

Global Perspectives in Education



A Book of Reading in Honour of
Late Prof. Mobolaji Ogunsanya



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IMPLEMENTING THE NEW SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM AND THE CHALLENGES FOR TEACHER PREPARATION IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

Down the ages, education has been seen as an important tool for the development of societies. One reason is that education drives the economy and gives meaning and reality to the socio-cultural life of the society all of which lead to the development of any nation. It is a process and medium for the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes for survival in an ever-changing world. That education shapes the society and contributes to its development, advancement and perpetuation of its culture is because education helps to preserve, maintain, and transmit the values of society from one generation to another. Thus, nations' desire for closer cooperation, improvement in the quality of life, respect for the rule of law and Human Rights and peaceful co-existence among communities and nations through education constitutes global issues of concern (Danmole, 2011).

As the objectives of education are fulfilled in educational institutions, and in responding to the issues highlighted earlier, Nigeria has been part of the global deliberations on Education for All (EFA), and such deliberations have been reflected in the national education policies and programmes. Notable among these policies in Nigeria is the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS), which was developed, adopted and implemented in 2004 (FGN, 2013). NEEDS has four critical elements which are: value re-orientation, poverty eradication, wealth generation and job creation. NEEDS is also anchored on the erstwhile Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Since education is the vehicle for cultural transmission and economic transformation, basic education must transform and empower people so as to achieve its stated objectives. Hence, the relevance of education in the actualization of NEEDS cannot be underplayed. Bust, if education must be used to achieve the goals of

NEEDS, its contents and processes of delivery should be reformed in the context of improving the quality of life and facilitating the cherished global values earlier mentioned. This was one reason the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was introduced by the Federal Government of Nigeria to correct the ills and shortcomings of the Universal Primary Education introduced in Nigeria in 1976.

Basic education is the dominant idea in the thinking on universalization of access to education. The goal is centred on functional literacy and numeracy and the inculcation of positive attitudes and values for self, community and national development (FGN, 2013). Following the decision of the Federal Government to introduce the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) re-structured and re-aligned all extant primary and junior secondary schools (JSS) curricula into a 9- Year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) for implementation in Nigerian schools. The 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum was particularly developed for the attainment of the Education for All (EFA) Goals, the critical targets of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS), and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Implementation of the 9- Year BEC commenced nationwide, in Primary 1 and Junior Secondary 1 classes in September, 2008, respectively (FGN, 2013).

There is the need, therefore, to determine the association, if any between the implementation of the new curriculum particularly in relation to one of the component subjects, Social Studies and level of teacher preparation in Social Studies in both primary and junior secondary classrooms in Nigeria. The objectives of education are fulfilled in educational systems through a number of career subjects at different levels, primary, secondary and tertiary levels. One of these subjects is Social Studies.

Social Studies has become a core subject in Nigerian schools particularly in the first nine years of the country's education system. The subject was introduced into the Nigerian school curriculum in the 1960s and was given a fillip in the 1980s. The basic justification for teaching Social Studies is the contribution it can make to an individual's potential for acting wisely in human affairs (Ajiboye, 2010; Ajitoni, 2008; Lee, 2006; Banks, 1992). According to Lee (2006), by acting wisely is meant those actions that are based on knowledge, reliable

information, sound reasoning, and adjudged as humane. Social Studies is interested in everything about human in relation to all aspects of the environment, and the subject incorporates all aspects of reforms and innovations geared towards human living, survival and sustenance of the environment (Akintunde, 2004).

One of the most important factors in the implementation of curriculum is the teachers. Teachers are ultimately responsible for introducing teaching and carrying out Social Studies in the classroom. Teacher preparation in Nigeria starts with the pre-service teacher education programmes at the College of Education and or Faculty of Education in the university. These programmes begin with a general studies component. Moreover, connections among disciplines are established and implications for future teaching and learning are applied. Included in the professional coursework are foundational studies which emphasise theory into practice. There is also an academic specialization which entails a focus on the broad principles of a subject. As the pre-service teacher education programme culminates in a field experience component, the teaching practice (practicum) enables the pre-service teachers to become increasingly responsible for guiding and directing a group of learners. By so doing, the pre-service teachers acquire the essential skills and learn to become creative and self-directive (Plevyak, 1999).

In this study, the authors examined the 4 year Basic Education curriculum with emphasis on the implementation of Social Studies components. The paper highlights the objectives, structure, contents and the mode of implementation of the Social Studies Curriculum. Finally, the study discusses emerging issues on teacher education as regards implementation of Social Studies curriculum and makes recommendations for the effective teacher education in the context of the Universal Basic Education Programme.

