

Formal and Informal Social Studies Curriculum in Nigeria

EDINYANG S. D., UNIMKE S. A.

Curriculum and Teaching Department, Faculty of Education, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria
sundaydavidedinyang@yahoo.com

Abstract

The aim of this work was to examine formal and informal Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria, particularly in Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State. The study posed three research questions. Instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Random sampling technique was used to select one hundred and seventy (170) JSS 3 students and teachers as sample for the study. The data collected were analyzed using means and standard deviation, with 3.00 as pre-determined cut-off point for each item. Formal Social Studies curriculum contents are implemented in uniformity in Nigeria while, informal contents and its implementation varies from society to society, but all geared towards inculcating in the learner positive attitudes, skills for national development and integration.

Keywords: Curriculum, Formal, Informal, Society, Skills, Implementation and Social Studies.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a multi-cultural Nation, where education is seen as an integral or indispensable tool for peaceful co-existence and cohesion among members of the society. A multifarious country for its dream of sustainable development to yield a positive result, the formal and informal processes of education must compliment each other, using curriculum as a working document to achieve the desirable goals.

Social Studies was introduced into the official school curriculum following its success in solving societal problems not only in Britain but also in America as well as Nigeria in the late 1960^s. This programmed of study was first introduced in Britain after the 1st and 2nd world wars in order to appease the conscience of the citizens to respect constituted authority, submissive to their parents, show regards to the elders of the society, help to protect public property, value the live of fellow citizens and contribute positively towards the development of the society. (Edinyang, Mezieobi and Ubi 2013).

Mezieobi, Fubara, Mezieobi (2008) are of the view that Social Studies is indigenous and argued strongly that the subject was and still a core subject in our informal curriculum. This is because the contents of indigenous Social Studies curriculum as introduced to us by the British government that colonial Nigeria are the same in all ramification in the sense that both focused more on affective domain of education.

Therefore, what is new in the introduction of the subject in Nigeria is the nomenclature called "Social Studies". Both informal and formal Social Studies curriculum according to Edinyang and Effiom (2014) could not make any difference as both emphasized on the change of attitudes of the students positively towards one another in the society. In order to empirically prove the differences, if any that exist between official and unofficial curriculum, the impact of both curriculum on the society as well as to suggest ways of modifying both curriculum to meet societal needs, the researcher therefore decided to carry out this study.

Statement of the problem

The social studies curriculum is eclectic and versatile due to the nature of the course as a discrete or distinct area of specialization. On this note, Edinyang (2014) sees it as a holistic area of study that derived its content from other fields of study like Anthropology, political Science, Economic, Geography, History and Sociology to impart to the learners positive ways of making useful contribution to the growth of the society.

The agglomeration of the above subject, which constitute social studies was to make its content from informal to formal because before the advent of the colonial master, social studies was already in existence, of course as old as man himself in Nigeria situation with informal curriculum contents.

However, according to Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezeobi (2008) the social content of the undocumented curriculum of the pre-colonial time in Nigeria was given a place of prominence by the traditional people because the relevance of their life depended near almost exclusively in the social content of the traditional curriculum for obedience and transperence. Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria has been subjected to a formal document, followed the recommendation of the first National Curriculum Conference of 1969, which made Social Studies assumed a prominent place in the 6-3-3-4 system of education for national consciousness, spirit of patriotism and law abiding citizens. The problem of this study is, if pose in the question form, what is the effect of formal Social Studies curriculum in the Nigeria society as compare to the informal curriculum?

The Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to:

1. Ascertain the discrepancy, if any that exist between formal and informal Social Studies curriculum.
2. Determine the correlation between formal and informal Social Studies curriculum.
3. Modify formal and informal Social Studies curriculum to meet contemporary challenges.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching methods in formal and informal social studies curriculum in Nigeria

Accordingly, curriculum as the name implies be it formal or informal is derived from a Latin word “currere”, meaning “race course” to be covered by students in standardize programmed in order to be awarded with certificate, diploma and degree. The creative method of teaching is very essential in the teaching of formal social studies curriculum to ensure that learners acquire skills that will make them creative enough and entrepreneurial. As such, Mezieobi and e’tal (2008) opined that creative method is being emphasized in order to develop the intellectual skills of the learners, thus arouses the interest of students sustain their attention and motivation to learn. Also, according to Akinlaye (2002) in this method of teaching, the teacher must ensure that the activities relate to something in the syllabus and not just time fillers. The creative method of teaching in the formal setting keeps the child memory alerts.

