

**SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION,
SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND
CULTURAL COOPERATION IN NIGERIA
AMALGAMATION: RETROSPECT AND
— — — PROSPECT — — —**

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Abstract

The dynamic nature of human environment is fortunately a major concern of Social Studies; its major trend is to develop a fuller understanding and insight of oneself as an individual, as a member of a local and national community and of the interdependence of all people. Social studies develops a deep knowledge of the major factors, events and people who have shaped and are currently shaping the world in which we live, patterns and examples of human settlement in the past and present. The paper discusses social studies education, social integration and cultural cooperation in Nigeria Amalgamation. The study adopted descriptive survey designed and the target population for the study comprised of all the students in two secondary schools in Oshodi/Isolo Local Government Area of Lagos State Educational District VI. The research instrument was a structured questionnaire which was used to gather information on social studies education, social integration and cultural cooperation. Experts in the field of social studies validated the instruments and the data were analysed using descriptive and inferential

statistics. The findings showed that social studies education to some extent has promoted social integration and cultural cooperation amongst people in the Nigerian amalgamation. Relationship exists between social studies education and cultural cooperation and social studies teachers are highly aware of social integration and cultural cooperation in Nigeria. Based on the findings from the study, some recommendations were made as a prospect.

Keywords: Social Studies Education, Social Integration, Cultural Cooperation, Amalgamation, Retrospect and Prospect

Introduction

Social studies education, apart from imparting knowledge and providing valuable information necessary for life, also aims at assisting students to inculcate desirable social habits, attitudes and values needed for the survival of the individual in the society. Before the formal introduction of social studies into schools, certain subjects like history, geography, civics, sociology etc., took the role of social studies education (Regan and Macaulay, 1987). History at that time was much emphasized because it was believed to perform certain function like inspiring patriotism and nationalism, strengthening the mind and fostering citizenship training since the idea of the society then was general education.

Social Studies is confirmed as a value-laden discipline in integrating Nigeria society right from the indigenous period. The first effort towards this integration came in 1906 when the Lagos colony and the protectorate of Southern Nigeria were merged. On January 1st 1914, Sir, Lord Fredrick Lugard United the northern and Southern protectorates into one Nigeria Omooba, Obi and Olabode, (2008). 2014 marks 100 years of Nigeria amalgamation. Before and after the amalgamation of Nigeria, social studies as a subject has been trying to promote social integration and cultural cooperation in the Nigerian society. In view of this, Frost and Rowland (1969) observe that social studies essentially studies human relationship: human to human, human to institutions, human to physical environment and to maintain

value systems. This implies that social studies encourages the process of living and working together, exploring the environment to meet basic human needs, customs, institutions, values, cultural heritage and its dynamic on-going characteristics. Cognitive and psychomotor learning that were Social Studies related in indigenous Nigeria were subsumed in affective learning which indigenous Social Studies specifically discussed. Okon and Anderson (1989) as cited by Lawal and Oyeleye (2003) put this more succinctly when they observed that "more emphasis was placed on the affective domain of education by the indigenous Social Studies; cognitive and psychomotor domains had meaning and significance only within the context of the affective".

Indigenous Social Studies was not only functional, and relevant to the real life of the people, but the people understood their environment and its problems, enjoyed their social life and attributed to its relevance in a number of ways. The relationship of today's Social Studies as having much to do with the indigenous Social Studies is not doubt.

Literature review

The main aspiration of social studies is to get young learners in school to better understand the intricacies of man's existence on earth. With such an understanding, they would then be better equipped to live and interact more effectively and meaningfully within their own environments. Quartey (1984) describes Social Studies as a "study that equips the youth with tools necessary in solving personal and community related problems". Thus, Social Studies will not mainly aim at giving out knowledge, but it equally emphasises on inculcating a certain distillate knowledge, which will assist humans in acquiring the tools necessary for life. Such tools are knowledge, values, attitudes and skills. These tools are expected to assist the learner in solving both personal and community related problems.

African Social and Environment Studies Programme (ASESP, 1994) views Social Studies as the integration of the social sciences and humanities' concepts for the purpose of promoting and practising effective problem solving, decision making, citizenship skills on social, political, economic issues and problems. In 1992, the Board of Directors of National Council for Social Studies, the primary membership of

social studies educators, adopted the following definitions:

“Social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school programme, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study, drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics and natural sciences. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decision for the public good as citizens of the culturally diverse democratic society in an interdependent world”.

