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Investigating the Effects of Social Studies Education on Students' Attitude to Nationalistic Ideals about Nigeria in Selected Secondary Schools in Gwoza Educational Zone, Borno State

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Abstract

This research work is designed to investigate the effect of social studies education on students attitudes to nationalistic ideals about Nigeria in selected secondary schools In Gwoza Educational Zone Of Borno State. The specific focus of the study is to findout the extent of social studies education on how it helps to shape the nationalistic attitudes, perceptions and skills of the students in bid to transform them. To be enlightened, loyal and patriotic citizens who will contribute positively to the development of Nigerian society. The study used survey Research design and three hundred (300) JSS III students from ten secondary schools in the zone. Questionnaire was administered to the students. The questionnaire was structural into six (6) sections 'A' deals with the background information of the respondents, the other sections covered students responses to objectives of social studies education and delivery process of social studies education, while the rest measured students attitude to nationalistic ideals in terms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain. The study found a relationship between social studies education objectives and students' attitudes towards nationalistic ideals in terms of cognitive dimension. However, no significant relationship was found in the average performance of JSS III students using the same curriculum. The study reveals that JSS III students in Gwoza, Borno state, exhibit high nationalistic ideals in terms of knowledge, attitudes, and skills. These ideals are achieved through Social Studies education, despite constraints. The study recommends periodic review of the curriculum, utilizing teaching methods like seminars, workshops, and in-service training, and encouraging teachers to pursue higher education. It also suggests minimizing dependence on imported teaching aid and encouraging local improvisation. To address textbook shortages, campaigns for indigenous authors to write textbooks and financial assistance from the government are recommended.

Keywords: Social Studies, Nationalistic Ideals, Attitude, Secondary, School,

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Introduction

Nationalism plays a vital role in cultivating national unity and a collective identity among citizens, serving as a foundation for social cohesion and a shared sense of purpose. It embodies a sense of pride and allegiance to one's country, reinforced through common cultural, historical, and civic experiences. Social studies education, which integrates history, civics, and cultural studies, serves as a fundamental medium for nurturing these ideals. Through its curriculum, social studies not only imparts knowledge about national heritage and civic responsibilities but also instills values that inspire students to actively engage in nation-building (Okilo, 1993).

The strength and orderliness of any society are significantly influenced by the quality of education, which is essential for facilitating developmental change at both the individual and societal levels. The incorporation of Social Studies into the Nigerian national curriculum was implemented as a corrective measure aimed at addressing societal challenges in a comprehensive manner. As a transformative tool, it seeks to expose learners to the knowledge of their social and physical environments, fostering appreciation and conservation of these contexts.

The United States Department of Education (2003) postulated that the instruction of Social Studies is influenced by significant national issues such as social and cultural integration, unity, patriotism, and ethnicity, which Nigeria has faced since gaining independence. In this context, Social Studies has been prioritized by the federal government as a crucial instrument for achieving national goals and objectives. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2008), the national values to be instilled in schools include respect for the worth and dignity of individuals, faith in humanity's capacity for rational decision-making, moral and spiritual values, interpersonal and human relations, shared responsibility for the common good of society, respect for the dignity of labor, and the promotion of the emotional, physical, and psychological health of all children. These national values should be integrated into any educational curriculum, and Social Studies is particularly relevant for fostering these values.

Aslan and Reigeluth (2021) asserted that the primary philosophy underpinning the teaching and learning of Social Studies in secondary schools is to mobilize and empower learners to develop an awareness and understanding that will transform them into responsible citizens equipped with desirable moral values, skills, and competencies necessary for making informed judgments regarding the affairs of the country. Furthermore, this education aims to facilitate positive interactions, relationships, and contributions to the economic, social, political, and cultural development of Nigerian society.

Statement of the Problem

The effective influence of social studies education on civic engagement in Nigeria encounters a complex array of challenges that necessitate thorough investigation. A primary concern pertains to the inconsistent quality and accessibility of social studies curricula across various regions of the country. Variations in educational resources, teacher training, and infrastructure contribute to discrepancies in the implementation of civic education, which may impede the formation of a cohesive and well-informed citizenry. Furthermore, the dynamic character of Nigerian society, marked by its rich diversity of ethnicities and cultures, presents distinct challenges in developing a social studies curriculum that resonates with the lived experiences of all citizens.

