

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS PERCEPTION OF THE INCLUSION OF SOCIAL STUDIES INTO SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

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Abstract

This study examined the views of students and teachers of social studies in Oyo township on the integration of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum. Fifteen (15) teachers and seventy-five (75) students were randomly sampled for the study. Two separate items were administered on both the teachers and the students. Simple percentage and t-test were used to analyse the data. The results indicated that there are significant differences in the students and teachers' perception of Social Studies with its introduction into Senior Secondary School Curriculum. It is however recommended that the government should expedite actions on implementing the policy for effective teaching and learning of Social Studies in the Senior Secondary Classes.

Introduction

Social Studies as a school subject in the Nigerian Schools is a relatively new subject. However, the subject should not be considered entirely new since it had been in the curriculum in one form or another as cited by (Ajasa and Aderibigbe, 2003), no wonder Ogundare (2000) posits that Social Studies was taken in Nigeria in form of Social Sciences such as Geography, Economics and Political Science in the 1950s. as an integrated subject, made its way into Nigeria through Ayetoro Comprehensive High School, under the auspices of the former Western Ministry of Education and the American Agency for International Development. The establishment of the subject was the hand work of the Americans as an experiment and it was referred to as the Ohio Project (Ogundare, 2000). Ayetoro comprehensive High School played a pioneering role in popularizing the teaching of Social Studies to other parts of Nigeria. Later, International Organizations, like the Ford Foundation Aid and Educational Agencies like the Comparative Education Studies and Adaptation Centre (CESAC), Nigeria Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) assisted in promoting the subject particularly in the area of textbooks production and organization of seminars. After passing through different stages of integration. The subject is now been taught at the Primary, Junior Secondary, Teachers' Colleges of Education and Universities in Nigeria. One important observation however, is that the subject has not been taught at the Senior Secondary School level all these years. With the revision of the National Policy on Education in 1988. Social Studies was however incorporated into the Senior Secondary School Curriculum to be offered as an alternative to either History, Geography, Government and Literature in English (FRN, 2004), The incorporation of the subject into the Senior Secondary was considered germane based on the philosophical endowments of the subject which are capable of assisting in effective actualization of the nation's objectives which have been endorsed as the necessary foundation for the National Policy on Education which is to build:

*"A free and democratic society
A just and egalitarian society
A united, strong and self reliant nation
A great and dynamic economy
A land full of bright opportunities for all citizen"*

These national objectives were set out because education is conceived as a tool for socio-economic and political transformation and improvement in the general well being of the citizenry and this in turn serve as a foundation for curriculum development of social studies. However, the objectives of social studies as one of the areas of study through which national objectives on education can be achieved are explicit statements or goals which directly reflect the society's concerns about human relationships with one another among themselves and the world around them. (Ogundare, 2004).

Social Studies aimed at preparing the people to become well informed citizens who will be ready and happy to contribute their own quota to the advancement of the community in which they live. It equally aims at inculcating in the citizens certain indispensable virtues which will help them to have the right attitude to life. It also helps an individual to be alive to his social and civic responsibilities. It equally aims at promoting national and international understanding and helps to achieve the goal of building a united, viable and prosperous Nigeria'. The above objectives of Social Studies as one of the areas of study through which national objectives on education reflect the society's concerns about human relationships with one another among themselves and the world around them. (Fadeiye, 2005).

Efforts have been geared towards ensuring that Social Studies is being taught in Senior Secondary Classes but till now particularly Oyo State, nothing has been carried out on this; may be government do not see reasons why this should be done. Social Studies is now being taught in Primary Schools so as to inculcate right type of attitudes that are acceptable to the larger societies into the children. The acquired skills, knowledge, ideas and values learnt from the Primary School Level continues or carries on into Junior Secondary School Classes but on getting to Senior Secondary Classes, the acquisition of values and skills formally end up unless such a child or children are of the opinion to specialize in the subject area. This shows an existed vacuum between Junior Secondary Classes and Tertiary Institution and which has to be filled-in. The children or students at Senior Secondary Class levels are at their adolescent stage that exhibit a lot of unacceptable behaviours that societies frown at; such as disrespect, law breaking, dishonest, selfishness, unpatriotism, indiscipline to mention a few. Since Social Studies inculcates healthy social attitudes and values in its learners such as obedience, sympathy, perseverance, endurance, resourcefulness and etc. (Ajasa and Aderibigbe, 2003). The subject Social Studies also promotes the appreciation of our cultural heritage. This makes man to have respect for the tradition customs, beliefs and prohibitions (Ogundare, 2004).