History of the New 9-3-4 Curriculum

The present Universal Basic Education Programme in Nigeria rose on the ashes of the old Universal Primary Education, which was introduced in the country in 1976. In October, 2010, the then President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, convened a National Stakeholders Forum to deliberate on the State of Education in Nigeria. Delegates at the summit called for immediate action to reduce

the number of subjects offered at the Basic Education level to between 6 and 13 subjects. Consequently, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) was directed to review the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) in line with the recommendations of the Summit, and to reflect, at every point, global best practices and contemporary national concerns. The curriculum revision process involved consultations with stakeholders in education at various levels to prepare a Framework for the review of the 9-Year BEC. The Framework identifies and groups related disciplines, thereby achieving a reduction in subject listings.

Thus, the conceptual framework for the review of the BEC comprises ten (10) subjects namely:

1. English Studies;
2. Mathematics;
3. Basic Science and Technology;
4. Religion and National Values (Islamic Studies, Christian Religious Studies, Social Studies, Civic Education, and the new Security Education);
5. Cultural and Creative Arts;
6. Business studies;
7. Nigerian languages;
8. Pre-vocational Studies (Home Economics, Agriculture);
9. French; and
10. Arabic.

History of the New Social Studies Curriculum

Social Studies today, is in one of its most eventful periods of development in Nigeria. Many currents have been set in motion, new subjects have emerged from the discipline and a new Social Studies programme has equally appeared. All these are innovations which no teacher is likely to ignore completely. Also, these are a pointer to the fact that great gains have taken place in the teaching of Social Studies over the years. However, more must be done in respect of the discipline. One reason for this is that educators, scholars, and other stakeholders are not satisfied that Social Studies programme as it is today, is adequate for meeting the needs of today's children in a rapidly changing world (Ajitoni, 2008); especially now that Social Studies teaching is limited to the first nine years of Basic Education in Nigeria.

There should be an improvement, and the search for this improvement must begin with an assessment of the present state of the art and science of Social Studies curriculum and instruction in Nigeria. In this regard, and in-line with Estvan (2006), the following issues are relevant.

1. What is the current Social Studies curriculum like?
2. How effective is it?
3. In what direction does it appear to be moving?
4. What initial issues must be resolved for improvement to take place?

To understand the present position of Social Studies in Nigeria, a cursory look at the evolution of the subject in the 1950-1960s and its reinvigoration in the 1980s is required. There is no doubt that a number of teachers and scholars as well as stakeholders contributed to and shaped the course of Social Studies in Nigeria. Listed among such teachers and scholars are Prof. A. Babs Fafunwa, Prof. J. F. Ade Ajayi, Mrs. M.A. Makinde, Prof. S.O. Biobaku, Prof. S.A. Aluko, Dr Ettim Udoh, Mr. J.K. Saliu, Dr E.N.E. Udoh, Dr S.A. Adejumo, Prof. Mobolaji Ogunsanya and others. The ideas and practices of these teachers and scholars provided a strong testing ground for development of the discipline in the country. The development of the discipline has pointed to the need for improvement and such improvement will come from "a fundamental rethinking of every aspect of the curriculum" (Estvan, 2006), and the introduction of changes on a broad front. Change is an inevitable aspect of every society.

The emergence of Social Studies as a discipline or a field of study in the Nigerian school curricula dates back to the 1950s. This was a time, perhaps, when theory and practice in education were viewed as two opposing sides, and not two sides of the same coin (Ajitoni, 2008). This phase of curriculum development was characterized by the teaching of geography, government, history and more importantly, civil government, later to be known as Civics (Akinlaye, Mansaray, and Ajiboye, 1996), which was in line with the British tradition. Studies of these subjects had taken hold in primary and secondary schools. Evidently, then, the scope of these subjects was limited, teaching was restricted to lecturing, and learning by rote was the order of the day. Moreover, that kind of Social Studies Education did not promote good

and active citizenship; neither did it facilitate the transmission of the people's cultural heritage (Ajiboye 2002).

Similarly, matters were not helped by the teachers who handled the subject at the time. This was because the backgrounds of the teachers who handled the teaching of Social Studies reflected very much in their approaches. They variously interpreted Social Studies as the study of history, geography, civics and or government. In effect, Mansaray and Ajiboye (2003) observed that Social Studies was taught as one week of History, another week of Geography, and so on. At this stage, consideration was not given to the integrated approach of Social Studies to the study of human beings in the environment. This situation led to an initial dilemma on the receptivity of the Social Studies curriculum. The arrival of Social Studies was thus, greeted with misunderstanding, contempt, doubts, and apprehension by educationists in many parts of Nigeria. Questions such as "Why amalgamate subjects, with well-defined content under an umbrella of Social Studies without a proper focus"? were asked (Mansaray and Ajiboye, 2003). This led to a chilly and nebulous reception of the Social Studies curriculum and the concomitant denigration of its status and identity. These limitations provoked some criticisms of the curricula which became more prominently virulent immediately after Nigeria's Independence in 1960 (Oyedepo and Ajitoni, 2000).

