



## An Analysis of the Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum in Nigeria Using Posner's Curriculum Analysis Model

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### ABSTRACT

The Nigeria's Social Studies curriculum is designed to equip the learners with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to be able to make sound judgments and take appropriate actions that will contribute to sustainable development of both social and physical environments. This paper therefore was aimed to provide a detailed curriculum analysis of the Nigerian Junior Secondary School (Upper Basic) Social Studies curriculum using Posner's curriculum analysis framework. The analysis was based on the four components of Posner's (2004) curriculum analysis model; curriculum documentation and origins, curriculum proper, curriculum in use and curriculum critique. The paper employed a document analysis method which included an article published by the curriculum designers, empirical findings, observations, as well as an interview with key participants in the development and implementation of the curriculum. Based on the analysis, it was concluded that the Curriculum is all right and the objectives are well spelt out but are yet to be achieved. Suggestions were made to improve the Curriculum and overcome potential weaknesses.

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### INTRODUCTION

Education as an important tool for national development has become the major concern of successive governments in Nigeria. Curriculum has become one of the success determinant factors in reaching the purposes of education and one of such curriculum is Social Studies. To this purpose, the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2006 has re-aligned the Social Studies curriculum named *9-Year Basic Education Curriculum for Social Studies JSS 1-3*, developed by Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in 2007, which is basically the revised version of the former *Nigerian Junior Secondary School Social Studies curriculum* of 1985 developed by the Comparative Education Study and Adaption Centre (CESAC) and the Nigerian Educational Research Council (NERC). The main crux of this paper is to provide a detailed curriculum analysis

and review of the current Nigerian Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum. Therefore, to identify the scope and focus of the curriculum, a systematic analysis was employed using the Posner's (2004) curriculum analysis framework, which poses four sets of components that let "the analyst tease a curriculum apart into its components" (Posner, 2004). These components comprises of *curriculum documentation and origins; curriculum proper; curriculum in use and curriculum critique*. Although the analysis was peculiar to the Social Studies curriculum, the results may be pertinent to similar curriculum and may provide a baseline for curriculum developers.

### AN OVERVIEW OF THE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM IN NIGERIA

Curriculum is the vehicle for facilitating education. It is the planned and guided learning experiences and intended learning outcomes, formulated and provided under the auspices of the school, for the learner's continuous and willful growth in cognitive, affective and psychomotor competence (Ivowi, 2003). Curriculum thus involves all the actions of the school, which are aimed at getting the child to begin a course and at the end attain educational goals. Denga (2001) defined curriculum as "planned and unplanned learning experiences to which learners are exposed within and outside the school environment for individual and collective growth". It is used to meet specific needs, interests, goals and aspirations. The curriculum should naturally provide directions and guide teachers as they organize appropriate and desirable learning activities (Olojobou, 2010). It is a programme of studies and activities designed so that learners will attain as far as possible, certain educational goals and objectives. According to Olibie and Ezeoba (2013), curriculum comprises of the courses or subjects and their contents to be studied by learners at all levels of education. Among such subjects is Social Studies.

Social Studies is an innovative in the school curriculum in Nigerian educational scene. Its introduction into the Nigerian school was agreed upon at the National Curriculum Conference of 1969. Eventually, Social Studies was introduced in the Nigerian school curriculum as part of the instrument for the achieving national development (Obebe, 2005). This was what informed its inclusion at the basic education level in Nigeria i.e, primary and junior secondary school and its subsequent elevation to the status of core or compulsory subject is a clear reflection of its perceived importance (FRN, 2013). In Nigeria, Social Studies is generally defined to mean "the study of man's interaction with his environment - Physical and Social" (Nigerian Education Research and Development Council, 2007; v-vi). It is therefore concerned with the reciprocal relationship between man and his environment in respect of how he is influenced by it and vice versa (Adaralegbe, 1980). These influences (physical and social) define and determine man's belief, occupation, use of natural and man-made resources etc.

Social Studies curriculum is concerned with what is planned, programmed, selected, proved and guided by the culture, experiences, aspiration and knowledge of the society, for the individual learners in the nation's schools (Kantoma, 2015). It has been observed that people and places in the world are different, and so are their interest, values, needs and norms or traditions, wants, desires, demands and aspirations. In a nutshell, Social Studies curriculum is an educational programme which embraces knowledge, method, resources, evaluation and societal experiences offered to learners in an effort to promote positive attitudes or values and acquisition of useful skills. Danladi (2006) in what he terms as operational curriculum design for Social Studies provides the following as Social Studies curriculum components: 1) Societal needs and problems; 2) Objectives; 3) Contents; 4) Methodology; 5) Society, Culture and Resources; and 6) Evaluation.

