

THE PLACE OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN VALUE RE-ORIENTATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By

GALADANCI NAFISA KABIR
*Department of Social Studies,
Federal College of Education, Kano*

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to examine the place of social studies in value re-orientation for socio-economic development in Nigeria. Therefore the paper examined social studies, values and value re-orientation as well as the place of social studies in value re-orientation. The entire responsibility of value re-orientation was saddled on the social studies teacher and recommendations on the use of appropriate techniques and strategies as well as the use of appropriate teaching materials ingeniously were proffered.

Introduction

Every society needs to define its values and engage in activities that will sustain these set of values. Nigeria as a multi-ethnic society has a value system that derives from the diversity of its people, religion and cultures. One of the national educational goals of the nation as enshrined in the National Policy on Education is the inculcation of the right types of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the society. The values which form part of the national goals include; respect for the worth and dignity of the individual, faith in man's ability to make rational decisions, moral and spiritual principles in interpersonal relations and shared responsibility for the common good of all (FRN, 2014). The 1999 Nigerian constitution stated the motto of the country as "unity and faith, peace and progress". And that the state social order is founded on the ideals of freedom, equality and justice. Also section 23 provides that National ethnics shall be discipline, integrity, dignity of labour, social justice, religious tolerance and patriotism (Igbuzor, 2013). However, the life of Nigerians is quite different from the provision of the constitution on ethics and values. Integrity and dignity of labour are no longer cherished by many. We have to agree that all is not well with our country. The values we once held dear sadly belong to another era. Values like honesty, integrity, good

neighbourliness, religious tolerance etc that once defined our society have given way to corruption, insecurity and violence which have become the order of the day (Agbo, 2014) no doubt, there is need for value reorientation in Nigeria.

In light of the above consideration, the focus of this paper is essentially to examine the place of social studies in value reorientation for socio-economic development in Nigeria.

Social Studies

Social studies according to Osakwe (2010) is an organized, integrated study of man and his environment both physical and social, emphasizing on cognition, functional skills and desirable attitudes and actions for the purpose of producing effective citizenry.

Njoku (2006) defined social studies as a discipline which focuses on man, his relationship or interaction with society and his environment. Similarly, Danladi (2005) sees social studies as a complex but organized process through which individuals acquire worthy knowledge, attitudes, values, skills and competences that are vital for self-fulfilment and effective contribution to the survival of the society. These definitions imply that social studies has the attribute to develop desirable qualities for an all-round development of rich personality.

According to the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) 1994, the purpose of social studies is to develop civic competence and help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizen of a cultural diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.

The goal of social studies simply put is to produce responsible and participative citizens with analytical and reflective skills and attitudes to make their environment yield all that makes for good and successful living.

Nigeria is currently faced with extreme insecurity challenges of terrorism, militancy, kidnappings, raping human trafficking among others. These problems can be addressed through social studies because of its interdisciplinary nature. The right types of values and attitudes can be acquired with the teaching and learning of social studies. Thus social studies has a major role to play in value reorientation in the Nigerian society.

Values

Values imply acceptable standard, ideal ways of behaviour and living virtuous life in society - values form the fabrics of the society. They influence the beliefs and morals of the people. Kadiri (2010) perceived value as

representing reasons, beliefs, convictions or virtues that guide peoples actions. The acquisition of good values will enable the individual to determine how reasonable, right or wrong, true or appropriate his actions, attitudes as well as relationship with others are. They include honesty, reality, social justice, self-control, fair play, respect for other people's rights and properties, humility, truthfulness, diligence, goodness uprightness etc.

Udofot (2008) also defines values as acts and practices which individuals and social groups in a society choose and regard as worthwhile to them. Urevbu and Omoifo (2009) explained values as what is right or wrong or what is important in life or decision about how good something is, based on personal opinion and not facts. Defining values Aggarwal (2007) states that "values stand for ideas men live for and they are the guiding principles of life which are conducive for all round development". Furthermore, society cannot be devoid of values neither can values be so called without society. Kalusi (2000) perceives values as the essence of society and the purpose for human existence. Njoku (2005) also affirms that no society is healthy, creative or strong unless that society has a set of common values that give meaning and purpose for group life.