Immediately after independence, however, well-meaning Nigerians, particularly those from the academics became worried about the relation between school work and the understanding of their own times. There was found a yawning gap between the needs and aspiration of the people and the type of education inherited from the British and provided to Nigerians. Where school work lacks social relevance any attempt made in school may retard rather than foster desirable growth towards maturity. The various development programmes in medicine, education, commerce, road construction, and so on – were designed in British colonial office and brought to the colonies for implementation. This situation was aptly captured by Fafunwa (1984) when he said:

The present educational system in Nigeria, instead of developing positive knowledge, attitudes, values and skills in the society in which the African child lives, tends to attenuate him from his

cultural environment. In other words, the system educates the child out of his environment (1984, p).

What all the foregoing amounts to is that the curriculum of schools focused pupils' learning outside their environment their society and their culture. Concepts were taught and explained from European angles. The historical events, political systems, civic rights and responsibilities of the colonial masters were accurately explained by Nigerian without any corresponding and comparative ability for the Nigerian situation. In Geography, for instance pupils were directed to learn, *ad nauseam*, the names of rivers, mountain, valleys, food crops and events in Europe. A similar thing applied to History, Arithmetic, Literature, English Language, Religion and Nature Study. It was not a surprise then that so respected a scholar of Prof. Hugh Trevor-Roper's standing could say, from his august chair at Oxford in 1962, when asked by his students to teach them African history (Crowder, 1973) that:

Perhaps in the future, there will be some African history to teach. But at present, there is none, there is only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness ... and darkness is not the subject of history (p. 10).

Thus, in all these subjects, African environments, and like Africans themselves were relegated and unknown. The notion of Africa as a 'dark continent', 'a penumbra of barbaric darkness,' continued and no attempt was made even by Africans themselves to 'illuminate' it.

The concerns felt for educational reforms in Africa led to a series of workshops, seminars, and conferences. The most crucial of these conferences to the teaching of Social Studies was the Mombasa Conference of 1968. The conference stressed, among other things, the urgent need to make education in Africa to relate to African culture and environment through the teaching and learning of Social Studies (Ajiboye, 2003; Oyedepo and Ajitoni, 2000). An important outcome of the conference was a Social Studies Curriculum which was accepted by all participants for adoption to suit the local needs of the individual countries that participated. Nigeria was one of the eleven countries that participated in the conference. A new resolution was passed at that conference for the adoption of a new approach to the teaching of Social Studies— an approach that would divest it of its traditional integument. In this approach, Social Studies was to be taught not as an amalgamation but as an integration of the traditional subjects such as

Civics, History, Geography, as well as elements of Anthropology, Economics, and Sociology. The four general objectives adopted by the Conference of 1968 to give support and guide to the growth of Social Studies in Africa were:

- (a) To create an awareness and an understanding of the social and physical environment as a whole. Its natural, man-made, cultural and spiritual resources together with the rational use and conservation of these resources for development;
- (b) To develop a capacity to learn and to acquire skills including not only the basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and of calculating, but also those skills of observation, analysis and interference which are essential to the forming of sound judgment;
- (c) To ensure acquisition of the relevant knowledge which is an essential prerequisite to personal contribution to the betterment of mankind; and
- (d) To develop a sympathetic appreciation of the diversity and interdependence of all members of the local and international community (Makinde, 1979).

Prior to the Mombasa Conference of 1968, there were some other efforts in Social Studies Education. Perhaps, the early beginning of a truly indigenous Social Studies programme in Nigeria was the Aiyetoro experiment which was sponsored by USAID and the Ford Foundation also of the USA. The former Western State of Nigeria twice introduced Social Studies in the Nigerian Educational System. The first was in 1958 when it participated educationally with the University of Ohio. This participation was known as the 'Ohio Project.' The second appearance of the subject came with the establishment of the Comprehensive High School at Aiyetoro in 1963. Efforts were made to reform the content of Social Studies Education and make it meaningful and relevant to Nigerian environments (Ajiboye, 2003). The Integrated Social Studies started as a subject for secondary schools at Aiyetoro Comprehensive High School in present Ogun State. At its inception, Social Studies was taught by few Americans who were assisted by two Nigerians, Messrs, M.A. Makinde and A.A. Oladiji. It is on record that Mr. A.A. Makinde was the first Nigerian to teach Social Studies at the secondary school level in Nigeria (Fasanmi, 2015). He participated with Mr. Spencer