Many Secondary Schools Students according to the observations of some Secondary School teachers that are found outside the school premises especially in the market places in school uniform during the school period are Senior Secondary School Class Students who are of the opinion that they are matured enough to face rigour of life and to take any decisions on their own. Had it been they had been exposed to the learning of Social Studies at this level, the problems might had been the thing of the past.

However, Social Studies Education can help to ensure and promote peace, cooperation and national pride. (Fadeiye, J.O., 2005). The acquisition of all the ideas, experiences, skills, knowledge, values and traditions should be a continuous exercise or activities throughout man's life-span. Based on the fact that Social Studies is seen as a problem solving discipline within any human society, this study intends to findout the views of Social Studies teachers and students in Oyo township on the introduction of the subject into Senior Secondary Curriculum in order to quicken actions of the government on it.

Statement of the Problem

In any dynamic society, values, culture, norms and traditions are appreciated. These also have to be preserved by transferring them all from one generation to the other. Learning of these traditions and culture have to be a continuous process. This has been the aim or objective of Social Studies in every society where social studies is being exposed to the children right from Primary School, through Junior Secondary jumped Senior Secondary and finally to higher institution. Here a gap is opened widely after Junior Secondary Class experience or exposure to the teaching and learning of Social Studies. Meanwhile if society has to be culturally, economically and physically rich and well developed; youngsters of good characters and attitudes that are well groomed in the Societal traditions and values are needed. This is the reason why any of the educational levels should not be left out in the teaching and learning of Social Studies. Meanwhile, the investigator of this study intends to seek for the perception of the teachers and students to allow the government to clearly see reasons why Social Studies should

be or not taught without delay in the Senior Secondary Classes; if total wellbeing of the students have to be developed and helped to become well informed citizens who will be ready and happy to contribute their own quota to the advancement of the community in which they live.

Purpose of the Study

The intention of this study is to find out ways to bridge the gap of preserving societal values existed between Junior Secondary School classes and Tertiary Institutions. The study also aims at seeking for ways of reducing social menace among senior secondary classes through the teaching and learning of Social Studies. It is also to assist the adolescents especially those in the senior Secondary Classes to be well behaved in the Society they find themselves.

Research Questions

The following research questions are therefore presented for investigation:-

- (i) What is the students perception of introducing Social Studies into the Senior Secondary School Curriculum?
- (ii) What is the teachers perception of introduction Social Studies into the Senior Secondary School Curriculum?
- (iii) Is there any significant difference between students and teachers attitudes about the introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum?

Methodology

Research Design: This study adopts a descriptive research method where sample survey type of descriptive research method was used. The sample survey seeks to select few samples thereby using the result to represent the entire populace. It is suitable for the study because it has the following attributes:-

- (i) It helps to find out the opinion of a group on a particular issue at a particular time.
- (ii) It gives accurate account of the characteristics of a particular phenomenon, community or persons.
- (iii) To estimate the population wop share certain views about any situation. (Akindutire, 2002). Simple percentage and t-test was used to analyse the data collected in the study.

Population and Sample: The total population sampled and used for the study was ninety (90). Oyo town comprises three (3) local government areas. In each Local Government, five trained specialists in Social Studies were randomly selected from five schools making the total number of fifteen (15). Then a total number of seventy five (75) students were used, where twenty five (25) students were randomly selected in each local government from five randomly selected schools. Generally, thirty five (35) males were used; both the teachers and the students while fifty five (55) females were also selected for the study from fifteen schools altogether.

Instrument: A self-designed questionnaire with two sections was used in collecting data for the study. Section A contains the respondents demographic data or characteristics while Section B has to examine the respondents opinion on the inclusion of Social Studies into Senior Secondary Curriculum. The instrument was given to two senior experts for proper scrutiny after which corrections was made before it was finally administered on the respondents. Twenty copies of the instrument were initially field tested using test-re-test method to determine its reliability. The collected data was analysed using cronbach alpha and the reliability co-efficient was calculated to 0.71.

Data Analysis

Research questions 1: What is the perception of the students about introducing Social Studies into the Senior Secondary School Curriculum?