In living with others, when man acts, his actions have consequences, which not only affect him but also affect others who live with him. While living in society with others, man needs certain organisation attributes that would ensure the smooth running of the society. Social Studies therefore is described as a discipline which attempts to modify or change the learners’ behaviours in the directions of acceptable values and attitudes. This modification is through a process of studying human beings, relationship with his or her environment and with the desire to provide solutions to various complements of problems in order to ensure human survival, having been equipped with the necessary tools such as values, attitudes, skills and knowledge (Lawal, and Oyeleye, 2003). With this assumptions and insights, it was accepted in Nigeria, that the subject should be described as “a way of life, of how man influences and he is influenced by his various environments”. Nevertheless, whether an educator visualises the subject in any of these ways, or perceives it in some other ways, it is possible to give important consideration to the development of cognitive (knowledge), affective (feeling) and skill acquisition (psychomotor) process of a learner. Thus, through the learning of social studies, we also expect sufficiently to be informing, tackling, solving the problems and issues of our society (Akinlaye, 1996). To this end,

the objectives of Social Studies specifically are to make the children according to Obidoa (1991) to:

- develop an understanding of their immediate surroundings;
- develop certain skills which will enable the children to deal with and manage the forces of the world in which they live; and
- Learn how to live harmoniously in a society where many different groups co-exist etc.

Social studies provide a sense of historical existence in the past as well as the present. Even though young children find the concept of time difficult, they need to understand how the present has come about and to develop an appreciation for the heritage of this country. Huck and Kuhn (1968), state that even though children have difficulty with time concepts, they develop an appreciation for their historical heritage through factual presentation of history, biographies of famous people, and historical fiction. Geographic concepts are equally difficult, but the social studies contents provide continuing opportunities for children to understand the spatial relationships of their immediate environment as well as those of areas of the world. Scholars found that children need systematic instruction to develop map and globe skills (Rice and Cobb, 1978). Children need to develop an understanding of and an appreciation for their physical and cultural environments as well as consider how resources will be allocated in the future. Scholars have argued that Western society makes it especially difficult to develop a sense of time as it relates to history because Western society does not provide clear and present needs for such concepts (Poster, 1973). In any case, both time and space are abstract concepts formulated on relationships that are equally abstract and certainly provide difficulties for young children. This acknowledgment of the difficulty of acquiring sophisticated time and space concepts has led to some reluctance in young children appreciation of the concept and the reluctance may be unfounded.

Retrospect

Social Studies in the formal school setting in Nigeria can be traced to the arrival of the Christian missionaries in 1842 and the subsequent establishment of the first primary school at Badagry, Nigeria. The

colonial curriculum at that time contained gems or aspects of Social Studies. Social Studies were subsumed in manners and morals religious curriculum. It was taught in the canopy of general knowledge, general studies and civics education (Fafuwa, 1974).

The traditional Nigerian practiced social integration and cultural cooperation before the arrival of the colonial masters, irrespective of the claims of some scholars that Social Studies was imported into Nigeria from Britain or the United States of America. Mezieobi (1992) has noted pointedly, that Social Studies has been in Nigeria right from its inception in the Nigerian traditional times. Pre-colonial Nigeria was very rich in the social content area which predominantly constituted the then 'General Studies' education. The social content of undocumented curriculum of the pre-colonial times in Nigeria was given a place of prominence by the traditional people because the relevance of their social life depended on the social content of the traditional curriculum. According to Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2008) some of the social content areas of the traditional 'Social Studies', which were emphasised, include;

- the learning of the people's local and family history, myths, oral literature, proverbs, riddles, geography of the community and the adjoining neighbourhood;
- respect for elders, honesty, truthfulness, fear of the gods/goddesses, learning of family gods, goddesses and the people's Ikenga;
- character, values and virtues development, traditional religion was encouraged and promoted;
- instruction on loyalty to the community, recognition of one's rights, obedience to elders, recognition of seniority, hospitality to people, cooperation in common task, respect for others.

Social Studies' in the indigenous Nigerian society placed unbounded emphasis on values and affective learning. Value education which is the crux of Social Studies is even the major plank of Social Studies education today.

In whatever form Social Studies existed in the primary schools in the period before Nigeria's independence in 1960 and a little after,

the truth is that Social Studies was culture-bound and was relevant to the needs and aspirations of Nigerians. Those Nigerians who were exposed to that colonial social studies curriculum were Nigerians by birth, physically in Nigeria, but British by intellect and behaviour. They were equipped with knowledge of the British environments but knew little about the Nigerian environment. The beneficiaries of the colonial Social Studies curriculum viewed knowledge from their separateness or compartmentalization as discrete subjects, stuck to their artificial subject boundaries, which made it impossible for them to view their world from a holistic frame or as a whole (Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi, 2008).

