.

Thus, the Social Sciences collectively provide insight into:

- (i) The nature of man and his general behaviour pattern,
- (ii) Human activities in the environment,
- (iii) Human interrelationships and institutions arising from inter-group relationships.

The Social Sciences are constantly expanding and extending the frontiers of knowledge as scholarly disciplines. A recent trend portrays a movement towards an inter-disciplinary approach in the study of man's life in society. This is informed by the fact that the variables influencing man's behaviour in the environment cut across many disciplines such that a satisfactory analysis and explanation of man's life requires the knowledge of the various social science disciplines.

**The Arts**

The arts according to Ololobou (1997) are concerned with: the extraction of reality from nothingness; with creating order out of confusion; with creating beauty and harmony out of disgusting and repelling disorder; with the creation of meaning where it is non-evident.

However, one can look at the Arts as those deliberate specialized activities that require skill in making or performing. The following have been identified.

Language Arts - Skills in communication.  
Liberal Arts - History, Philosophy.  
Graphic Arts - Printing and Book making,  
Applied Arts - Architecture, Mech. Drawing.

### **Social Studies and the Social Sciences Education for Economic Rehabilitation and Reliance**

Social Studies is identified as a problem approach discipline through which man studies and learns about problems of survival in his environment. It is pertinent to understand that Social Studies as a single integrated discipline borrows ideas from the Social Science subjects such as History, Geography, Political Science, Sociology and Economics. This is where social studies utilizes the approach of integration whereby facts, information and ideas from different sources are used to identify human problems and how to solve them.

Social Studies does not encourage the study of man in fragmented bits. Its base is in the Gestalt psychology whose emphasis is "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". The Social Sciences are based on a structure which studies the activities of man through separate disciplines like economics, sociology, geography etc. It has been argued that children do not naturally understand knowledge in bits but whole.

Social studies is aimed at problem - solving, hence it is usually referred to as a problem -solving discipline. It involves the idea of critical thinking where pupils are able to distinguish, for example, between facts and propaganda. The idea of reflective inquiry, which is emphasised in the National Policy on Education also, has a base in social studies. Through the learning of social studies, pupils are exposed to the rudiments of generating hypothesis, gathering data, analysing and interpreting data and making conclusions and generalizations.

All the subjects are related to Social Studies which deals with man's activities with his environment. The information from the social sciences, arts and humanities, help to improve the study of man. Social Studies also help to understand the implications or the findings of the other subjects on man.

### **Social Studies for Economic Rehabilitation and Reliance**

The 1977 National Policy on Education recognized Social Studies as one of the core courses at both the primary and junior secondary school levels. Proposals were made in 1985 to include social studies in the Senior Secondary Schools as an elective course. In all the Grade II Teacher Training Colleges, Social Studies has also been made compulsory. Many Colleges of Education have Social Studies as subjects with majority of the students. It is along this wide and popular reception that the N.T.I has established the N.C.E Long Distance Learning System from which we now benefit. We have been hearing of the 6-3-3-4 System of Education established in Nigeria since 1976. The first six. years is spent in primary education. Primary education is considered to be the most important foundation of education. After the primary education, the next three years will be spent in the junior secondary school. The third segment which consists of 3 years will be spent in the senior secondary school while the fourth segment of 4 years or more will be spent in the universities or other institutions of higher learning for both academic and vocational technical programmes. Social Studies is one of the most constant core courses at the primary and secondary school levels.

It is envisaged that only a very small proportion of the children will succeed in getting into the university, or other higher institution. Majority of them may end their formal education in the primary school and junior secondary school, Hence, it is necessary for the schools to provide them with the basic education needed to prepare them for a gainful and successful life.

Let us discuss the specific cases of Social Studies. If we recall the aims and objectives of Social Studies, we will quickly understand why Social Studies has been given an important place in the school curriculum. According to Okonkwo (2004) stipulated aims of Social Studies are firstly the need for children to develop an understanding of their immediate surroundings. Secondly, since there is a world-wide trend towards a scientific and technological approach. Social Studies aims at developing certain skills which enable children to deal with and manage the forces of the world in which they live. Thirdly, in a society, where many different groups co-exist, Social Studies should play a unique role in educating the young citizens in harmonious living, and in an understanding of the different peoples who make up the society.

Whether one finishes only primary or junior secondary school, he or she would find a place of work. Hither (he job is self employed or paid labour, he or she is required to possess a positive value and altitude for the success of the society and himself or herself. Most of the problems of society today can be attributed to the failures of our children to acquire the right type of values and attitudes towards work, respect for labour and dignity in service. Besides, a large number do have sufficient social skills and intellect to help contribute to the development of the society. All these are the expected values, which Social Studies will bring to bear on our children throughout their experiences in the schools. Through the interdisciplinary and integrated approach in Social Studies, they will be better disposed and equipped with these skills and values. Social Studies provides the basic social skills and values for the successful living of our children and adults alike in the society into which they are born. Social studies makes or helps somebody to have a normal, useful life. It reforms the learners and makes them to be acceptable members of the society, as one of the objectives is the promotion of effective and active citizenship.

This discipline raises a generation of individuals who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour etc. It contributes very effectively in the realization of these objectives among which are freedom, democracy, justice, egalitarianism, unity, self-reliance, economic dynamism, brightness and fullness of opportunities (Okonkwo, 2004). A study of this discipline should make it easier for an individual to adjust and live happily in any community in which he finds himself. It develops in learners the ability to adapt to their changing environments and inspires them with a desire for achievement and self-improvement both at school and in later life. It also helps them to understand the socio-economic problems of the country, how they arise and how they can be solved.

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Since the Social Sciences focus man's life as he relates with other men in groups, an acquisition of the knowledge of social sciences essentially means job among other men. This means one can always work as a social worker in any sphere of life. In fact, other professionals would depend on the understanding of the Social Scientist to succeed in their sphere of operation.

Choosing a vocation is one of the most serious decisions an individual would make. This is because it affects the entire course of his life, his off-spring and his nation. It is what provides the individual's socio-economic status that satisfies not only his economic needs but also emotional needs of self-realization and actualization.

The study of the Social Sciences can lead to specialization in any of the fields/disciplines e.g. as an Anthropologist, Economist, Geographer, Psychologist or Sociologist or a Social Studies Education. A combination of the study of any of these areas with a study in Education, also provides a place for the Social Scientists to take to the teaching profession. Thus, jobs in the civil service in both public and private enterprises are available at Federal, State and Local Government.

### **Recommendations and Conclusion**

Based on the issues raised in this paper, the following recommendations are proffered for future improvement and positive solution for economic rehabilitation.

1. That all the useful aspects of any of the arts and social science education for social studies philosophy is made use of to solve the problem at hand.
2. That all the teachers in this very disciplines should be highly motivated and encouraged to give their best to the students because they hold the key to the door of education.
3. That instructional materials should be in use while teaching these students so that children will understand knowledge not in bits but in whole.
4. Teachers and students of these disciplines should be attending conferences, seminars and workshops, which will help in economic rehabilitation and reliance.

Conclusively, Arts and Social Science disciplines are concerned with questions about man and his relationship with other men and the metaphysical world. The goal of its study is not just to enhance man's knowledge of his environment but to use that knowledge to enhance the quality of life in the environment increasing man's level of survival.

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