Table 1: Students perception on the introduction of Social Studies into the Senior Secondary School Curriculum

S/N	Variables	SA	A	D	SD	X	Standard Deviation
1.	The introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary Curriculum would make students to be better socially responsible towards other people around them.	52 (69.3)	23 (30.7)	- (0.0)	- (0.0)	3.69	46
2.	If Social Studies is introduced into Senior Secondary curriculum awareness would be created in the students to develop social values to understanding their environment.	42 (56.0)	27 (36.0)	6 (8.0)	- (0.0)	3.48	64
3.	The introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary Curriculum makes the students to acquire the right skills and attitudes for a better living in the society.	47 (62.7)	26 (34.7)	2 (2.7)	- (0.0)	3.60	55
4.	Learning Social Studies at Senior Secondary School level can assist to identify and finding means of solving my personal problem.	31 (41.3)	25 (33.3)	18 (24.0)	1 (1.3)	3.14	83
5.	Acquisition of relevant knowledge essential for personal development becomes better achievable with the introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum by the students.	50 (66.7)	24 (32.0)	1 (1.3)	- (0.0)	3.65	50
6.	Students are trained to be better responsible as a citizen of Nigeria with the introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum.	43 (57.3)	31 (41.3)	1 (1.3)	- (0.0)	3.56	52
7.	Introduction of Social Studies would make students to develop better positive attitude to contribute to the development of Nigeria.	45 (60.0)	29 (38.7)	1 (1.3)	- (0.0)	3.58	52
8.	Social Studies would help	39	23	13	-	3.34	76

	me as a student to become better thinker thereby brighten my horizon.	(52.0)	(30.7)	(17.3)	(0.0)		
9.	Introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum would be of great assistance to the students by developing students interest in the subject for better living.	38 (50.7)	36 (48.0)	1 (1.3)	- (0.0)	3.39	52
10.	Introduction Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum could not solely determine the students sound moral uprightness.	6 (80)	11 (14.7)	15 (20.0)	43 (57.3)	1.73	99

Weighted Average.....(3.33)

From the above, the study reveals that students have positive perception of the introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum (Weighted average 3.33) for instance, they strongly agreed that Social Studies will make students better socially ($X = 3.69$); it will also make students acquire the right skills and attitudes for a better living. ($X = 3.6$); it gives room for acquisition of relevant knowledge essential for personal development ($X = 3.65$), students become better and responsible citizens ($X = 56$), and also the students become better contributors to the development of the nations. ($X = 3.58$).

Research questions 2: What is the teachers' perception of introducing Social Studies into the Senior Secondary School Curriculum?

Table 2: Teachers' perception on the introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum

S/N	Variables	SA	A	D	SD	X	Standard Deviation
1.	The introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary Curriculum would allow the school environment to be conducive for teaching thereby discouraging distraction.	4 (26.7)	8 (53.3)	3 (20.0)	- (0.0)	3.06	70
2.	It would be easier for the teachers to encourage and improve on moral standard of their students if Social Studies is introduced into Senior Secondary School..	7 (46.7)	8 (53.3)	- (0.0)	- (0.0)	3.46	51
3.	More cooperation from the students could be easily sought by the teachers to maintain the cultural standard of the society as a result of introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School	5 (33.3)	8 (53.3)	2 (13.3)	- (0.0)	3.20	67

Curriculum							
4.	Social vices among the adolescent would be surely brought to the minimum by the teachers.	9 (12.0)	4 (26.7)	1 (6.7)	1 (6.7)	3.40	91
5.	There can't be any significant impact in the level of students social values and understanding of the environment if Social Studies is introduced into Senior Secondary School Curriculum.	1 (6.7)	5 (33.3)	3 (20.0)	5 (33.3)	2.00	1.13
6.	Introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum gives opportunity to the teachers to acquire additional right skills and attitudes.	1 (6.7)	9 (60.0)	4 (26.7)	1 (6.7)	2.66	72
7.	Responsibility is giving to the teachers to become better thinkers in the midst of adolescents.	4 (26.7)	10 (66.7)	1 (6.7)	- (0.0)	3.20	56
8.	Introducing Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum encourages the teachers to be more academically dynamic.	5 (33.3)	5 (33.3)	5 (33.3)	- (0.0)	3.00	84
9.	Acquisition of relevant knowledge essential for personal development becomes better achievable by the teachers.	6 (40.0)	9 (60.0)	- (0.0)	- (0.0)	3.40	50
10.	The teachers would further appreciate the role which they can play for better living and to develop the society.	9 (60.0)	5 (33.3)	- (0.0)	- (0.0)	3.40	1.05
11.	There will be opportunity of employing more teachers to cater for Social Studies teaching and learning in Senior Secondary School classes.	10 (66.7)	3 (20.0)	1 (6.7)	- (0.0)	3.40	1.12
12.	Inclusion of Social Studies into the Senior Secondary School Curriculum is an unnecessary additional job for the teacher that is uncalled for.	2 (13.3)	5 (33.3)	5 (33.3)	2 (13.3)	2.33	1.11
<i>Weighted Average.....(3.04)</i>							