Primarily, the rationale behind the introduction of Social Studies curriculum in Nigerian schools was that the exposure of young people to the subject would instill in them a love for their country and a sense of loyalty to the Nigerian government. It was believed that the subject would expose the learners to the problems in our society and equips them with necessary skills needed for their survival (Olojobou, 2007). This position is further collaborated by Ajiboye (2008) who argues that the ultimate goal of Social Studies education is citizenship training and that civic issues had always been part of the subject since its inception. Currently, the overall objectives of Basic Education Social Studies curricula in Nigeria should be to enable pupils and students to achieve the following:

- a) develop the ability to adapt to their 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;



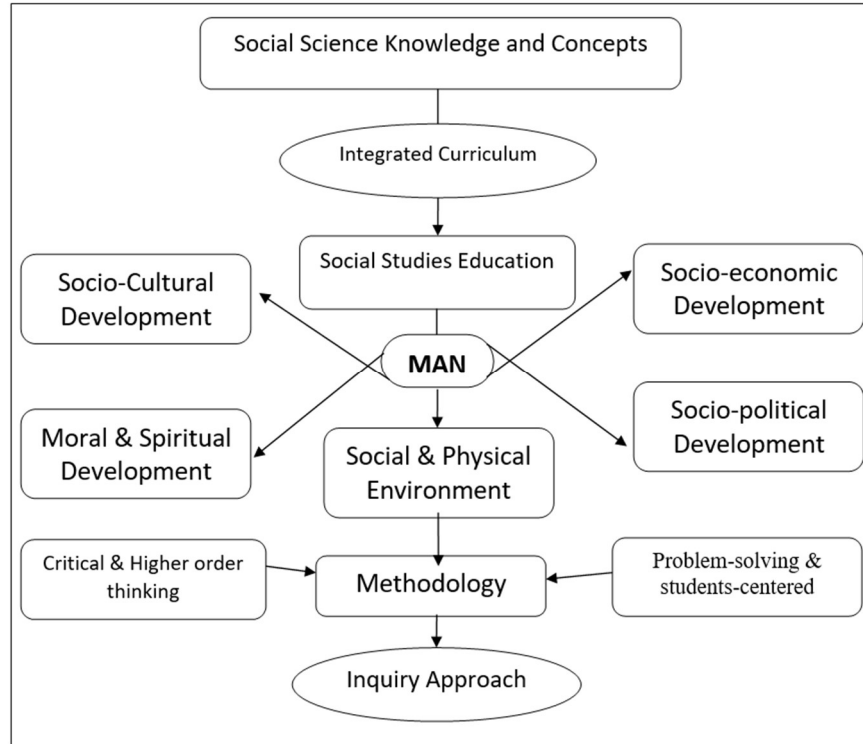
- e) develop the capacity to recognize the many dimensions of being human in different cultural and social contexts; and
- f) develop a sense of solidarity and sharing based on a sense of security in one's own identity (NERDC, 2007: v-vi).
- iii. Foster and improve human relations through a better understanding of others within the immediate environment and beyond (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that Social Studies curriculum in Nigerian school system is designed to build citizens who are intellectually sound, skillful and capable of exhibiting desirable attitudes, values and social actions to promote nation building.

The Social Studies curriculum is eclectic and versatile due to the nature of the course as a discrete or distinct area of specialization (Edinyang and Unimke, 2014). However, according to Mezieobi (1993), the general belief of curriculum planners for Social Studies is to provide a forum whereby learners would be taught how to imbibe the values in Nigerian society. The provisions and objectives set for the accomplishment of Social Studies goals are worthwhile enough to achieve the set goals and the objectives are laudable enough to bring about a worthwhile end. Therefore, the curriculum design of Social Studies is to help the school child to have a holistic understanding of man's existence and interaction with natural and social environment (Joof and Okam, 1992). The basic goal of this subject design is that of preparing a school child for full responsible citizenship through practical utilization of knowledge drawn from a variety of sources in the social sciences. To achieve this basic goal, the subject is designed to:

- i. Provide insight into the use of various knowledge structure and procedure from the social sciences that have relevance in modern civilizations;
- ii. Be concerned with fostering (students) better understanding of the movement, events and personalities that have influence the history of their immediate environment and the wider world as a global community.

Based on the curricular design issues displayed above, it is established that the Social Studies curriculum design in Nigeria provides a base for integrated, interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary approaches to curriculum design with sole goal of studying issues and problems in the society for the purpose of solving them. Thus, curriculum development in Social Studies is therefore aimed at a universe of inter-disciplinary inquiry, discourse and understanding among the young citizens of different background and aspirations; who as citizens would have to share some responsibilities and problems (Dubey & Barth, 1980; Adarelegbe, 1980; and Okam & Ezegebe, 2013). It has been noted that the various forms of thoughts and reasoning represented in Social Studies education vary among the individual subject disciplines of the social sciences. Okam (2002) rightly observed that the instructional framework of Social Studies curriculum is therefore associated with expended meaning and knowledge of the interconnections and interrelationships of the concepts. Thus, as depicted in figure 1 below, the curriculum content of Social Studies are selected and drawn from the social sciences. But the selected contents are not in any way taught in the context of the social science disciplines; instead, they are integrated into a single curriculum design to develop multi-discipline approach in the study of man and society. The design exposes the learners towards acquiring the skills and competences of adopting the strategy of multi-disciplinary approach to studying issues; and, interdisciplinary approach to problem-solving. According to Garba, Singh, Yusuf and Sa'ad (2012), the focus of instructions in Social Studies education is to be directed toward socio-economic issue; socio-political issues; socio-cultural development; moral and spiritual development for the overall development of man and society.



**Fig.1:** The Conceptual Framework of Social Studies Curriculum Design in Nigerian Schools  
**Source:** Adapted from Garba, A. S. *et al.* (2012).

