



BUILDING FUTURE LEADERS THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES: A STUDY OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTION IN IBADAN, NIGERIA

¹Oluwaseun Oyewole, ²Olusegun Tunde Egbetola and ³Bolaji Oluwaseun Akinsanya

¹Arts and Social Sciences Education

University of Ibadan, Nigeria

+2348060527696

oyezeun@gmail.com

²Osun State College of Education

Ilesha, Osun Stae.

+2348034916855

freshsegun@yahoo.com

³Arts and Social Sciences Education

University of Ibadan, Nigeria

+2348037566957

akinsanyabolaji@gmail.com

Abstract

Developing active citizens is the oldest need which is known for social studies. Social studies is an integrated subject designed for making active and bonafide citizen of any nation. Social studies curriculum was designed to address emerging issues in the country; therefore its contents are tailored towards it. Students acquire skill, knowledge, and trait of being a good citizen through courses and curricular activities by attending in social studies classrooms. Based on the social value of Social Studies, this paper focused on building future leaders through Social Studies with regard to teachers' perception. Research paradigm is interpretivism. The study adopted qualitative research approach and descriptive research design. Teachers that taught Social Studies at Junior Secondary Schools formed the population for this study. Six teachers were purposively selected from three schools, that is, two teachers from each school. Those teachers were selected based on their deep knowledge on the Social Studies curriculum. The instrument for this study was structured open interview for teachers' perception on Social Studies to build future leaders. The result revealed that social studies can be one of the corner stone subjects that can build future leaders among younger generation. It is therefore recommended that social studies should be taught with appropriate teaching methods and materials to achieve its main objectives in school curriculum.

Key words: Teachers' perception, Building future leader, Active citizen

Introduction

Different researchers have discussed the relationship between Social Studies and aims of education. The main initial reason for the introduction of social studies into school curriculum is to train effective citizens that can bring about different changes in environment. Therefore, social studies curriculum was designed to integrate social sciences and humanities subject in order to make and build active citizens that can handle affair of the country in the future (Boyle-Baise and Goodman, 2009). Social studies provides citizens with vital information, abilities and belief that

can easily make citizens become active member of society or country at large in future (TESSA, 2007; NTI, 2009; Çengelci, 2013). Social studies is a subject that ensure that the combination of knowledge and approaches tailor towards achieving active citizens who can contribute his/her quotas in future in area of politics, economy, education, trade and so forth.

Furthermore, learning about the different religions, social and cultural beliefs, castes and creed, nationalities and ethnicity, values, languages, festivals, food and clothing, types of families, and so forth makes students aware that the society they live



in, is diverse and multicultural and yet there is interdependence and inter-relatedness between different people, families, cultures, religions and countries (Usta, Dikyol, & Ince, 2010). This helps students to recognize the benefits and challenges of living in a world with multiple cultures and ideologies and also help them to know what it takes to manage such a nation when time comes. This awareness helps them to understand the importance of democracy, rights and freedoms and the fact that in order to live and coexist peacefully each and everyone needs to respect, trust and balance the various opinions, values and attitudes, lifestyles, cultures and practices and ideologies existing in society.

Social Studies helps students to become better citizens: Subjects in Social Studies like, Political Science, Economics and History educate students on political ideologies, constitutional laws, citizenship, rights and duties, morals and virtues, social code of conduct, thus making children aware of their roles and responsibilities particularly in relation to social and civic affairs. By providing relevant information and knowledge, skills and attitudes, the study of Social Studies prepares students to grow up as active, responsible, and reflective members of society (Anders, 2010). It also teaches them to address societal and global concerns using literature, technology and other identifiable community resources. The knowledge gained from Social Studies allows students to make relevant observations, identify similarities and differences, makes connections between related concepts, ideas and resources. Appropriate experiences further enhance the students' understanding about how different things and people affect their day to day lives. For example – in order to investigate poverty in the society, students require knowledge of subjects like – History, Economics and Politics. Students first have to gain information and comprehend ideas such as discrimination, resource allocation and political priorities (Ezegbe, 1994). They then need to understand, analyze and evaluate the existing connections between those ideas and theories to make sense of how poverty affects certain populations in the country. This knowledge can be further put to use to foster creativity, if students are asked to think about ways or come up with new solutions and policies which they think can help reduce poverty (Shesh, 2002). They could be given a

chance to present their ideas in the form of debates, essays, role plays or class projects.

Situation of this nation with set of leaders we are having call for planning for future and ensuring good leaders coming up from this young generation to take this nation to her glorious land. Based on these invaluable contributions of Social Studies to build active citizen from the past till present, there is need to look into future, that is, looking at how Social Studies subject can build future leader based on the Social Studies curriculum in Schools at present. This study investigated teachers' perception on the role of Social Studies to build future leader through its curriculum.

Both National Educational objectives and Social Studies objectives are tailored towards attaining building up a society that will be self-independent through the participation of the citizens who are well-informed to contribute their quotas to national development.