From the above, it reveals that teachers also have positive perception of the introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum (Weighted average 3.04). this is inferred from the fact that the teachers agreed that it will bring about conducive environment for teaching ($X=3.06$), it will bring about encouragement and improvement on moral standard of the students ($X = 3.46$); it will allow for easy cooperation among the students ($X = 3.2$). it will bring about reduction of social vices ($X = 3.4$); Acquisition of relevant knowledge essential for personal

development will be made easy with ($X = 3.4$) and will improve the chance of employing more teachers with ($X = 3.4$).

Research questions 3: Is there any significant difference between students and teachers attitudes about the introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum?

Table 3: t-test comparison of the mean perception values of students and teachers on the introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	df	Sig (P)	Remark
Students' Attitudes	75	33.2933	2.20425	-	88	-	-
Teachers' Attitudes	15	36.5333	3.83344	-4.52	-	.000	Significant

From the table above, it is shown that the teachers have higher level of perception with ($X = 36.53$) than the students which is ($X = 33.29$). this difference is also shown to be statistically significant ($t = -4.52$, $df = 88$, $P < 0.05$).

Summary of the Findings

The study had attempted to examine the opinion of the students and the teachers on the introduction of Social Studies into the Senior Secondary class curriculum. From the responses of the students, evidences have shown that the students are of the opinion that the teaching and learning of Social Studies would make them to be better socially responsible towards other people around them with $X = 3.69$. This implies that students' characters can be easily moulded thereby interacting respectfully and cordially with other societal members. Even acquisition of relevant knowledge essential for personal development becomes better achievable at the Senior Secondary School level through integration of Social Studies with $X = 3.65$. The students who are the respondents also agreed that the right skills and attitudes for a better living in the society could be easily acquired through this with $X = 3.60$ as well as developing better positive attitude to contribute to the development of the nation.

However, teachers' opinions too cannot be left out in this regard. They are the parent's representatives and more closer to the students in school. They opined from the study that the introduction of Social Studies into the senior secondary curriculum would make it easier for the teachers to encourage and improve on moral standard of their students with $X = 3.46$. They also agreed that more cooperation from the students could be easily sought by them to maintain the cultural standard of the society while social vices among the adolescents at this Senior Secondary School level would be surely brought to the minimum as well as assisting them too as teachers to acquire additional right skills, attitudes and to become better thinkers in the midst of adolescents. Conclusively, introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum as opined by the teachers would further helps the teachers to appreciate the role they can play for better living.

Conclusion

It can be clearly shown and concluded from the study that introduction of Social Studies into Senior Secondary School Curriculum would have a greater and positive impact on the students thereby making them develop social skills, values and attitudes for a better living in the society, making them responsible as citizens of Nigeria, becoming better thinkers and developing more interest in the subject. It is also affirmed that implementation of the Senior Secondary School Social Studies curriculum would minimize the non-challant attitudes of the students towards the subject. It was also concluded on the part of teachers that it would be easier for them to improve on moral standard of their students while more cooperation could be sought to maintain

the cultural standard of the society. Even the social vices among the adolescents would be minimized while greater opportunity of employing more teachers to cater for Social Studies teaching and learning in senior secondary schools will be granted.

Recommendations

The idea has been seen to be a morale booster for students' commitment to the subject and its philosophy. It was therefore recommended without delay that government and those that are concerned should see to the quick implementation of the Senior Secondary School Social Studies curriculum.

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