### **Analyzing Nigerian JSS Social Studies Curriculum using Posner's Curriculum Analysis Model**

Curriculum analysis is an important task in detecting the validity of assumptions behind the curriculum and to assess its perspectives, goals and objectives (Posner, 2004). Thus, Curriculum analysis refers to segmenting the curriculum in order to understand the coherent plan (Heyman, 1981). While curriculum development involves building and packing the curriculum in order to present a coherent plan, the curriculum analysis connotes "unpacking the components/elements of curriculum e.g., teaching, learning, knowledge, society, resources". (Posner, 2004). Curriculum analysis is a useful tool that can be utilized to evaluate how the different parts of the curriculum fit together in terms of focus and coherence,

checking the underlying beliefs and assumptions validity. Also, it is an important step taken by most of the curriculum development agencies and schools in seeking justification for curriculum choices and assumptions (Heyman, 1981). From the foregoing we can deduced that curriculum analysis is critical in determining whether a curriculum is appropriate to be used in a particular classroom, school or community. This examination requires understanding the underlying assumptions of the curriculum and determining the extent to which they are valid for the particular situation. Based on that, this paper adopted the Posner's (2004) curriculum analysis framework to analyse the Junior Secondary School Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria. In the model, Posner developed a framework and posed a set of questions that may be used by the

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curriculum analysts to tease a curriculum apart into its component parts. These are:

- 1) Curriculum documentation and origins
- 2) Curriculum proper
- 3) Curriculum in use
- 4) Curriculum critique (see figure 2).

Similarly, Posner (2004) presents five (5) theoretical perspectives on curriculum, as follows; *Traditional*, *Experiential*, *Structure of the disciplines*, *Behavioural* and *Cognitive*. To summarize the five perspectives, Posner also provide five central questions:

1. **Traditional:** What are the most important aspects of our *cultural heritage* that should be preserved?

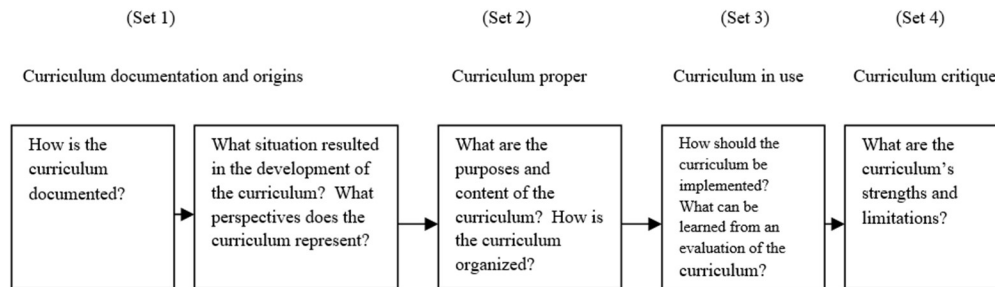
2. **Experiential:** What *experiences* will lead to the healthy growth of the individual?

3. **Structure of the disciplines:** What is the *structure of the disciplines* of knowledge [to be acquired by the pupils]?

4. **Behavioural:** At the completion of the curriculum, what should the learners *be able to do*?

5. **Cognitive:** How can people learn to *make sense* of the world and to *think* more productively and creatively?

Moreover, Posner (2004) further explained that an understanding of these perspectives is essential before attempt to use his framework for curriculum analysis.



**Figure 2:** Posner's Process of Curriculum Analysis

**Source:** Posner, G. J. (2004).

### THE CURRICULUM ANALYSIS

The basis of this curriculum analysis is, therefore, the *Nigerian 9-Year Basic Education Social Studies Curriculum (JSS 1-3)*, developed by Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in 2007. The following is a detailed curriculum analysis using Posner's (2004) Curriculum Analysis Framework.

#### Set 1. Curriculum Documentation and Origins

Curriculum documentation and origins address issues of who develops the curriculum for what reasons, how it is planned out, and how it is affected by social, political, cultural and or economic situations (Posner, 2004). It concern about the philosophical, theoretical, empirical and jurisdictional aspects of the curriculum. In other words, the curriculum analysis starts with

revealing the factors and histories behind the development and planning of curriculum. According to Yusop (2013) the first set of Posner's curriculum analysis also refers to the political, economic and social problems that prompted the formulation of the curriculum. For instance, the emerging need to educate students to be computer literate becomes the basis of computer literacy curriculum (Posner, 2004). It is important to know the history behind formulation of a curriculum so as to allow educationists to review the curriculum if needed. Therefore, in this analysis all aspects concerning to historical, jurisdictional, philosophical, theoretical and empirical aspects of Nigerian JSS Social Studies curriculum were analysed.

**Historically,** Social Studies curriculum as a school subject had its origin in the United States





of America in 1916. And in Nigeria it was in Ayetoro Comprehensive High School, Ibadan that Social Studies as an integrated subject was first introduced to secondary school curriculum in 1963. In 1969, Social Studies department was firmly established in the Institute of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The introduction of Social Studies was disturbed in the former Eastern region due to Nigeria civil war (Ololobou, 1999). Presently, Social Studies is a core and compulsory subject in the 9-years Basic Education Programme of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria. The success of the subject could be attributed to the efforts of various professional bodies who worked relentlessly to propagate the subject among which are the Nigerian Education Research Council now known as Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC), Comparative Education Study and Adaptation Centre (CESAC), Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN), Northern Nigeria Teacher Education Project (NNTEP) and National Teacher's Institute (NTI).

Tracing the origins of Nigerian Junior Secondary School Social Studies curriculum, Jekayinfa (n.d) noted that was to the need to sensitize the youths to the problems of their immediate environment. The need for nation-building after the civil war is also shown to have contributed to the emergence of the subject to forge the idea of citizenship education. Thus, from the foregoing, it clearly shows that Social Studies curriculum was designed as an instrument which is highly indispensable for building and developing effective citizens who would transform Nigeria into a united, strong and self-reliant nation.