Values guide human behaviour, give purpose and direction to human lives and help in decision making. Most values are derived from family, school, religious teaching, community, cultural or traditional teaching etc. Education is expected to be a transmitter of worthwhile value and attitudes. Therefore, if and all learning and training cannot make one to be of good value, then education is a failure.

Value Reorientation

When we talk of value re-orientation, it means the principles of right or wrong that are accepted by individuals or social groups. Njoku (2006) sees value re-orientation as inculcating good values that can help Nigeria out of her numerous predicaments and can refocus the nation through greatness. The re-orientation of value system in the society is a search for national culture that will reshape national character and image. It reveals when national character is taken over by social vices where citizens pursue wealth without character, pleasure without conscience, commerce without morality, worship without sacrifice, science without humility and politics without principles (Akintoye, 2009). Therefore, value re-orientation has to do with the readdressing of those values which have been thwarted in the line as a result of change in behaviour. Going back to the root and re-organizing things the way they used to be.

The Place of Social Studies in Value Re-orientation for Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria

Social studies is a natural development from man's interaction and exploration of the environment which he lives. It concerns the concrete experiences man encounters as he relates to the various aspects of his environment. It is therefore not based on abstract theories but rather a practical learning of coping strategies against the problems and challenges man encounters in his relationship with the environment (Ololobou, 2010). Through social studies education, man is equipped with useful knowledge, practical skills, positive values and attitudes to be sufficiently informed to tackle societal problems and issues functional social studies education emphasizes applicability of the acquired knowledge to the immediate environment. Its main purpose is to help learners to develop the ability to adapt and contribute to the ever changing environment.

A close look at the general objectives of social studies education as outlined by Aina (1981) in Ololobou (2010) go a long way to justify the strength possessed by the subject in human development and attainment of national goals of education as probably no other subject on the school curriculum has the potentiality of bringing about.

The general aims of social studies:

- i. The development of an understanding of the environment in the learners.
- ii. The development of useful skills and abilities which will enable the learners to deal with and manage the forces of the world around them.
- iii. To inculcate in learners the desire for harmonious living through an understanding of the social and cultural diversities in the society.

From the foregoing, it is clear that social studies education is primarily designed in responses to the needs and aspiration of the society. Essentially, the aims of social studies programmes are drawn from the goals of the nation and those of education. To this end, there is a complete agreement between social studies goals and those of the nation.

Even a cursory look at the goals of social studies reveals that they are reflections of the three learning domains. Social studies is interested in developing in learners knowledge and understanding of the environment in which they live (Cognitive), the acquisition of useful and functional survival

skills of living (Psychomotor) and the inculcation of positive values, attitudes and actions (affective) for full integration into society.

Social studies is largely an affective subject, although all other domains have a place in the subject, but the affective domain occupies a place of primary importance. It inculcates in learners the right type of values and attitudes such as persistence, perseverance, diligence, hard work, dedication, tolerance, respect and a host of others, thereby making it a viable tool for value re-orientation.

Also, contents taught through social studies education which emphasizes developing higher cognitive abilities, skills and value such as patriotism, national consciousness, unity in diversity, cooperation, interdependence etc and strategies adopted for content presentation such as fieldtrips, survey, group work, case study, role play, simulations, interviews, are all used to emphasize character development for purposeful living in the society.