Research Questions

Four research questions were investigated in the paper namely,

1. to what extent has social studies education promoted social integration in Nigerian?
2. what are the various ways social studies education promoted cultural cooperation amongst people in Nigeria?
3. is there any relationship between social studies education and cultural cooperation lastly?
4. what is the level of social studies teachers' awareness of social integration and cultural cooperation in Nigeria?

Method

The study was a descriptive survey designed to investigate social studies education, social integration and cultural cooperation in Nigeria amalgamation: retrospect and prospect. The target population for the study comprised all the students in two secondary schools in Oshodi/Isolo Local Government Area of Lagos State Educational District VI. These schools are Oshodi Junior Secondary School Oshodi and Mafoluku Junior Secondary School Oshodi, The sample for the study comprised of 80 students, were drawn using multi-stage sampling technique from the two selected Junior Secondary Schools in Oshodi Local Government area, Lagos State. The research instrument was researchers developed questionnaire and contained 16 items which covers social studies education as a tool for promoting social integration and cultural cooperation in Nigeria. A 4-point liker scale

of strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) instrument was used and validated by experts in the field of social studies. The researchers distributed and collected the copies of questionnaire with the help of two research assistants from the two schools. Copies of the instrument were return for statistical analysis since the entire questionnaires were filled. The data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics of percentages.

Research Question 1

To what extent has social studies education promoted social integration in Nigeria?

Questionnaire items 1-4 were used to provide answer to this question.

Table 1: Social Studies and Social Integration

Table 1 above shows that higher percentage of 52.5%, 37.5% agreed in items 1 and 3, 45%, 41.25% agreed in the same item. 35%, 31.25% agreed in items 1 and 3 while 36.25% and 33.75% strongly agreed respectively with the statement. 8.75%, 12.5% strongly disagreed in items 1 and 2, 18.75% and 15% disagreed while 3.75%, 6.25%. In

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	Social studies education has to some extent promoted social integration in Nigeria.	42 (52.5%)	28 (35%)	3 (3.75%)	8 (8.75%)	80
2	Unite and promote living together in Nigeria.	29 (36.25%)	36 (45%)	5 (6.25%)	10 (12.5%)	80
3	Social studies education promotes Nigerian values of social cohesion.	30 (37.5%)	25 (31.25%)	15 (18.75%)	10 (12.5%)	80
4	Educating people on the need to promotes the main national objectives as contained in the national policy on education	27 (33.75%)	33 (41.25%)	12 (15%)	8 (10%)	80

items 1 and 2 disagreed, 12.5% and 10% strongly disagreed with the statement. With this result therefore, social studies education promoted social integration in Nigerian through uniting and promoting social integration, values of social cohesion and national objectives.

Research Question 2

What are the various ways social studies promotes cultural cooperation amongst people?

In providing answer to this research question 2, questionnaire items 5-8 were used.

Table 2: Social Studies and Cultural Cooperation

The data in Table 3 above revealed higher percentage in items 5 and 7 with 45% and 37.5% strongly agreed responses. Items 6, 7 and 8 with 43.75%, 37.5% and 37.5% agreed with the statement followed by 25% and 33.75% strongly agreed respectively. On the other side, 12.5% in item 5 strongly disagreed with the statement, item 6, 7 and

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total
5	Social studies promote social cooperativeness.	36 (45%)	25 (31.25%)	9 (11.25%)	10 (12.5%)	80
6	Social studies promote Social awareness.	20 (25%)	35 (43.75%)	15 (18.75%)	10 (12.5%)	80
7	Teaches how to achieve unity and solving societal problem.	30 (37.5%)	30 (37.5%)	15 (18.75%)	5 (6.25%)	80
8	Social Studies teaches senses of belonging and the need for tolerance.	27 (33.75%)	30 (37.5%)	15 (18.5%)	8 (10%)	80

8 with 18.75%, 18.75%, 18.75% disagreed with the statement. Item 5 with 11.25% disagreed and item 6, 7 and 8 with the lowest percentages of 12.5%, 6.25% and 10% strongly disagreed with the statement. With this higher percentage of strongly agreed and agreed statement, social

studies education promote social cooperation, social awareness and integration, solving societal problem, teaches senses of belonging and the need for tolerance.