**Jurisdictional aspect**, the first thing that evokes into the Nigerian Social Studies curriculum is the jurisdictional principle, which is stipulated in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that “Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels. Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy; and to this end Government shall as and when practicable provide free, compulsory and universal primary education; free secondary

education; free university education and free adult literacy programme” (FRN, 1999). With this provision of the Nigerian Constitution we can deduce that Social Studies education being a school subject and made it compulsory for all students at the basic education levels is seen as been appropriate to provide equal access to qualitative opportunities for all actions within and outside the formal school system (Adesina, 2013). The implication of this, is that Social Studies curriculum is recognized as a school programme capable of assisting in the realization of the national goals of Nigeria as stated in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) as the building of:

- i. a free and democratic society;
- ii. a just and egalitarian society;
- iii. a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- iv. a great and dynamic economy; and
- v. a land of bright and full opportunities for all its citizens (NPE, 2013).

Thirdly, from the **philosophical aspect**, the introduction of Social Studies curriculum in Nigerian schools was to promote national consciousness, national unity, effective citizenship, social and political harmony, mutual co-existence, value clarification and re-orientation all at which are powerful ingredients for building a free, democratic, just, egalitarian, united, strong and self-reliant nation. Social Studies education in Nigeria was conceived as a subject to help heal the wounds of the civil war, ethnicity, ethnocentrism, social, economic and political problems, and to promote national consciousness and national integration, co-operation, good citizenship among others using the instrument of school (Ololobou, 2007).

The overall philosophy and objectives of education in Nigeria is based on the development of individual into a sound and effective citizen; the full integration of individual into the community and the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system (FRN, 2013). Based on our analysis, these characteristics of the Nigeria's philosophy of education are fully reflected in the Social Studies objectives. Because Social



Studies, a part of from imparting knowledge and providing valuable information necessary in life, also aims at helping students to inculcate desirable social habits, attitudes, and values needed for the survival for the survival of the individual in the society. Thus, Social Studies education is recognized as a subject capable of assisting in the realization of the national objectives of education, which in themselves are a reflection of the national philosophy.

From the **theoretical aspect** of this analysis, Barth and Shermis (1970) identified three theoretical principle involved in the Social Studies curriculum development that is *citizenship transmission*, the *social science* and *reflective thinking models*. These theoretical positions embody the philosophical and instructional goals of Social Studies education. The citizenship transmission model encourages those instructional approaches which inculcate the norms, values, rules, beliefs and principles of democratic living to students especially through interaction processes that are persuasive. By implication the main goal of Social Studies curriculum is to make children good and effective citizens which enable them become disciplined adults who would be able to maintain the principles of patriotism, moral uprightness, faithfulness, effectiveness and efficiency in all endeavours that may lead to national development (Adesina, 2013). The social science model emphasizes the training of students as junior historians and social scientists. Social Studies is interdisciplinary and draws its content from the social sciences. It is more or less a reflection of the disciplinary influence of the social sciences on Social Studies education especially with respect to encouraging students to become active and critical thinking citizens. The reflective thinking model on the other hand encourages the process of thinking and problem-solving attitudes required by pupils to become active political citizens.

Lastly, **empirical aspect** proved that Social Studies curriculum set to provides Nigerian generations profoundly need to be prepared for the elevating economic growth, on one hand; and on the social and criminal issues that have

awfully occurred across the country such as youth restiveness, child/ human trafficking, drug abuse, corruption, violence, kidnapping, thuggery, ethnic militia, holliganism and robbery, incessant killings, wonton destruction of properties etc. (NERDC, 2007; Adesina, 2013).

The National Policy on Education (2013) viewed education in Nigeria of which Social Studies curriculum is core as an instrument par excellence for effecting national values and total development. Ololobou (2007) regarded social studies as a curriculum instrument for inculcating positive norms, attitudes and values for effective citizenship. It is observed that many empirical studies reveal that the goals and objectives of Social Studies are yet to attain. In other words the Nigerian populace, through their school systems, is yet to effectively achieve the desired ends that promoted the introduction and teaching of Social Studies in the country. The lapses are not entirely inherent in policy formulation as stipulated in National Policy on Education but on the implementation issues as critically examined in this paper.

On the final note, the curriculum documentation of JSS Social Studies in Nigeria provides the rationale of the curriculum, the learning objectives, the expected consequences the curriculum should have on the students and their socio-economic environment, a stipulated teacher and students' activities, teaching and learning materials, suggestive approaches to teaching content, and guidelines regarding student's evaluation.

## Set 2. Curriculum Proper

The curriculum proper is concerned with the purpose and content of the curriculum and what assumptions each imply (Posner, 2004). It seeks to clarify the organizational structure and content embraced in the curriculum. According to Yusop (2013), this second set of Posner's curriculum analysis framework, *curriculum proper*, is meant to capture the essence of the curriculum. It zooms into the process of designing and developing the curriculum by examining the purposes and content of the curriculum, and how it is organized. Analysis of curriculum purposes and content require close examination of its



educational aims, goals and down to its learning objectives. Organization of the curriculum, on the other hand, is concerned with the epistemological views applied in its content organization. In this regards, Posner (2004) identifies two sets of views that affect curriculum organization: the *behavioral psychologists view* and the *cognitive psychologists view*. The former view is concerned with change in certain behaviors of the learners, while the latter is concerned with enhancement of the intellectual abilities such as higher-order thinking skills of the learners (Yusop, 2013).