At the centre of all these curricular activities is the social studies teacher vested with the responsibility of modifying behaviour of learners. He acts as a guide, a role model, a facilitator, an inspiratory and initiator of learning experiences. The social studies teacher according to Akinbode (1985) in Ololobou (2010) is not an ordinary teacher. He is one saddled with the responsibility of producing responsible citizens. Responsible citizenship according to Mezieobi (2008) is the hallmark of every promising society and indeed a basic requirement for sustainable national development

Conclusion

Education as the main agent of socialization has not been effective. There is a great imbalance between cognitive and affective development among product of Nigerian educational institutions and this has affected the potential of greatness of Nigerian human and material resources. Igborgbor (2006) identified that factors working against the realization of Nigeria's greatness to be self-oriented, rather than societal oriented. He therefore, proffered the way for the realization of the potential greatness of Nigeria to be "the education of the heart". In other words the education needed should be one that will help the individuals to increase their awareness of the norms and values that can enhance the growth and transformation of the Nigerian society.

Social studies programmes have failed to produce the desired results for which they were designed. Several social studies scholars have over the

years neglected the effective domain. The dysfunctionality of social studies lessons has been attributed to overemphasis given to the attainment of cognitive domains. This is largely unacceptable because social studies is concerned with the formation of desirable values and attitudes and the production of effective citizens. Any social studies lesson that does not plan and achieve some affective objectives according to Nwagwu (1981) in Ololobou (2010) is Bankrupt and useless.

A problem identified is a problem half solved. It is therefore the humble opinion of this paper that social studies teachers should take their jobs seriously, because as noted by Akinbode (1985) in Ololobou (2010) “any wrong move on the part of the social studies teacher spells doom for the society”.

Recommendations

For social studies education in Nigeria to deal with the problem of moral decadence and bring about value reorientation, the social studies teachers must up and doing. It is therefore, imperative that only social studies experts are employed to teach the subject in schools and colleges. These teachers must meet the following conditions:

- They must be knowledgeable, competent and committed to duty.
- They must be skilful in teaching the subject using appropriate methods, techniques and strategies.
- The contents must be logically selected, organized and presented.
- The right kind of materials must be provided and ingeniously used.
- They must give prominence to the achievement of objectives in the affective domain.

References

- Agbo, A. (2014). The Nation (online) retrieved on 29th April, 2017 from <http://ng.net/need-valuere-orientation>
- Aggrarwal, J. C. (2007). *Teacher and Education in a developing society*. New Delhi: Vilcast Publishing PVT Limited.
- Akintoye, O. (2009). "Women in Search of Family Values". *The Nation*, December 3, p.8
- Danladi, E. N. (2015). *Social Studies perspectives in Nigeria*. Vol. 1(11). Rex, Charles and Partick Ltd.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014). *National Policy on Education*, Abuja: 4th Edition.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999*. Lagos: Federal Government Press.
- Igborgbor, G. (2006). "Education of Heart" towards reconstruction of the Nigerian: 12th Inaugural lecture of Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria
- Igbuzor, O. (2013). *Value re-orientation and transformation: A panacea for growth and Development*. Retrieved March 19th, 2017 from www.otiveigbuz
- Kadiri, Y. (2010). *Dynamic of social studies*. Vol. II Kano: Jaleyemi Graphics and Gen. Enterprises
- Kalusi, O. (2000). Education as a fundamental human right: The case of Nigeria. In J. M. Rosemary (Ed) *Nigerian Education: Matters Arising* (VI).
- Mezioeobi, K. A. (2008). *Understanding Social Studies in Nigeria*. Warri: Genteel Publishing.

- Njoku, D. I. (2005). Reorientation of value system in Nigeria: A Critic, *Global Journal of Arts & Social Sciences*.
- Njoku, P. N. (2006). Social Studies education as a tool for religious and national integration in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Studies Association of Nigeria* 9(2).
- Ololobou, C. O. (2010). "Methodological approaches in social studies Education". Kano: Jalayemi Graphics.
- Osakwe, A. (2010). Social Studies and integrated national development in Nigeria. *Daily Times* June 28, 2010 p. 3.
- Udofot, M. A. (2008). *Value disorientation in Nigeria educational system*. Lagos. The CIBN Press Limited.
- Urevbu, A. O. & Omoifo, C. N (2009). *Curriculum provisions for Education for value* (Ed) Iwovi U.M.O Lagos: The CIBN Press Limited.