Research Question 3

Is there any relationship between social studies education and cultural cooperation?

Questionnaire items 9-12 were used to analyse research question 3.

Table 3: Social Studies and Cultural Cooperation: Relationship

Analysis of this Table 3 shows higher percentages with 43.75%, 40% and 45% in item 9, 11 and 12, which agreed with the statement. Item 10 with 58.75%, 31.25%, 27.5% and 38.75% strongly agreed in item 9, 11 and 12. With the statement, items 9, 10, 11 and 12 disagreed with the statement with 16.25%, 7.5%, 20% and 10% respectively. The

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total
9	Relationship exists between social studies education and cultural cooperation.	25 (31.25%)	35 (43.75%)	13 (16.25%)	7 (8.75%)	80
10	Social Studies teaches tolerating one another's culture	47 (58.75%)	23 (28.75%)	6 (7.5%)	4 (5%)	80
11	Promote patriotic spirit and nationalistic feelings.	22 (27.5%)	32 (40%)	16 (20%)	10 (12.5%)	80
12	Social Studies teaches values and beliefs of different culture.	31 (38.75%)	36 (45%)	8 (10%)	5 (6.25%)	80

same items with 8.75%, 5%, 12.5% and 6.25% strongly disagreed with the statement. With the highest percentages recorded in agreed and strongly agreed responses, it is an indication that relationship exist between social studies education and cultural cooperation.

Research Question 4

What is the level of social studies teacher's awareness of social integration and cultural cooperation in Nigeria?

In providing answer to this research question 4, questionnaire items 13-16 were used.

Table 4: Teachers' Awareness

Results from the Table 4 revealed high percentage with 41.25%, 46.25% agreed responses, in items 13 and 14 and 36.25%, 33.75% in the same items with strongly agreed responses. While 37.5% and 32.5% strongly agreed in items 15 and 16 with the statement, same items recorded 31.25% and 30% agreed responses with the statement and same items recorded 31.25% and 13.75% strongly disagreed,

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total
13	Social studies teachers are highly aware of social integration.	29 (36.25%)	33 (41.25%)	8 (10%)	10 (12.5%)	80
14	Received enough education on cultural cooperation	27 (33.75%)	37 (46.25%)	5 (6.25%)	11 (13.75%)	80
15	Learnt adequate knowledge of Nigeria empire, kingdom and chiefdom before the amalgamation.	30 (37.5%)	25 (31.25%)	15 (18.75%)	10 (12.5%)	80
16	Received education on how Nigeria states were created and how Nigerian lived together.	26 (32.5%)	24 (30%)	15 (18.75%)	10 (12.5%)	80

items 15 and 16 recorded 18.75%, 18.75% respectively on disagreed responses. Items 13 and 14 with the lowest percentages of 10% and 6.25% disagreed and strongly disagreed in items 15 and 16 with 12.5% and 12.5% respectively. With the highest record in strongly agreed statement and agreed statement, therefore social studies education teachers are highly aware of social integration and cultural cooperation in Nigeria right from inception.

Discussion

The analysis shows that social studies education promoted social integration in Nigerian through uniting and promoting social integration, values of social cohesion and national objectives. These ideas are in consonance with Omooba, Obi and Olabode (2008) when they affirm that social studies has been described as the key subject that is indispensable for the attainment of national unity. It is therefore an uphill task for educating the various ethnic groups in Nigeria on the interdependence of one group with another, social responsibilities with one another, the concept of equality with one another and of the philosophy of one nation with one undivided and indivisible destiny. Kochar (2002) also affirms that social studies as the name suggests studies the society; the chief aim is to help pupils to understand the world in which they live, and how it comes to be, so that they may become responsible citizens. Social studies also aims at critical thinking and encouraging a readiness for social change at creating a disposition for acting behalf of the general welfare of people, an appreciation of other cultures and a realization of interdependence of man and man; and of nation and nation.

The data also showed that social studies education promotes social cooperation, social awareness and integration, solves societal problem, and teaches senses of belonging and the need for tolerance. In the light of this, Jarolimek (1977) as cited in Ikwumelu (1992) affirm that social studies concerns itself with learning about people, how and where they live, how they form and structure societies, how they govern themselves and provide for their material and psychological needs. Other areas of concern to social studies according to Jarolimek (1977) are how and why societies love and hate each other, how they use and misuse the resources of the planet that is their home. According to Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2008) social studies in the

indigenous Nigerian society placed unbounded emphasis on values or affective learning to promote integration through appreciation, respect, loyalty to the family, hospitality to people, learning the myths and traditions, values familiarity with people's culture, acceptance of beliefs and practices, as well as learning the virtues of cooperation, etc.