Macdonald (USAID, 1963-64) and Mr. V. Seasholes (USAID, 1963-65) who were their members of the Social Studies Department. Late in 1964, Mr. A.A. Oladiji was also posted to Aiyetoro Comprehensive High School to join the other teachers in the Department. Between 1965 and 1967, the number of Nigerian Social Studies teachers also increased and included Messers E.A. Ogunde, B.O. Obaweya, S.A. Adewuya, S.A. Oni, A.O. Ogunmodede, and Mrs. R.O. Marwell. It is on record that, Mr. M.A. Makinde was the first Nigerian to teach social Studies at the secondary school level in Nigeria (Fasanmi, 2015). It was from this school that the integrated Social Studies found its way to other schools. As early as 1963, schools in the Western Region of Nigeria had started to incorporate the Integrated Social Studies in their curricula based on the Aiyetoro experience. In 1965, the Conference of Principals in the then Western Region adopted the proposed outline of a Social Studies syllabus for the junior classes of the secondary schools. This conference, in effect, served as a useful forum for propagating the message of the "new Social Studies." The Aiyetoro Project also came up with some books on Social Studies which were displayed during another Conference of Principals. These textbooks were later re-written and a mass production was made through the sponsorship of the Ford Foundation. This helped to make the books usable nationwide.

Series of efforts were made to incorporate Social Studies in the Nigerian Education Curriculum through conferences and workshops. In January, 1969, a 14-day seminar on Social Studies was held at the Cooperative College, Eleyele, Ibadan. The opening session was addressed by Mr. B.O. Rotimi, on behalf of Western State Ministry of Education. Professor J.F. Ade Ajayi, then a Professor of History, University of Ibadan, and Dr Ademola Igun, the Demographer of the then University of Ife, were the main speakers (Makinde, 1979). During the two-week seminar, efforts were made to demonstrate both the theory and practice of Social Studies teaching in Nigeria. Another important outcome was the launching of the Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN). This was performed by Professor Aliyu Babs Fafunwa, a well-known Nigerian educationalist who, having been connected with the development of the Social Studies Project in Aiyetoro, became the first President of the Association while Mr. M.A. Makinde was the Secretary. A book was given to Social Studies by the National Curriculum Conference held at the National Hall in Lagos, from

8 to 12 September, 1969. At that Conference, the then SOSAN Secretary, Mr. M.A. Makinde, delivered a paper entitled 'A case for Social Studies in the Primary and Lower Classes of Secondary Schools in Nigeria.' People's reactions to the paper helped to inform many more Nigerians about Social Studies and a general enthusiasm about the subject began to gain grounds.

There were other Conferences in 1979, 1971, and 1973, which was the fourth annual conference of the Association and the 1976 Conference. In August, 1970, the Institute of Education, of the then University of Ife, launched the Six Year Primary Project. The Project covered five subject areas: English Language, Yoruba, Social and Cultural Studies, Mathematics, and General Science for Primary Schools. The Director of the Project was Professor A. Babs Fafunwa, President of the Social Studies Association of Nigeria, and Dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), Ile-Ife. He was assisted by Dr Adebisi Afolayan of the University of Ife, Mr. J.A.F. Sokoya, Institute of Education, University of Ife, Mr. Ologunde of the same University, and their colleagues. The inclusion of Social Studies was an evidence of the accepting of the subject as one of the subjects recognized in Nigerian schools.

The officers of the Social Studies Association of Nigeria who were selected at the end of the 1969 Seminar were Prof. A. Babs Fafunwa, President, Mr. J.J. Egwuma, Government Ctfar School, Idah, Vice President, Mr. M.A. Makinde, Comprehensive High School, Aiyetoro, Secretary; Mr. F.A. Kargama, Government Craft School, Maiduguri, Assistant Secretary; Mr. E.A. Ogunode, Comprehensive High School, Aiyetoro, Treasurer; Mr. B.O. Obaweya, Comprehensive High School, Aiyetoro, Publicity Secretary; Mr. S.A. Olorunselu, Government Craft School, Pankshin, Auditor; and Mr. S.A. Omole, Victory College, Ikare, Auditor.

The inauguration of the Oyo State Branch of the Social Studies Association of Nigeria was the brainchild of Professor Mobolaji Ogunsanya who, apart from working hand-in-glove for many years with Mr. M.A. Makinde, hosted the Conference of the Association under the auspices of the Oyo State Ministry of Education in 1979. Prof. Ogunsanya was also the National President of the SOSAN from 2007 to 2011. Other notable figures in the development of the Social Studies Curriculum and the Association in Nigeria include Prof. Segun Akinbote,

Prof. S.F. Ogundare, current President of the SOSAN, Prof. Segun Ajiboye, Association Secretary for many years, Prof. Alice Jekayinfa, Prof. Okobiah, Dr Fasanmi, and a host of others (Fasanmi, 2015).