The Nigerian JSS Social Studies curriculum emphasizes concept learning, reflective thinking and problem solving (Jekayinfa, n.d). The curriculum tries to show that as a nation, Nigeria must emphasize the similarities and common traits among the ethnic groups in order to build a United Nigeria. All the themes are taken from some of the Social Science disciplines, namely Geography, Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology and History, Science and Technology aspects are also featured in the curriculum. All the subjects brought together are believed to be able to provide useful knowledge which a person required to become an informed citizen.

A critical examination of the existing JSS Social Studies curriculum shows that an aspect of citizenship education in the curriculum

were completely disarticulated and a separate subject termed Civic Education was designed. The curriculum could be described as depths, appropriateness, and inter-relations of the curriculum contents. It was introduced to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 now Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and by extension, the need to implement the core focus of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS), which are value orientation, poverty eradication, job creation, wealth generation and using education to empower people (Obioma, 2007). Our analysis indicated that JSS Social Studies curriculum content was structured and organized in a thematic approach in which the major themes were selected and topics were arranged under them in a spiral manner to sustain the interests of the students. Also the format of the themes includes the topic, performance objectives, teachers and student's activities, suggested teaching methods and materials as well as suggested evaluation guide. Furthermore, the thematic and spiral structure of the curricula have provided sufficient deep, rich and extensive social issues and problems which will make the Social Studies lessons interesting, active, interactive and very engaging to the Nigerian students. The themes covered in the JSS Social Studies curriculum package are shown in table 1 below:

**Table 1:** Breakdown of the Major Themes of Social Studies Curriculum at JSS Level

Grades	Themes
JSS One	Introduction of social studies, People and their environment, Socialization; its agent and process, Culture, Social issues and problems and National Unity and Integration.
JSS Two	People and their environment; Culture, Social issues and problems, Science, technology and society, Communication, Family I, Family II, School community, Science technology and society II, Social issues and problems, Storage, National economy and Health issue.
JSS Three	Social values, Peace and conflicts, National economy, National Economic Life, Science, technology and society and World issues.

**Source:** NERDC (2007). *9-Year Basic Education Curriculum in Social Studies JSS 1-3*.

From the above table, we can deduced that there are six (6) themes in JSS one, fourteen (14) themes in JSS two and also six (6) themes in JSS three syllabus. This indicated that the JSS two syllabus is broader than JSS one and three,

because it incorporated many of the contemporary issues of local and global concern.

In view of the above, Posner (2004) advocated set of views that affect curriculum design and organization i.e., *behaviorists* and





*cognitivist* psychological views of learning experiences. Based on that the curriculum content of JSS Social Studies was so selected and organized that there are fewer topics in the upper class (JSS 3) than in the lower ones. The topics were arranged in a special form according to the advocacy of behaviourist psychologists who view learning in term how events in the environment affects behavior. Williams (2002) avers that behaviourists have a solid conviction that environmental forces responsible for making us what we are must be organized with extreme care and be reactivated in the school's curriculum with the same scientific precision that engineers employ when they design a complicated machine. In fact, the behavioural approach is orientated to the behavioural objectives, which according to Mucavele (2009) are simply objectives in terms of the observable behaviour expected of students after instruction. This means that the behavioural approach focuses on what learners should be able to do as a result of the teaching and learning process (Posner, 2004).

On the other hand, cognitivist psychologists try to explain learning in term of how people think and construct their knowledge based on prior experience. Based on this view we can affirmed that the JSS Social Studies curriculum content emphasizes concept learning, reflective thinking and problem solving approach. The curriculum could be described as an example of the child world curriculum as advocated by Social Studies practitioners because each theme is oriented towards human problems that impinge on the child (Jekayinfa, n.d). She further explains that over-riding goal of the JSS Social Studies curriculum appears to be the provision of knowledge to produce sound and informed citizens who will translate knowledge and attitudes into desirable socio-civic behavior. By implication, based on the cognitivist views, the content arrangement and organization of learning experiences drives from the JSS Social Studies curriculum will allow learners to know and comprehend each topic in and outside the classroom for easy assimilation and meaningful functional learning. In essence, continuous use of similar concepts will give learners the ability and the opportunity to understand the learning

process and create new knowledge on their own based on their prior experiences.

In summary, from the analysis we can deduced that the Nigerian Social Studies curriculum reflects depths, appropriateness, and inter-relatedness of the curricula contents. Meanwhile, after critical examination of the existing Social Studies curriculum at JSS Level is identified that the objectives are not covering all the three (3) domains of learning, i.e., cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. As noticed, most of the objectives in this curriculum were emphasize on cognitive aspect, neglecting the affective and psychomotor areas. Also, in the content organization of the curriculum, it is observed that most of the contents and topics in this curriculum lack sequential arrangement and organization. However, as identified that most of the objectives are stated in cognitive area. Likewise, the evaluation procedures also emphasized on cognitive aspect. In order to give a total and balanced feedback on the growth and progress of learners, the evaluation procedures should cover all the three aspects of learning (Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor).

