SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION IN NIGERIA

By

MUSA GARBA
Social Studies Department,
Federal College Of Education, Katsina

Abstract
This study focuses attention on Social Studies Education as a tool for sustainable development in transformation agenda in Nigeria. It discusses the concept of political socialization as well as the importance of social studies education to students and the society. It also postulate that social studies education help in bringing up good citizenship, inculcating in the learner the idea of cooperation, loyalty, tolerance, respect for other, law of the land constituted authority. It also outlined some of the problems facing social studies education as well as suggesting or making some recommendation for further studies. Some of the recommendations are there should be objectivity in politics, most especially the political leader, teachers should strive to make social studies education more functional by relating learning experience to everyday life in the school and community. Political leaders, religious leaders should be honest, secure and exhibit characters that will improve national unity rather than promoting conflicts in Nigeria.

Social Studies Education leads to the production at enlightened and well articulated individuals. Political education enables one to perform one’s social-civic and political functions more effectively so the production of good citizens is enhanced. The prevailing situation in Nigeria Society is characterized by indiscipline, bribery and corruption, tribalism, election mal-practices and unstable government. Any change in leadership is usually characterized by rigging, annulment or coup detail and revolt. For example in 1993, Nigeria had three governments which did not allow for continuity. A review of Nigeria’s political history reveals that this is the third elected civilian government that has completed the first tenure of four years successfully in office as stipulated by the nation’s constitution without any interruptions.

This has constitutes great concern that call for attention of every lover of democracy, development and progress. To correct this instability, Nigerian government has stressed that a conscious effort should be made to teach the tenets of good citizenship at all level of education through Social Studies in order to achieve good political socialization in Nigeria.

Social Studies Education
These education disciplines is saddle with the responsibility of inculcating political socialization, appropriate forms of political behavior in the citizen, and ensure corruption free nation through the creation of political awareness in Nigerian. (Tapper 1996).
Social Studies Education has been recognized as a discipline assigned with the task of promoting political consciousness and participation of students through both its curricular and co-curricular activities with the main goals of creating a new political culture that will transplant the multitude of negative factors that have hitherto characterized the Nigerian society today. NPE (2008)

Political Socialization

Notable scholars have analyzed the concept of political socialization in different ways as a tool for sustainable development in Nigeria through social studies education. Some of them are:
Dennis (2010) defines political socialization as those development processes through which people acquire political orientations and patterns of behaviors.

Political Socialization is the internationalization of political knowledge, attitudes, values, and norms as well as its transmission from generation to generation, through Social Studies Education.

Almond (1996) sees political socialization as the process of induction into the political culture, its product is a set of attitudes, cognition, values, standards, feelings towards the political system, feelings towards the input of demand and its authorities output.

According to Adekeye (2000), Political Socialization also involves the process of learning the acceptable political attitudes and behavior in both formal and informal settings.

Importance of Social Studies Education in Sustainable Political Socialization in Nigeria

The inculcation of Social norms, promotion of civil awareness and provision of political learning assist in transformation of Nigeria Political Socialization through Social Studies Education.

Tapper (1996). See Social Studies Education as one of the school disciplines saddled with the responsibilities of ensuring Political Socialization in learners, and therefore, play several roles. These roles include.

1. Promotion of Civil Awareness

Social Studies Education helps pupils, learners/students and citizen of a nation to learn their basic right, obligations and responsibilities as stipulated in the nation's constitution. Right from the primary school, the pupils are taught their right, duties and privileges at home, school and the society at large. These rights include the right to live, the right to vote and be voted for, freedom of association, movement, religion and expression. It also enables them to know their civic rights, privileges as well as their possible roles as participating members of the society.
2. **Promotion of Comprehensive Political Education**

Social Studies cover the three main domains of learning, the affective, cognitive and psychomotor. The cognitive content includes themes such as arms of government’s e.g. Legislatives, Executive and the Judiciary. Others are pressure groups, power and authority, leadership and fellowship, right, obligation and responsibility and rule of law. The effective contents cover loyalty, respect for ethic and religious diversity, cooperation, patriotism, respect for others and the government. The psychomotor content on the other hand cover participation in patriotic rituals such as singing of National anthem, reciting the national pledge and saluting the National Anthem, reciting the national pledge and saluting the national flag, participating in community services such as building of bridges, clearing of roads, building of market stalls as well as participating in sports.