Thus, the informal Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria is based on observation. According to Oyekan (2000) observation is rooted in human ability to examine, see, notice and carefully through the senses with keen understanding of emerging events or phenomena. Dogmatically, formal Social Studies uses dramatization as a method of teaching for clarity purposes in the teaching and learning processes. Thereby, Mkpa (2009) sees it appropriately a good method for Social Studies formal curriculum because it renders vividly a play or act a character in a play. This method helps in interpersonal relationship among learners and the society at large.

Informal curriculum uses imitation method in which individual in the society is expected to perform the act exactly as instructor does. Both play significant parts as the aggregate of all processes by which the child or young adult develops the abilities, attitude and other forms of behaviour which are of positive values to the society in which he lives. In essence, education is regarded as the totality of all forms of brilliant ideas, usable skills and desirable value – orientations that can nurture individual into responsible competence citizens. (Fafunwa 1974).

Curriculum materials in formal and informal Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria

According to Esu, Erukoha and Umoren (2004) instructional materials make teaching and learning more effective in the teaching and learning encounter. On this note, the use of materials in formal and informal Social Studies curriculum is shown in the tabular format below:

	Formal	Informal
1.	Manpower here consists of trained teachers.	Manpower is made up of parents, guidance or tutelage/mentor.
2.	Infrastructural facilities consist of class rooms, libraries and workshops	Infrastructural facilities are made up of play ground, civil centres, bus-stops and motor park.
3.	Instructional materials consist of reading materials like textbooks, chalk board, audio materials, visual materials (Dike 1989).	Instructional material consists of concrete objects, model, improvisation and specimen.

Evaluation of formal and informal Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria

Evaluation, according to Cronbach (1965) is the process of ascertaining the decision area of concern, selecting, appropriate information and collecting and analysis information in order to report summary data useful to decision makers. Gbamanja (2002) sees evaluation of formal curriculum consists of the adequacy of instructional objectives the subject matter, learning experiences for a change in behaviour among learners. In addition Dike (2008) opines that the purpose of evaluation in formal or informal school system is to determine whether to improve, maintain or terminate the programme. The formal curriculum Social Studies and other subjects trigger the articulation of mass literacy, adult and non-formal education in Nigeria. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) opines that non-formal education encourages all forms of functional education given to youths and adults outside the formal school system, such as functional literacy, remedial and vocational education which is equally subject to evaluation to ascertain the usefulness of the programme.

Generally, a formal curriculum is a planed programme that includes content, objectives and learning experiences as well as assessment and resources that help for easier implementation. While, informal curriculum are things that are learned in school, even if they are not written down as part of the formal curriculum.

For clarity purposes the above variable is shown in tabular format below:

	Formal	Informal
i.	Evaluation takes place through the use of written examination, continuous assessment, oral or interview	Evaluation is in form of oral discussion.
ii.	The evolution here is seen as macro because it includes both instructional and programme evaluation.	The evaluation in the informal is micro or limited in scope.
iii.	Formal curriculum evaluation covers cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain	Covers affective and psychomotor.
iv.	Existence of formative, summative, diagnostic	Existence of formative, summative and Scio metric.

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study: The study adopted survey design. The design was appropriate for the study because it is suitable for the collection of data from the respondents (sample) in different locations after which a generalization could be made about the entire population (Nworg, 2006).

Area of the Research: The area of the study was at Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State.

The Population of the Study: This was made of students and Social Studies teachers in the ten (10) wards of the Local Government. The number of students was 1,277 and that of teachers 250, in all 1527.

Sampling Techniques: The use of random sample technique was applied. This was used in order to reflect the ten (10) wards of the Local Government Area where formal and informal Social Studies curriculum exist. Therefore, 100 students were randomly selected in the population of 1,277 and 70 teachers in the affected schools and that gave a total of 170 respondents.

Sample: The sample was made up of 5% of students and 4% of teachers, which is 9% (170) respondent from the population as sample.