### Set 3. Curriculum in Use

The third process of Posner's curriculum analysis model is the *curriculum in use* which is related to how teachers interpret and put the official curriculum into operation. It simply concerns with curriculum implementation. Throughout this implementation process, the curriculum analysts need to take many frame factors; physical, cultural, temporal, economic, organizational, political, legal, and personal characteristics into consideration. These factors might either hinder or facilitate the implementation of the curriculum (Posner, 2004). According to Yusop (2013), curriculum in use, focus on the issue of curriculum implementation and evaluation. Some of the issues one needs to consider include the issue of available resources and the constraints emerged resulting from the implementation of the curriculum. Offorma (1994), define curriculum implementation as the translation of the curriculum contents into practice or action. She further explained that implementation of curriculum is normally done in the classroom



through joint efforts of the teacher and learners and those concerned. According to Meziobi (2013), Social Studies curriculum implementation refers to the process of instilling life into a dormant Social Studies curriculum plan or document by operationalising it to achieve specified goals. The degree of effectiveness in the practical translation of a curriculum is evidenced by the proper conduct, behaviour and performance of the learners. The current analysis will hinged on research literature on implementing the JSS Social Studies curriculum in different parts of Nigeria, with particular emphasis, to contextual conditions in which implementation may occur. Therefore, the analysis of the state of the implementation of the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum in Social Studies in Nigeria are based on the following factors, thus:

- i. The teacher factor
- ii. The student factor
- iii. The system factor

These are briefly discussed, thus below:

### 1. The Teacher Factor

Putting the curriculum into operation requires an implementation agent. The teacher is identified as the agent in the curriculum implementation process (Obanya, 2007). A major setback in effective curriculum implementation of Social Studies curriculum is the problem of unqualified teachers, especially specialist teachers in Social Studies education. According to Oloobou (2011) the professional Social Studies teacher is the life wire for the effective implementation of the Social Studies programme. However, there are clear indications that most Social Studies teachers are largely unqualified. The limited professional competence of the primary and Junior secondary school Social Studies teachers imply that they cannot handle the content of Social Studies curriculum in the desired manner and adopt the recommended inquiry method of teaching. As noted by Okonkwo (2012) that the classroom malfunctioning of Social Studies Curriculum at the JSS level is largely due to the mode of implementation adopted by teachers. As is evident in the curriculum document and effort of teachers teaching the subject. For instance,

statement of objectives is stated in favour of the cognitive domain to the near total neglect of the psycho-motor and affective domains. Over 80% of objectives planned and taught are cognitive objectives. Kantoma (2015) revealed that over 50 percent of the stated instructional objectives in the secondary schools Social Studies curriculum was basically cognitive objectives. The implication of this is that the focus of teachers' evaluation effort is the regurgitation of the knowledge provided rather than measuring attitudes and values developed which is the philosophical basis of the Social Studies.

On the issue of teaching methods, there are many researches carried out in Social Studies curriculum implementation and their findings revealed that many Nigerian Social Studies teachers mostly used the traditional/conventional lecture methods that centers on teacher, textbook, chalk and chalkboard. A study by Mezieobi (2013) revealed that over ninety (90%) percent of all the Social Studies teachers largely use the expository/presentation teaching methods in their classroom interactive process in which teachers are sheer dispenser of knowledge, not learning guide, to the student-clientele who listen in passivity. Interview shows that, the method commonly used was lecture method neglecting new methods and strategies like simulation method, advanced organizer model and concept mapping among other new pedagogical methods. This tallied with the findings of Kantoma (2015), and Babo (2015) respectively, who found that the teachers place much emphasis on teacher-centered method than activity-based or student-oriented method and the implementation of the course contents is mostly dominated by the use of traditional techniques of instruction notably the lecture method to the detriment of other instructional strategies.

In the area of instructional facilities, it has been noted that many teachers of Social Studies find it difficult to prepare lessons due to the inadequate textbooks of Social Studies written by Social Studies experts. No wonder, Oloobou (2004) stated that one sad observation that impedes the realization of Social Studies objectives is the dearth of Social Studies textbooks in JSS level. Similarly, Chukwu (2010)



observed that limited modern facilities of teaching Social Studies in Junior Secondary Schools resulted in the use of obsolete and outdated facilities that lead to faulty learning outcomes of the students. Based on this analysis, it is observed that there is unavailability of school facilities and equipments like classrooms, libraries, laboratories, computer sets, resource centers, offices, desks, schools halls and others to effectively teach Social Studies at JSS level. As it relates to instructional materials and resources usage, Mezieobi and Mezieobi (2011) revealed that most Social Studies teachers make use of reading materials largely textbooks, some select visual materials such as chalkboard, diagrams, pictures, and completely ignore Audio – Materials (AM), Audio-Visual Materials (AVM) and Community Resources.

In the evaluation of learning outcomes, it has been observed that most of the Social Studies teachers adopt only formal tools to the total neglect of less- formal and informal evaluation techniques. The implication is that only the cognitive domain is evaluated leaving out the psychomotor and affective domains. This is a grievous situation as social studies is largely an affective subject directed at shaping the behaviours of students. Olobobou (2011) reported that only test is used by most of the Social Studies teachers and the questions asked not only require low level of cognitive functioning but lack content validity. This situation is also reflected in the junior secondary certificate examination (JSCE) questions and result. Analysis by Kadiri (2008) on the BECE questions and results showed that learners displayed ignorance and lack of mastery of content areas in Social Studies. This is in spite of the fact that questions used did not focus the current realities or reflect any appreciable relevance for young people tasked with the responsibility of nation building. The handling of the Social Studies curriculum in this manner has caused lots of problems, preventing the realization of stated goals. Studies of Okobia (2009), Kantoma (2015) and Babo (2015) revealed that evaluation in Social Studies is largely focused on the extent to which students retained factual content and materials. Emphasis is laid on the traditional efforts at evaluating mainly the cognitive

achievements of learning. As a result, assessment of the non-cognitive learning outcomes has remained one of the neglected aspects of teaching and learning in Nigerian schools. The non-cognitive aspects of learning especially the affective domain deals with learning outcomes that promote and reinforce the learners' feelings, emotions, attitude, values, interests and appreciation. Generally, the JSS Social Studies curriculum in its present state is non-functional. This is why steps need to be taken to redress the situation.