Some other organizations took active parts in the development of Social Studies Curriculum in Nigeria. These organisations included the former Comparative Education Study and Adaptation Centre (CESAC) of the University of Lagos, and the former Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). These two organisations at various times and levels organised conferences, writers' workshops, and so on, all aimed at enhancing the teaching and learning of Social Studies in schools. The Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN) equally played a very significant role in entrenching the curriculum of Social Studies as a distinct field of study in Nigerian schools. It was the 1969 Curriculum Conference that finally adopted Social Studies as one of the core subjects that could lead to the "inculcation of the right of the individuals and the society" (Ajiboye, 2010).

Ajiboye (2010) further reported that in the Eastern States of Nigeria, efforts were made to experiment the teaching of Social Studies as produced to the booklet. Those efforts failed because of the Nigerian Civil War, which lasted from 1967 to 1970. In the Northern States, the educational committee of the Interim Common Services Agency (ICSA), decided to introduce Social Studies into their schools and colleges. In 1969, the Department of Social Studies was established in the Institute of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

The present trend in the restructuring of the Social studies is directed at enhancing its evolvement as an academic discipline. This implies that current effort, therefore, tries to redress the observed inadequacy by confirming the teaching of the subject as a discipline that brings the reality of everyday societal living to the students with a view to making them acquire the knowledge, attitudes, values and skills required to be responsible and disciplined members of their societies. Thus, it was decided that the overall objectives of Social Studies at both the Basic Education and Junior Secondary levels should be to enable pupils and students to achieve the following:

- a) develop the ability to adapt to his or her changing environment;
- b) become responsible and disciplined individuals capable and willing to contribute to the development of their societies;

- c) inculcate the right types of values;
- d) develop a sense of comprehension towards other people, their diverse cultures, history and those fundamental things that make them human;
- e) develop the capacity to recognize the many dimensions of being human in different cultural and social contexts;
- f) develop a sense of solidarity and sharing based on a sense of security in one's own identity (NERDC, 2009; FGN, 2013).

In the context of the current reduction, selection and harmonization of the UBE curriculum, the curriculum titled "Religion and National Value" is in umbrella embracing the previously autonomous subjects of Religious Studies (Christian Religious Studies and Islamic Studies), Civic education, Social Studies and a new addition, Security Education. The rationale for the new title is the need to emphasise the importance of value across the educational spectrum with particular reference to the curriculum content of the Religion and Value subject. According to the National Policy on Education (2013), the previously autonomous subjects now subsume in Religion and National Value subject, each of them now becomes a theme under the umbrella subject while each theme has sub-themes and topics. Key concepts in the former curricula now form integrating threads for organizing the contents of the new subject into a coherent whole.

In order to present Social Studies in a holistic manner to students, the thematic approach to content organization was adopted. Major relevant themes were selected and topics were arranged under these themes across the 9 years of Basic Education in a spiral manner to sustain the interest of the students. In addition, the curriculum is organized to ensure continuity and flow of themes, topics and experiences from the primary school to the junior secondary school.

Table 1: Sub-themes and Topics in Primary New Social Studies Curriculum

PRIMARY ONE		
	SUB-THEME	TOPIC
1	Fundamental of Social Studies	- Meaning of Social Studies
2	Family as the Basic unit of society	- The family - Qualities of a good family
3	Culture and Social Values	- Meaning and types of culture - Values that show good morals in our society
4	Social and health issues	- Reasons for taking substances into the body - Overdose (too much eating, drinking or smoking) - Food - Food safety - Risk factors in food - Sources and uses of water
PRIMARY TWO		
	SUB-THEME	TOPIC
1	Fundamental of Social Studies	- Scope of Social Studies - Physical environment
2	Family as the basic unit of society	- Foods we eat in our culture as family member - Importance of these foods to our growth
3	Culture and Basic values	- Greetings and respect to elders in our culture
4	Social And Health Issues	- Keeping our environment clean - Accidents in the school/home - Drugs - Drug abuse - Harmful substances and how to avoid taking them
PRIMARY THREE		
	SUB-THEME	TOPIC
1	Family as the basic civic of society	- The nuclear and extended families
2	Culture and social values	- Types of marriages in our community - Various ways of getting married and the objects used in the ceremony

3	Social and health issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Common drugs in our community and the right people to give them -Ways of identifying someone who has abused drugs -Ways of preventing common illness -Causes of road accident -Giving first aid treatment to road accident victims
PRIMARY FOUR		
	SUB-THEME	TOPIC
1	Fundamental of Social Studies	- Social environment
2	Family as the basic unit of society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The relationship of some members of the family - Culture - Other people's belief, and traditions
3	Social and health Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Characteristics of drug abuses, their treatment and rehabilitation. - Prevention of drug abuse-life\ - Attitude to different forms of accident
PRIMARY FIVE		
	SUB-THEME	TOPIC
1	Fundamentals of Social Studies	- Influence of man and his environment
2	Family as the basic unit of society	- Other people in the family
3	Culture and social values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unity in cultural diversity - Responsible parenthood - Personal hygiene and physical development
PRIMARY SIX		
	SUB-THEME	TOPIC
1	Fundamentals of Social Studies	- Living together
2	Family as the basic unit of society	- External influences on Nigerian family
3	Culture and Basic values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inter-marriage - The characteristics of healthy boy-girl relationship - Some foreign cultures that are affecting our values and culture
4	Social and Health Issue	- Gedfneer dissemination and its consequences
5	Conflict and co-operation	- Conflict and co-operation