Instrumentation: Instrument for data collection was made up of questionnaire items based the research topic. The questionnaire consisted of two section "A" and "B". Section "A" was designed to collect information on personal data of the respondent while "B" gathers information on the research topic. The use of four (4) point Likers scale responses was adopted in the designing of the questionnaire as:

Strongly Agree	(SA)	=	4
Agree	(A)	=	3
Disagree	(D)	=	2
Strongly Disagree	(SD)	=	1

Principally, the validity of instrument of which consisted of (12) items were cross checked and scrutinized by three experts in the department of measurement and evaluation. All corrections and suggestions by the expert were effected.

Method of Data Analysis

The three research questions posed were carefully analyzed using the Means and Standard Deviation. This implies that the pre-determined cut-off point for each item is 3.00. Therefore, any item with a score of 3.00 and above indicates that the question is answered in affirmative. While any question with a mean score below 3.00 indicate negative response or rejection.

Research Question One

To what extent is the effectiveness of formal Social Studies curriculum as compare to informal in Nigeria?

Table (1)

	Items/Questions	SA	A	D	SD	N	\bar{X}	Remark
1.	Formal social studies curriculum has content and learning experiences to teach as compare to informal?	71 284	87 261	10 2	2 2	170 567	3.5	Affirmative
2.	Formal social studies curriculum has a specific time for the lesson on the school time table as compare to informal?	91 364	60 180	15 45	4 4	170 593	4.8	Affirmative
3.	Formal social studies curriculum has appropriate evaluation methods as compare to informal?	70 280	73 219	4 12	26 26	170 537	3.1	Affirmative
4.	Formal social studies curriculum has appropriate teaching methods as compare to informal?	90 369	60 180	20 40	- -	170 580	3.41	Affirmative

The Mean of Means Rating $14.81 = 3.70$

4

As regards to the above research question, item 1 with a mean score of 3.5 proves that formal social studies curriculum has content and learning experiences to teach as compare to informal. The item 2 which also answered in affirmative with a mean score of 4.8 shows that formal social studies curriculum has a specific time for the lesson on the school time table as compare to informal.

Again in affirmative, is item 3 with a mean score of 3.1 indicates that formal Social Studies curriculum has appropriate evaluation method as compare to informal. In the same vein, item 4 with a mean score of 3.41 affirms that formal Social Studies curriculum has appropriate teaching method as compare to informal.

Research Question Two (2)

What similarities that exist between formal and informal Social Studies curriculum?

Table 2

	Items/Questions	SA	A	D	SD	N	\bar{X}	Remark
5.	Formal social studies curriculum and informal focus on learning society culture?	87 348	70 210	7 14	6 6	170 568	3.40	Affirmative
6.	Formal social studies curriculum and informal emphasize on respect, honesty and truth fullness?	81 324	88 264	1 2	- -	170 590	4.70	Affirmative
7.	Formal social studies curriculum and informal dwell on reflective thinking goal?	61 244	83 249	17 34	9 9	170 536	3.15	Affirmative
8.	Formal social studies curriculum and informal centre on socio-political activism?	73 292	70 210	9 18	18 18	170 538	3.1	Affirmative

The Mean of Means Rating $14.81 = 3.58$

4

Analytically, item 5 with a mean score of 3.40 attests that formal Social Studies curriculum and informal focus on society culture. In item 6 with a mean score of 4.70 demonstrates that both formal and informal social studies curriculum emphasized on respect, honesty and truthfulness. In relation to item 7 with a mean score of 3.15, which of course is positive/justified that both formal and informal Social Studies curriculum dwelled on reflective thinking and 7 equally testifies that formal and informal Social Studies curriculum centered on socio-political activism with a mean score of 3.1 respectively.

Research Question Three

What are the challenges associated with formal and informal Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria?

Table 3

	Items/Questions	SA	A	D	SD	N	\bar{X}	Remark
9.	Political factors is a challenge with implementation of formal social studies curriculum and informal?	47 188	100 300	3 9	20 20	170 517	3.1	Affirmative
10.	Teacher factor poses challenge in the implementation of formal social studies curriculum and informal?	105 420	58 174	- -	8 8	170 602	5.4	Affirmative
11.	Community factors are challenges in the implementation of formal and informal social studies curriculum?	50 160	5 15	114 88	80 80	170 343	2.1	Rejected
12.	Instructional material is a challenge in the implementation of formal and informal social studies curriculum?	75 300	90 270	2 4	3 3	170 577	3.40	Affirmative

The Mean of Means Rating $14 = 3.5$

4

In response to research question three, item 9 with a mean score of 3.1 answered affirmatively. Also, 10 with a mean score of 5.4 displays a positive result that teacher factor poses a serious challenge in the implementation of formal and informal Social Studies curriculum. Thereof, item 11 proves negativism result with a mean score of 2.1, signifies that community factors are challenges in the implementation of formal and informal social studies curriculum. Item 11 however with a means score of 3.40 digest that instructional material is a challenge in the implementation of formal and informal social studies curriculum.