## 2. The Student Factor

Students are the central figure of any curriculum development. As such full implementation of any curriculum takes place when learners acquires the planned or intended experiences, skills, knowledge, attitudes and ideas which are aimed to enable them effectively and optimally function in the society. The learner is therefore seen as the central figure of curriculum implementation process. Obanya (2007) contends that effective curriculum is the one that reflects what the learner eventually takes away from an educational experience, which he termed 'the learned curriculum'. Learners may also influence the curriculum implementation in Nigeria. If teachers are provided to be the arbiters of the learning process, but the learners actually hold the key to the idea of curriculum activity. Students were not represented as direct contributors in the curriculum design process, but their "needs" were established on the basis of the professional knowledge of the textbook writers and of the curriculum designers. In this regard, some studies were reviewed to assess students' specific interests, attitudes or concerns related to the teaching of the Social Studies in Nigeria.

Jekayinfa (n.d.) reported that high grade in Social Studies at JSS level is a factor that can full students to History or Government in the SSS level in Nigeria. She further stated that the poor attitudes of some students towards the study of Social Studies in secondary schools is an unsatisfactory state of affairs and imbalance in the educational sector in particular and the nation's development in Nigeria. However, it has been noted that some students still have wrong



notion and perception about Social Studies and this could be responsible for poor performance of them in the subject. Studies by Muhammad, lyoke and Nura (2009) found that students preferred Social Studies when it was treated in a more active learning mode i.e., when the lessons were carried out in a cooperative and collaborative learning environments. Teacher reliance on the use of predominately teacher-centred learning activities was found to be an influence on students' attitudes towards Social Studies. Therefore, the relationship of student, teacher and learning environment variables to interests and attitudes towards Social Studies are the major factors and also noted that student motivation, teacher quality/traits and classroom organisation variables were most consistently related to Social Studies attitudes for each grade level and gender.

Based on the foregoing analysis we can testify that the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum in Social Studies do not stresses students' involvement in activities that engage critical thinking, reflective inquiry and problem-solving skills. Similarly, while the importance of problem solving and inquiry-based learning strategies in Social Studies education are stated in the curriculum, it is clear that problem-formation and problem-solving are not emphasized adequately. As is obvious in most JSS Social Studies classrooms, learners are not given opportunity to be creative or challenged to think critically, experiment and discover.

### 3. The System Factor

The Nigeria educational system is largely academic-examination-and certificate-oriented (Ololobou, 2011). This pattern originally inherited from the colonial master/government has not changed over the years. This situation has robbed JSS Social Studies education from achieving stated goals. The system is not flexible as it operates under a tight timetable schedule. This places the Social Studies teacher under pressure to ensure that syllabus is fully covered preparatory to scheduled examinations for the award of certificates that candidates cannot justify. The resultant effect is that students are involved in examination malpractices. In addition, the nature of class-size arising from the

implementation of the UBE (1999) programmes have created class control, discipline and management problems. Most upper basic (JSS) classes are over flowing with students far above the stipulated 1:40 ratio. Muhammad, Nura and lyoke (2009) reported that it is now common to find JSS classes with a 1:100 ratio. In situations like this, the JSS Social Studies teacher cannot effectively implement the curriculum because the over-whelming number means he cannot give individual attention to students or even use small-group interactive approaches to enrich teaching and learning. Furthermore, there is faulty distribution, monitoring and supervision of the implementation process to ensure quality control. Another fundamental issue surrounding the implementation of Social Studies curriculum in Nigerian JSS is inadequate funding. Confirming this, Ololobou (2011) noted that, no any programme can function effectively without fund. Unfortunately, fund allocated for education is grossly inadequate.

The inconsistency changes of government policies as regards to education serve as another obstacle to the realization of Social Studies objectives at JSS level. There is no denying the fact that the goals and objectives of Social Studies education in Nigerian Junior Secondary Schools are all very sound and impressively state, but there is practically very little achievement on the ground. Based on this analysis, it has been noted that the Social Studies curriculum at Junior Secondary School level has undergone a good number of revisions resulting into the current 9-years Basic Education Curriculum. This integrated the 6-3-3-4 system as Lower Basic (primary 1-3), Middle Basic (primary 4-6), and Upper Basic (JS 1-3). Social studies still features core subject. But the implementation of the curriculum has been sloppy as a result of the alienation of the end users. Indeed, when many teachers and head-teachers were ask in a recent survey, they denied ever coming across copies of current 9-years Basic Education Curriculum (Social Studies). At this point, it is obvious to say that most of the impediments to the realization of Social Studies objectives at JSS level arise from the poor commitments of government to the conception and execution of its policies. It is



observed that there is limited procurement and supply of the resources in schools. Instructional materials and equipment are all in short supply or may not be available at all – no books or writing materials, no ICT facilities, inadequate or out-of-date library facilities among others.