The following were identified as curriculum sub-themes and topics for the new Social Studies curriculum:

Table 2: Sub-themes and Topics in Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum

	JSS1	JSS 2	JSS 3
SUB-THEME	FUNDAMENTALS OF SOCIAL STUDIES	FUNDAMENTALS OF SOCIAL STUDIES	FUNDAMENTALS OF SOCIAL STUDIES
Topic (s)	History of Nigerian Social Studies Education	General Objectives of Social Studies	Contents of Social Studies
SUB-THEME	FAMILY AS THE BASIC UNIT OF THE SOCIETY	FAMILY AS THE BASIC UNIT OF THE SOCIETY	FAMILY AS THE BASIC UNIT OF THE SOCIETY
Topic (s)	Family as a primary social group The consequences of large/small family size	Advantages of living together as a family	Roles of extended family members in child development
SUB-THEME	CULTURE AND SOCIAL VALUES	CULTURE AND SOCIAL VALUES	CULTURE AND SOCIAL VALUES
Topic (s)	Meaning and characteristics of culture	Purpose of marriage	Human trafficking
	Similarities and differences among cultures in Nigeria	Readiness in marriage	Preventing human trafficking
	Agents and processes of socialization	Positive group behaviours	Harmful traditional practices
	Road safety clubs as an agent of socialization		Promoting peaceful living in the society
SUB-THEME	SOCIAL AND HEALTH ISSUES	SOCIAL AND HEALTH ISSUES	SOCIAL AND HEALTH ISSUES
Topic (s)	Common social problems in Nigeria	Meaning and consequences of drug abuse and harmful substances	Social conflicts
	Ways of solving	Dangers of drug	Managing and

	social problems	trafficking	resolving conflicts
	Promoting safety in our community		Controlling cultism in our society
			Preventing drug trafficking

Source: NERDC (2009)

Provision made for Meeting the Objectives

In the 4-year strategic plan for the development of the education sector, 2011-2015, the Strategies to be aggressively pursued to facilitate the successful achievement of the 9-year Basic Education objectives are the following:

Strengthening the institutional management of education

- (a) Access and equity
- (b) Standard and quality assurance
- (c) Teacher education and development
- (d) Technical and vocational education and training
- (e) Funding, partnerships and resource mobilization (FGN, 2013).

Implication of the New Social Studies Curriculum in the Area of Need to Train Competent Teachers to Handle the Students

Teacher education, training or preparation is an important aspect in the development of education programmes. Teacher education, as defined by Ipaye (1996), is a process where the prospective teachers are provided the opportunity to develop cognitive perspective, affective dispositions, and psychomotor competencies, which will imbibe such teachers with the qualities, capacities, and capabilities for teaching. The extent to which a teacher is capable of successfully and positively facilitating educational outcomes, is a function of that teacher's knowledge, attitude and skills. All these will depend on the quality of preparation and training given to the teacher (pre-service and in-service) in teacher education (Okon, 2008). The professional preparation of the teachers, therefore, is the central focus of teacher education. In effect of the training of teachers in the teaching of Social Studies should first provide such teachers with the essential basic knowledge of Social Studies issues and concepts and an adequate background of the various relationships in the environment. Social

Studies is concerned with three major relationships. Second, it is essential to develop in teachers of Social Studies in Nigeria a critical awareness of issues and problems in a diverse pluralistic and multicultural society so as to provoke responsible attitudes in respect of such issues and problems. Third, all pre-service teachers must be given adequate training in the use and evaluation of pedagogic methods in various modes and ways. This is because teacher training in Social Studies involves the use of a repertoire of methods, strategies and techniques.

In the preparation of teachers for the teaching of Social Studies in Nigeria, the following stages are relevant in line the categorization of Nakpodia and Urren (2011). The first is the initial training (a pre-service teacher education for would-be-teachers before entering the classroom fully as a responsible teacher). The second is the induction and mentoring (the process of providing training and support to a new teacher during the first few years of joining the teaching profession or joining a new school). The third is the teacher development or continuous professional development (an intensive process for practising teachers to update themselves).