Discussion of Results

Sequel to data analysis of the three research questions, the following are noted thus:

The first research question which consists of item 1, 2, 3 and 4 answered in affirmative from the respondents. This justified that to a large extent, there is effectiveness in formal social studies curriculum as compare to informal in Nigeria.

Thereafter, in research question two that is made up of item 5, 6, 7 and had a pre-determined cut-off point of 3 and above therefore means that there is an element of similarities that exist between formal and informal social studies curriculum. Concisely, in research question three, items 9, 10 and 11 answered in affirmative. This entails that there are challenges associated with both formal and informal social studies curriculum in Nigeria.

Findings

The findings of this study revealed that:

1. Formal and informal social studies curriculum in Nigeria are geared towards meeting the philosophy of the five main national goals of Nigeria as reflected on the National Policy on Education, the building of:
 - a. A free and democratic society;
 - b. A just and egalitarian society;
 - c. A United strong and self-reliant nation;
 - d. A great and dynamic economy;
 - e. A land full of bright opportunity for all citizens.
2. Formal Social Studies curriculum has well stated objectives that are measurable as compare to informal curriculum.
3. Both formal and informal Social Studies curriculum is yet to address the social needs, realities and aspiration of Nigerians.

Recommendations

Following the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Workshop/seminar should be organized annually to see whether the philosophy behind the structure of formal and informal Social Studies is achieved.
2. Government should set-up monitoring teams to evaluate and supervise the implementation of formal Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria.
3. Infrastructural facilities should be put in place and shabbily or dilapidated ones be renovated to make learning conducive for both formal any informal Social Studies curriculum consumers in Nigeria.
4. Government should create an opportunity for opinion poll to enable people from different cultural background make their input towards the success of formal and informal social studies curriculum in Nigeria.
5. Distribution of reading materials should be made available free of charge for learners, as a motivational factor to enhance the processes of learning in Nigeria schools system.

REFERENCES

- Akinlaye, F. A. (2002). *Social studies methods for teachers*. Ageje. Pumark Nigeria Ltd.
- Cronbach, L. (1965) *Course improvement through evaluation*. Teacher College record. 64, 672.
- Dike, H. I. (1989) *Modern trend in the teaching of social studies*. Owerri centre for audio visual production intercultural communication.
- Dike, H. I. (2008). *Bringing Information technology into educational development: The role of the library*. A paper presented at the annual library, Nigeria library association, River State chapter.
- Edinyang, S. D, Mezieobi, K. A and Ubi, I. E (2013) *Selected issues in social studies education*. Maesot & Company publishers. Calabar.
- Edinyang, S. D, Effiom, V. N (2014) *Materials and resources in social studies*. Graphic frame publishers. Lagos.
- Edinyang, S. D (2014) *History of social studies education in Nigeria*. Lecture Notes EDC 872 unpublished University of Calabar.
- Esu A. E. O., Enukoha, O. I. and Umoren G. U. (2004) *Curriculum development on Nigeria for colleges and universities*. Owerri. Whyte and Whyte publishers.

- Fafunwa, A. B. (1974). *History of education in Nigeria*. London. George Allen.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). *National policy on education*. 2004 edition 16-17.
- Gbamanja, S. P. T. (2002) *Essential of curriculum and instruction*. Theory and practice Port-Harcourt paragraph.
- Mezieobi, K. A, Fubura, V.R and Mezieobi, S. A. (2008) *Social studies in Nigeria: Teaching methods, instructional materials and resources*. Acadapeak Publisher. Owerri.
- Mkpa, N. D. (2009) *Teaching methods and strategies*. Theory and practice curriculum organization of Nigeria.
- Nworgu, B. G. (2006). *Educational research basic issues and methodology*. Nsukka. University Trust Publishers.
- Oyeka, S. O. (2000). *Foundations of teacher education*. Ibadan Ben quality publishers.

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:
<http://www.iiste.org>

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page: <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Recent conferences: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/>

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