3. **Training of citizenship**

Okam (2008) asserted that social studies constitute one of the curricular arrangements accepted for laying, strong foundation for the purpose of creating effective citizens. For examples, in social studies, the pupils are taught qualities of a good citizen such as being democratically minded, obedience to the laws of the land, willingness and prompt payment of taxes, casting of ball of thought fullness, respect for freedom, and not interfering with the enjoyment of the right of others in the society.

4. **Social Studies help in the inculcation of basic Societal Norms**

It is believed that educational establishments are designed to socialize children into acceptance of basic societal norms and beliefs. The major task of formal political education in Nigeria rests in social studies. For example, effective and cognitive orientations to politics and public affairs serve as focus to instruction in social studies classroom. Social studies teach talk and teach about politics in classroom substantially more than other teachers of other subject (Sigel 1999).

Today, in Nigeria, there is emphasis on teaching of values and norms such as co-operations, tolerance, honestly, dignity of labour, obedience, integrity, respect for elders and constituted authorities as well as religious tolerance in social studies among children in the classroom and the society at large.

Enhancement of political socialization through socialization studies instruction. As a unique area of study, social studies represent one of those modern curricular arrangements which capitalize on the use of method to sustain the reason for it existence as an important subject area.

According to Okam, (2008). This is to say that social studies is expected to be taught in such a way as to develop in pupils or students, socially, politically desirable attitude, and skill which will help to transform Nigerian politics into a more transparent and sustainable once as well as instill in our politicians the spirit of honesty and sincerity as a leader.
Problems of Political Socialization in Nigeria

Despite the political usefulness of political socialization, there are some problems which affect it and hinder it from achieving its objective. Some of these problems are, (Tapper, 1996).

1. Poor Political and Intellectual Honesty
   A major problem of political socialization in Nigeria is the lack of intellectual and political honesty. Our children from very early ages are exposed to conflicting experiences in our social and political behavior. Even though social studies teach values of honesty, the child is surrounded by corruption from the home, the school, the society at large and even the religious institutions are not left out of this problem.

2. In-Objectivity
   The leaders do not practice what they preach. For example, the child is taught that he is a citizen of a united country where there is equally of access and opportunity, he is taught, that sense of national identity should transcend parochial, ethnic, state or religious sentiments while his experience in the society is affected and influenced by clear discrimination an open conflict on basis of place of birth, and religion.

3. Poor Political Orientation Among Politicians
   Dennis (2010) most politician do not know what they represent, neither the people nor their interest. Every politician is expected to understand the concept of politician socialization in order to be able to represent his people and unity the nation the knowledge of the constitution and its proper interpretation. Most leaders do not understand the meaning of national unity; they rather fight for their religious and cultural interest, which has the nation high levels of disunity in Nigeria.

4. Poor Foundation of Social Studies Education
   Due to funds and negligence on the part of government, social studies education which serve as a tool for sustainable development of political socialization in Nigeria has been relegated to the background with poor attention of government, teaching learning facilities, poor classroom for teaching and learning of social studies, inadequate teaching staff to implement its curriculum etc. has reduce the interest of people in social studies education. (Almond, 1996).

Conclusions
   Social studies education is a discipline saddled with the responsibility of inculcating political socialization, appropriate forms of political behavior in citizen and ensure corruption free nation.

   For social studies education to be employed in achieving the goal of political socialization in Nigeria the school alone should not be saddled with the responsibility; rather all hands must be on deck. The home and other socializing agents and the large society must ensure that what the child experiences in the society does not negate that which is being taught in the school.
Recommendations

For better understanding of political socialization, national and inter-national politic as well as inculcation of national unity in Nigeria, social studies education must be paid proper attention, since it is the most important organ through which relevant political information can be transmitted to the pupils/students. Based on these, the following suggestion or recommendations are made for further studies.

1. Full attention should be given to social studies in other to help teach and improved political socialization in Nigerian and there by improve and inculcate the sense of National Unity among Nigerian citizens.

2. Political leaders should be objective in their administration, as well as practice what they preach as well as religious leader should live by example. This will help to improve political socialization.

3. Adequate intellectual and political host leader of nation, religious body should be honest before it follower, if the followers intelligent enough to manage issues which can cause national conflicts in the nation.

4. In other to achieve the objective of political socialization. Through social studies education, emphasis must be placed on the application of techniques of inquiry and discovery methods, inductive and deductive approaches in teaching – learning situation.

5. Teachers should strive to make social studies education more functional by relating learning experience to everyday life in the school and community.

6. Social studies education could be made real by teachers through providing pupils the opportunity to participate in planning and engaging in purposeful projects, and by engaging these pupils in civic activities and co-operating with other community, institution on issues that have leaning on political socialization.
References


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