#### Set 4. Curriculum Critique

Curriculum critique, the fourth set of Posner's (2004) analysis framework, concerns with the strengths and limitations of the curriculum that may lead to its re-making. Such analyses will also shed some lights on maximizing its strengths and minimizing its limitations.

There are numerous strengths and weaknesses associated with Nigerian JSS Social Studies curriculum. First, its strengths include flexibility for serving a greater student population, utilizing the thematic and spiral nature of the design of the curriculum, which stressing students involvement in hands-on activities that engage them with critical thinking and reflective inquiry, offering learning activities in which students with different interests and abilities work together, describing teachers' role as facilitators of the curriculum.

From this analysis, it can be observed that the Social Studies curriculum content at the JSS level is appropriate in the area of developing individual into morally sound, patriotic and effective citizens. Similarly, the instructional methods and materials recommended in the curriculum have the potential to make teachers more aware of their own actions and identifying the most effective ways to illustrate or share information. Another strength of the JSS Social Studies curriculum is the thematic and spiral structure of the curricula that have provided sufficient deep, rich and extensive social issues and problems which will make the lessons interesting, active, interactive and very engaging to the Nigerian students. Moreover, it is noted that the goals of the JSS Social Studies curricula are relevant to the needs, problems and aspirations of the contemporary Nigerian society.

As part of its strength, the 9-year Nigerian Basic Education Curriculum in Social Studies (JSS 1-3) can be partly considered a constructivist curriculum. Constructivism implies

that the student is always an active agent in the process of meaningful learning (Yalçinkaya, 2013). The Curriculum stresses students' involvement in hands-on activities that engage critical thinking, reflective inquiry and problem-solving approaches.

Next, as part of this curriculum's weaknesses includes its rigid structure of content i.e., lack sequential arrangement and organization; objectives are more emphasize on cognitive areas and also the evaluation procedures emphasized on cognitive aspect; the JSS two themes are broader than JSS one and JSS themes. On the other hand, while the importance of problem solving and inquiry-based learning strategies in Social Studies are stated in curriculum, it is clear that problem-formation and problem-solving are not emphasized adequately. The theoretical perspective which forms the basis for the current curriculum design does not differ from the one at the old curriculum. The traditional instructional approach to teaching the subject still remains. That is content is still delivered through lecture approach.

An overall analysis of the current state of the 9-year Basic Education Curriculum for Social Studies (JSS 1-3) reveals that the Curriculum was more utopian than practical. This is because there are clear indications that Social Studies Curriculum implementation at JSS level has been generally defective and largely ineffective and have shown disappointing outcomes. In fact, a scrutiny of literatures revealed that the philosophy and objectives Social Studies at the Junior Secondary Schools level are yet to be realized.

#### CONCLUSION

Curriculum analysis can offer insights into the designs of comparative analyses. A thorough curriculum analysis provides a clear articulation of the relevance of a particular curriculum to an established perspective. From this review, we have been able to identify contentious issues that merit further analysis and investigation. In this analysis, it was discovered that the government has formulate its policy on Social Studies curriculum refinement (revision) which was done in the year 2014 in response to the country's need for relevant, dynamic and



global competitive. But it is evident to conclude that many problems still exist in Nigeria despite the teaching of Social Studies that work towards solving socio-economic and political problems in the country. However, the curriculum content has been observed to lack depth and the teaching methods adopted by most of the teachers were traditional, teacher-centered with little or no practical application in the school ethos and practices. It also observed that the mode of evaluation is paper and pencil system in which, in most cases students respond to questions after memorizing concepts.

Despite these outlined factors militating against the effective implementation of the JSS Social Studies curriculum, there is still great hope in the efficacy of Social Studies to help create the desired kinds of citizens in Nigeria. Therefore, the future is still bright but all that is needed is committed and conscientious efforts of all concerned to work towards the realization of this goal.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis, the possible things that need to be done in order for the JSS Social Studies curriculum to be implemented effectively in Nigeria are recommended as follows:

- i. The curriculum should be reorganized so that content follows in the right order, appropriate logical sequence and without information gaps.
- ii. The current 9-year Basic Education Social Studies curriculum (JSS 1-3) need to be reviewed and enriched by introducing more topics for effective promotion of national consciousness and unity in the country; e.g. Self-discipline, National Ideology, Tolerance, Commitment, Accountability and Transparency.
- iii. Since Social Studies is aimed at promoting national consciousness, national unity, peace and progress in Nigeria, the teachers should encourage active participation of learners physically, socially, emotionally and mentally in their teachings. This will help them

- iv. develop the spirit of self-determination, self-realization and self-actualization; Professionally committed Social Studies teachers and educators should be more employed to manage both the planning, administration and teaching of Social Studies curriculum at all levels of education in Nigeria;
- v. Social Studies teachers should make use of innovative instructional strategies in teaching the subject such as concept-mapping, simulation game, computer aided instruction etc;
- vi. Government budgetary allocation to education should be improved tremendously to meet the UNESCO's benchmark of minimum of 26%. It is through education that citizens can help in developing a sense of attachment, awareness and identity for the country.
- vii. Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN) should during its annual national conferences organize workshops for teachers of Social Studies to uplift their knowledge and skills.
- viii. There is need for the establishment of a comprehensive and integrated system to harness the benefits of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Social Studies.
- ix. Regular and periodic monitoring and supervision of Social Studies curriculum implementation should be embarked upon by Social Studies curriculum experts.

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