Statement of the Problem

Social Studies is subject that allows different emerging issues in the society to be addressed and also allows the younger generation to be aware of their environment. As result of the main objectives of the social studies, the curriculum was designed to integrate different subjects in humanities and social sciences in order to build active citizens. Studies have shown that Social Studies is a panacea to national development and it has been contribution in building well-informed citizens. To the best knowledge of the researchers there is little study to investigate the role of social studies in building future leaders, therefore, the researchers focused on building future leaders through social studies: a study of teachers' perception in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. Does Social Studies curriculum sufficient enough to build future leaders?
2. In what areas can social studies build good future leaders?
3. How can social Studies accomplish these effectively?
4. What are things needed to be put in place to achieve building future leaders through Social Studies?
5. Is there any issue that can hinder Social Studies to effectively build future leaders?



Methodology

The research focused on the interpretive paradigm. This implies the need for interpretative analysis of data by the researchers, which can only gain meaning if the researchers understand the subject's language, along with all its attendant nuances. This study used a qualitative approach because the researchers interviewed the respondents who are teachers in order to allow them to explain their perception. The study adopted phenomenological research design because it is a study that attempts to understand people's (teachers) perceptions, perspectives and understandings of the role of Social Studies to build future leaders. The target population used for this study was teachers of three junior secondary schools in Ona-Ara Local Government Area, Ibadan, Oyo State. This population was chosen since it is very close to the researchers' location and the researchers are familiar with the terrain. It was easy for researchers to reach the schools and deal with the staff members.

The researchers believed that the population chosen was relevant and suitable for the study since the teachers are well grounded in the Social Studies curriculum. In this research the researchers used non-probability sampling. This type of sampling does not require a list of a large population. Participants for this study were purposively selected from three junior secondary schools. The sample of six teachers, that is, two per school, was purposively selected to provide information through interview on the role of Social Studies to build future leaders. The researchers were the only one who undertook fieldwork. The duration of interviewing was two weeks. The researcher placed the raw data got from the interview into meaningful categories in order to examine them in a holistic fashion.

Results

The following sub-research questions constitute the themes of analysis from which sub-themes will emerge, for the purpose of data analysis.

Research Question 1: Does Social Studies curriculum sufficient enough to build future leaders?

Many teachers agreed that Social Studies curriculum is sufficient and load with different contents that can build future leaders among younger generation. The following were teachers' responses:

Teacher A1: *I think it can help in moulding future leaders but the current curriculum needs review.*

While Teacher C1 also revealed the similar report:

Teacher C1: *The previous curriculum was sufficient, not the current one that has been watered down.*

Another teacher also revealed his perception:

Teacher A2: *Yes, it is effectively and efficiently enough to build leaders because it is generally believe that Social Studies programme can solve Nigeria problems generally, politically, economically and socially. Man has been described as a social animal, who has the abilities to interact with others, shares several things with others. Since a child is familiar with skills, knowledge, values and attitude at his/her elementary background.*

Another teacher also said that:

Teacher B2: *It is flexible enough to accommodate emerging issues*

Another teacher from the same school B also agreed that Social Studies curriculum is sufficient, here is his response:

Teacher B1: *Yes, Social Studies curriculum is sufficient enough to build future leaders.*

Teacher C2 has similar response with teacher B1

Research Question 2: In what areas can social studies build good future leaders?

One teacher responded that:

Teacher B1: *Social Studies can build future leaders in the area of citizenship transmission and character education.*

Another teacher from the same school perceived that social studies can build future leaders in the area



of politics, economy and education. This is his opinion:

Teacher B2: *Areas in which Social Studies can build future leaders include politics (who will be honest, patriotic, detribalized, responsible, dynamic leader, and corrupt free)*

While Teacher A2 gave general perfective as in:

Teacher A2: *In all areas because social studies is an interdisciplinary subject and since the scope is very broad. Its subject matter touches nearly all aspects of human life. Its scope makes learners seem the whole as one unit.*

Another teacher C1 was very specific by saying:

Teacher C1: *We can build students for future leadership through sound citizenship education*

Other respondents have similar ideas with teacher C1

Research Question 3: How can social Studies accomplish these effectively?

Teacher C1: *Students must be exposed to realities of life and be committed to service to mankind.*

Another teacher added that:

Teacher A2: *It can be accomplished effectively if right from the birth of a child, the adequate knowledge, ideas needed by the child is been taught. This is where socialization comes in. the family must be available to bring up the child by empowering him/her the appropriate skills, values knowledge and attitude.*

Teacher B2: *Implementing its curriculum to properly coupled with the use of appropriate teaching methods and relevant instructional materials, training and retraining of social studies teachers, appointment of experts to teach the subject,*

encouraging expert in the field to write textbook, organising workshop and seminars among others

Teacher B1 also furthers supports his co-staff that:

Teacher B1: *Social studies curriculum that is well packaged with professionally trained teachers will help achieving this objective.*

Others that responded to this question have similar ideas with Teacher B1

Research Question 4: What are things needed to be put in place to achieve building future leaders through Social Studies?