Teacher preparation has been given great prominence in educational planning by the Federal Government of Nigeria as is seen in the National Policy on Education. The goals of teacher education in Nigeria as contained in the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004) are: (a) to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system; (b) to encourage further, the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers; (c) to help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives; (d) to provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for the assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country, but in the wider world; and (e) to enhance teacher's commitment to the teaching profession (p. 33). From these goals, it could be inferred that teacher education is the professional preparation of teachers for the attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge considered desirable to make them effective and efficient in their work in accordance with the need of the society at any particular point in time.

The New Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria has provided the total experiences to which all learners must be exposed; the contents, performance objectives, activities for both teachers and learners, teaching and learning materials and evaluation guide. The prescriptions represent the minimum content to be taught in the schools in order to achieve the objectives of the 9-year basic education programme. However, teachers are encouraged to enrich the contents with relevant materials and information from their immediate environment, but adapting the curriculum to their needs and aspirations. Thus the curriculum can be adapted for such special needs as nomadic education, non-formal education and education of the physically challenged.

For effective delivery of subject matter and improved learning achievement of Basic Education, teacher orientation and training on the implementation of the curriculum, as well as development of relevant resource materials, is strongly recommended (FGN, 2013). This will help in a large measure to attain the objectives of education and achieve national development. The term national development implies growth or advancement in all areas of the country's social, economic, and political life. Such development stems from and encourages experience, experimentation rationality, industry and, above all, self-reliance. Such development as seen by Ukeje (1999), incorporates education for the future with hope, imitative, integrity, meritocracy, morality, hard-work, modernization, technological revolution and utility with progress towards the achievement of the country's vision. In all these, the quality and quantity of teachers are of great importance.

The Present Content of Teacher Preparation in Social Studies at the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) Level

Philosophy

Social studies is a core subject from Basic 1-9 schools in Nigeria. The large numbers of these institutions coupled with their ever-increasing enrolment have necessitated the production of specially trained teachers who are equipped with the knowledge and special skills for implementing the Social studies programme in schools. The fundamental concern of social studies is with human and the complex relationships with the world around and beyond. It is in this context

that the NCE Social Studies curriculum attempts to instil in the students the basic knowledge, desirable values, and skills for investigating, analysing and explaining these interrelationships (NCCE, 2012). The Social Studies programme is, therefore, designed with the objectives of producing teachers who are both professionally committed and academically competent in its philosophy, content and methodology.

Objectives

The programme is designed to achieve the following:

- I. Produce professionally and academically competent NCE Social Studies teachers for the junior secondary schools.
- II. Prepare teachers who will inculcate in their pupils rational adjustment to their physical and social environment through acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, values, appreciation and skills necessary for developing social and civic responsibilities.
- III. Produce students who are capable of benefitting from further education in Social Studies and other related areas (NCCE, 2012).

Mode of Teaching

Various methodological approaches have been recommended and should be adopted in teaching NCE Social Studies, with special emphasis on inquiry and field trip (NCCE, 2012).

Table 3: Themes in Teacher Education Social Studies Curriculum

100 Level	200 Level	300 Level
Introduction TO NERDC National Curriculum for Social Studies Nigeria as a Nation Origin and Nature of Man Environmental Studies Law Related Education Transportation and	Nigeria Political Life Practicum For NERDC National Curriculum Social Studies Research Method and Statistics Field Trip Issues and Problems of National Development Citizenship Education Social Services and Social Changes in Nigeria Man and His Government Contemporary Public Issues	Population and Family Life Education Nigeria External Regulations Social Institutions Globalization

Communication		
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Source: Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Arts and Social Sciences Education 2012 Edition

From the above, it can be inferred that NCE Social Studies curriculum is relevant to 9-year basic education Social Studies curriculum. However, the problems lie on its implementation, which shall be discussed in the next section.

The New Social Studies Curriculum and Challenges for Teacher Preparation

A review of selected written materials reveals that Colleges of Education are faced with certain challenges. These discernible challenges include:

Poor Quality of Curriculum Delivery

The spiral curriculum requires child-centred and activity-oriented teaching/learning process. The use of different teaching methods and strategies to ensure students' understanding of topics has become imperative. However, it is interesting to note that lecture room activities which most teachers perceive as indicative of good teaching are still predominantly teacher centred. Lecturers in colleges of education whereas supposed to expose teachers in training to active learning instructional strategies heavily rely on the lecture method (Gbadamosi, 2012). They are thus, poor role models for the teacher trainees.

Poor Academic Culture

A majority of the students in Nigeria tertiary institutions pay lip service to their studies. There is complete loss of societal values. The urge to acquire material wealth has beclouded their minds. Students are no longer interested in learning. Rather they prefer short-circuiting by involving in examination malpractices, cultism among others (Okebukola, 2009).

Poor Funding

Availability of facilities like lecture rooms, departmental libraries, instructional materials, and so on, depends on adequate funding. Apparent lop-sidedness in investment in higher education in Nigeria is well reported in various studies (Obanya, 2013; Okebukola, 2009).