Relationship exists between social studies education and cultural cooperation. In line with the findings, Ogunbemi (1998) observes that social studies education studies man and everything about his environment. Attempt at understanding human relationship aims at producing citizenship with skills, competences, moral values and reasoned judgment to effectively live, interact, interrelate and contribute positively to the economies, social, political and cultural development of Nigerian society. Danladi (2005) in same trend opines that social studies education is a field of study that strives to pass on the knowledge, attitudes, values and practical skills of the society to the young ones, who later will become adults for purpose of helping them become better members of the society. In addition to this, it helps in understanding the multicultural set-up of human societies and accommodating one another for sustainable development and progress. Okam (1998) concludes by saying that social studies is the school subject that has the potentialities for inculcating the right type of virtues in the learner's unified and interdisciplinary study of man.

In the light of social studies, social experience is meaningless without skills, techniques and procedures, applied to subsequent situations by the teacher. According to Sign (2008), social studies provides adequate information about man's relationship to man and his environment. It is a store house of accumulated human experience and knowledge which is open to the child who gets it through reading, motion picture, listening to others and many other activities connected with the teaching of social studies by social studies teachers and the correct interpretations of judgment and generalization. The history of Nigerian amalgamation is not left out, since social studies describes the standards that society has evolved during the course of time and provides education for character and behaviour, forming and moulding of attitudes, ideals and standards. Glereson and Whitty (1976) as cited in Sign (2008) sum it up that the professional social

studies teacher functions principally as a facilitator of learning rather than a dispenser of knowledge.

Prospect

Social studies new curriculum considers man's various relationships or encounters with other men in and outside his immediate environment. However, social studies programme hopes to provide a setting for students to acquire knowledge of social sciences, arts, humanities, pure and natural sciences so as to expose the learners to a broad variety of opinions, facilitating the formulation, re-assessment, and affirmation of their beliefs. Akinlaye (1996) observes that the new social studies programme will enable the learners to participate effectively in the groups to which they belong and not to look only to their future participation as adults. The school serves as a laboratory for students to learn social participation directly and not symbolically. Democratic and participatory school and classroom environments are essential to this type of real-world learning. Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2008) affirm that the expectant change in social studies education includes:

- Complementing the new emphasis in the integrated approach with the social living approach. The free ranging model, interactive approach and the comprehensive themes approach.
- De-emphasizing the passive oriented didactic and expository method and focusing largely on the active, investigation-oriented and activity packed methods.
- Encouraging individualised instruction in social studies and attention focused on the innovative teaching methods.
- Social studies will more than ever be community-focused and will be taught with the community's human and material resources.
- Will improvise increased and well-made instructional materials.
- Will increase university programmes in social studies education and the production of social studies personnel for all levels of the educational system.

- Social studies will be introduced in the senior secondary school either as a distinct school subject or as citizenship education.

Social studies has and will be an integration of different subjects in the field of social sciences, humanities, arts, applied sciences and pure sciences which its broad knowledge will enable social studies students to acquire a better understanding of the concepts, events and materials around their physical environment. Therefore, it will further deal with man's interactions with his physical, social, economic, cultural, religious, scientific and technological environments (Akinlaye, 1996). It is believed that social studies in the school curriculum will help the learners at all levels to develop the ability to adapt to the ever-national consciousness and aspiration towards national cohesion, unity and progress. Thus, the following purpose of social studies are equally hoped to be achieved according to Ololobou (1999):

- Inculcate national consciousness and aspiration towards national cohesion, unity and progress.
- Make learners become good citizens capable of and willing to contribute to the development of society,
- Inculcate the right types of attitude, skill and values in the learners.
- Make learners acquire basic knowledge, feeling and skill as essential pre-requisite to personal development as well as positive contribution to the better quality of life of man in the society.
- Social studies will develop in the learner's intellectual capacity and ability, self-confidence, self-expression, self-realization, initiative, reflective thinking, resourcefulness for the social-political order.

Conclusion

It is very clear and obvious from these aspirations of social studies that its concern are on citizenship education, with full emphasis on the development of the rational habits of mind and humane attitude

that should enable individual learner make informed decisions about social and personal matters. Social studies education variably will further promote Nigerian integration through uniting and promoting social cooperation, values of social cohesion and national objectives, social awareness and integration, solving societal problem, creating sense of belonging and the need for tolerance.

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