Teacher A2; *Through Social Studies programme, creating awareness on social problems, describes, defines and attempts to solve them.*

Teacher B1: *Enabling environment for Social Studies teaching must be provided, a well packaged curriculum must be prepared and faithfully implemented, professionally trained teachers must be allowed to teach the subject, train and retraining programme must be organized for Social Studies teachers, and government must perform her role as supervisor to ensure that the needful is done*

All other respondents shared similar ideas with Teacher B1

Research Question 5: Is there any issue that can hinder Social Studies to effectively build future leaders?

Teacher B1: *Issues like nonpayment of salaries of teachers, not well packaged curriculum, and undue interference from government.*

Teacher C1: *Social Studies is already incapacitated through frequent curriculum change. Social Studies scholars should rise up and restore the lost glory of the subject.*



Teacher B2: *Misconception of what the subject entails, allowing all categories of teachers teach the subject, lack of expertise in the field, lack of required textbook among others.*

Discussion

The findings revealed that the Social Studies curriculum is sufficient to bring about building of future leaders. This implies that Social studies as a subject can be of help in training responsible young generation that will take and manage the affair of the country development in future if the contents are properly taught and this collaborates with Sheshi (2002) study which affirmed that social studies develop rational thinking ability for practical social life.

The study showed that through Social Studies future leaders can be built in the areas of politics, economy and education. This implies that young generation can be built to handle the aspect of politics, economy and education in the future through the teaching and learning of Social Studies. The learning of Social Studies content will enable them to prepare for future leadership role that will improve the nation national development in different areas and this is in line with TESSA (2007) that posits that teaching and learning should involve helping learners to discover certain facts or answer to a given problem and this idea was also collaborated NTI (2009) findings.

The study revealed that government needs to implement the social studies curriculum properly coupled with the use of appropriate teaching methods and relevant instructional materials, training and retraining of social studies teachers, appointment of experts to teach the subject, encouraging expert in the field to write textbook, organising workshop and seminars among others in order to build future leaders through Social Studies. Once Social Studies curriculum is being properly implemented, it will make the subject to achieve its objectives in training young generation to become an active citizen and this collaborates Anders (2010) who supported the fact that Social Studies must be properly implemented in a way that it will help producing citizens who are well disciplined, loyal, honest, obedient, hardworking, dedicated, committed and painstaking. The findings of this study revealed the following should be put in place if Social Studies will be up to the task of building future

leaders: enabling environment for Social Studies teaching must be provided, a well packaged curriculum must be prepared and faithfully implemented, professionally trained teachers, government must be allowed to teach the subject, train and retraining programme must be organized for Social Studies teachers, and government must perform her role as supervisor to ensure that the needful is done. Issues like nonpayment of salaries of teachers, not well packaged curriculum, and undue interference from government can hinder Social Studies from achieving the stated objectives.

Conclusion

Social Studies has been known as a vehicle for national development by training young leaders who will do the job but if this will be done there is need for parents, teachers and government to put their efforts together to ensuring that this young generation are trained to become this country future leaders that will be more responsive and responsible.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made.

All stakeholders should recognize Social Studies as one of the subjects that can build future leaders in politics, economy, education and so forth. Enabling environment for Social Studies teaching must be provided, a well packaged curriculum must be prepared and faithfully implemented, professionally trained teachers, government must be allowed to teach the subject, train and retraining programme must be organized for Social Studies teachers, and government must perform her role as supervisor to ensure that the needful is done. Government needs to review recent Social Studies curriculum. Teachers' salaries should be paid on time.

References

- Anders W(2010). "Knowledge transfer in organization: Learning from the experience of others" *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes* 82.1:1-8
- Boyle-Baise, L., & Goodman, J. (2009). The influence of Harold O. Rugg: Conceptual and pedagogical considerations. *The Social Studies*, 100, 31-40.



- Çengelci, T. (2013). Social Studies Teachers' Views on Learning Outside the Classroom. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 4.2:14-19.
- Ezegbe, M.O (1994), "Building a Strong United Nigeria Nation Through Social Studies Education in Nigeria". *Journal of Social Studies Review* (1)
- NTI (2009). *Manual for the re-training of Primary school Teachers Social Studies*. A Millennium Development Goals project. Kaduna.
- Shesh, T. S (2002) Citizenship education: A panacea for national consciousness and sustainable democracy in Nigeria. A paper presented at the 7th annual national conference of Federal College of Education, Kontagora
- TESSA (2007). *Life Skills Supporting Teachers to Achieve Education for all*. Kaduna: NTI press
- Usta, S., Dikyol, D. C., & Ince, E. (2010). The alternative evaluation tools chosen by social and science teacher candidates. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(2), 3457-3462. Federal Republic of Nigeria, National Policy on Education (2010). Lagos, NERDC, Government Press.