Mode of Assessment and Conduct of Examination

The policy indicates that major mode of assessment will be school based or Continuous Assessment (CA) of learning outcome under the UBE programme to determine the child's progress from one level to the other. In addition, a Continuous Assessment Instrument has been standardized and would be applied nationwide. Pre-service teachers are expected to be exposed to the mode of assessment and conduct of examination. Assessment should not be limited to the cognitive domain alone because Social studies leads to acquisition of various skills, the effective and psychomotor domains too should be assessed. However, there is a compelling body of research concluding that teacher neglects assessment of affective domain of Social Studies objectives (Akintunde, 2008). Thus, pre-service teacher should be exposed to the mode of assessment and conduct of examination, for successful implementation of the curriculum.

Poor Supervision and Monitoring of Teaching Practice

In most colleges of education, in spite of the provision for a 12-week teaching practice, actual supervision is reported to be poor, leading to shallow field experience for the pre-service teacher (Okebukola, 2009; Obanya, 2006).

There is the need to place on record that Social Studies teachers of the 21st century must be adequately prepared to face the challenges of the age. Such a teacher must be knowledgeable, and possess a proper balance between the academic and the professional components of the job and the effectiveness, capabilities and possibilities of the entire education. All these will depend on the teachers' quality and devotion to duty, their effective and efficiency, competency and productivity. The ability to fully realize the potentialities of education as a veritable instrument for social change and national development depends greatly on the teachers.

If teachers fail to be properly prepared and mistakes are made, generations yet unborn may suffer the consequences. In effect, teachers' mistakes may be covert, indelible, pervasive, and more debilitating and devastating to future generations than mistakes made by any members of other professions whose mistakes are overt and transient (Ukeje, 1999). Ironically, teachers who are largely concerned with human's intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual health and affect more the future of individuals are relegated to the background whereas the medical doctors, for instance, who are largely concerned with human's mental and physical health are largely respected in the society.

The foregoing situation is apathy captured by Ukeje (1999) when he noted:

It is a national suicide for any nation either by accident or designed to allow its best brains to cure its sick, design and build its roads and bridges, formulate and administer its laws while its poorest brains teach its youths. It takes good and dedicated teachers to produce efficient doctors, competent lawyers, functional and creative engineers. Therefore, the education and training of the teacher particularly for the challenges of the 21st century should be an issue for serious national consideration and attention (1997:4).

Suggestions

- 1) Lecturers of the Faculty of Education in Universities and Colleges of Education should undergo periodic training on innovative methods of teaching. Innovative strategies such as cooperative learning, educational trips, participatory learning, service learning should be taught to Social studies lecturers during capacity building to improve their teaching competencies. Effects of cooperative learning on performance of students in Social studies have been widely researched (Ajitoni, Salako and Ojebiyi, 2013). Educational trips instructional strategy is yet another that has the potential to bring about meaningful learning (Gbadamosi, 2012). Adequate display of knowledge acquired by the lecturer during the capacity building in classroom interaction will prepare the teacher in training for meaningful learning for effective implementation of UBE curriculum.

- II) Test and measurement should be incorporated to the teacher training Social studies curriculum to broaden the knowledge of pre-service teacher on mode of assessment and conduct of examination. Though, test and measurement is one of the courses in general education but there is need for it for effective implementation of UBE.
- III) Experienced professionals (counsellors, teachers) should be invited periodically to give talks, seminars to pre-service teachers to stimulate and motivate their interest in studying to achieve success.
- IV) Teaching practice committee and quality control unit of Colleges of Education should be empowered with adequate human and material resources to constantly inspect school and ensure that teaching practice supervision is effective.
- V) There should be an improvement in pre-service teachers' learning opportunities. By learning opportunities we mean those environmental characteristics (classroom, group and individual activities, learning resources, assessment process and so on) that purposefully enhance learning (Obanya, 2007). Aarons (2009) was of the view that learning opportunities should include among others providing different learning materials, genuinely effective and high quality texts, not simplistic course book; teachers planning effectively for each course by designing a learning programme that aims at learning, not just teaching; giving student teachers regular group and individual assignments.

The whole of teacher education programme should not only be experience-based but also competency-based. Experience-based programme is where the would-be-teachers experience specific areas under the so-called minimum standard requirements, and have undergone some form of teaching practice experiences, and are ready to teach. Such an experience, according to Ukeje (1999), may be superficial, trivial, transitory, and just an experience to obtain a certificate. But in competency-based teacher education programmes, the performance is the most important. The pre-service teacher must be able to either consistently demonstrate ability to promote desirable learning or exhibit continuously, behaviour known to promote it. The

pre-service must not just pass a set of prescribed teacher education courses but must also attain a level of competency with which to perform consistently all the essential tasks by teaching.

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