Another significant issue involves the rapidly evolving technological landscape, which necessitates a reassessment of traditional pedagogical approaches to ensure that social studies education remains pertinent and engaging for today's digitally connected youth. Addressing these challenges is crucial for formulating targeted interventions that can enhance the impact of social studies education on nationalistic ideals and foster the emergence of a more informed and participatory Nigerian citizenry.

Moreover, periodic evaluation of the current program is essential to assess its effectiveness in achieving its objectives and delivery outcomes. Such evaluations would bolster the sustainability of the curriculum and inform its redesign for optimal results, particularly in light of the increasing moral decay observed among the youth, exemplified by issues such as Boko Haram, kidnapping, and banditry. It is on this foundation that this research was conceived, with its primary focus being to examine whether the objectives and delivery of social studies significantly influence students' attitudes concerning nationalistic ideals related to Nigeria. This inquiry contributes to the existing literature regarding the attainment of social studies objectives and their effective delivery.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the impact of social studies on students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals concerning Nigeria in selected junior secondary schools within the Gwoza educational zone of Borno State. Accordingly, the specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To examine any significant relationship between students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals about Nigeria as manifested in the cognitive domain of social studies.
- ii. To determine whether there exists a significant relationship between students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals about Nigeria as expressed in the affective domain of social studies education.
- iii. To identify any significant relationship between students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals about Nigeria as demonstrated in the psychomotor domain of social studies education.

Literature Review

Concept of Social Studies

Social Studies is a problem-solving discipline designed to address human challenges across various domains, including geographical, historical, sociological, economic, psychological, and political contexts. This inter-disciplinary subject draws upon concepts and knowledge from fields such as geography, history, anthropology, economics, and sociology. Orakwe (2001) defines Social Studies as "an organized, integrated study of humans and their environments, both physical and social, emphasizing cognitive and functional skills, as well as desirable attitudes and actions aimed at fostering effective citizenship."

In a similar vein, Kissock (1981) conceptualizes Social Studies as a program of instruction through which society imparts knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and actions that pertain to human relationships. Social Studies serves as a mechanism for instilling common values among citizens, such as moral virtues and rational judgment, to facilitate positive and effective contributions to the economic, social, political, and cultural development of society (Okilo, 1993).

Furthermore, Social Studies examines human interactions with both physical and social environments, focusing on their implications for survival within society. It also explores how individuals are influenced by their physical, social, economic, political, and cultural contexts, as well as how they endeavor to shape their environments to enhance their chances of survival.

Main Objectives of Social Studies

Uchegbu and Ekwonwa (2001) categorized the primary objectives of social studies in Nigerian schools into four distinct areas:

- a. Value Education: This involves instilling in individuals the behaviors, attitudes, values, and feelings that society expects.
- b. Citizenship Education: This aims to prepare children for social responsibility.
- c. Humanistic Education: This seeks to assist children in understanding life.
- d. Intellectual Education: This introduces children to various modes of thinking and inquiry within the social sciences.

Additional objectives include:

- I. To foster awareness and understanding of both the social and physical environments among citizens, thereby promoting their conservation and preservation for national development.
- II. To cultivate an appreciation for the diverse cultures and interdependence among Nigerian communities, as well as between national and international communities.
- III. To encourage positive attitudes among Nigerian citizens that support the spirit of friendliness and cooperation essential for a healthy nation, while instilling values such as honesty, integrity, hard work, fairness, and justice.

Attitude and Social Studies Education

Attitude is a psychological construct that holds varied meanings for different individuals. Evens (2014) defines attitudes as feelings that influence an individual's actions, preferences, and reactions to others and to events in their lives and surroundings. Conversely, Okam and Lawal (2011) describe attitudes as encompassing one's feelings, thoughts, and predispositions to behave in a certain manner toward various objects, issues, or aspects of one's environment. For instance, a schoolboy expressing, "I enjoy mathematics," reflects a predisposition to act or feel favorably or unfavorably toward certain subjects, people, situations, or ideas. Similarly, Kenedle (2014) articulates that "attitude is an individual's predisposition to respond in a particular manner to certain stimuli in their environment," with behaviors ranging from negative to positive toward social institutions, individuals, situations, or ideas.

In this context, social studies can serve as a platform for teaching students to cultivate positive attitudes, recognizing the significant role that attitude plays in the process of socialization within society. Murkherjee (2009) asserts that attitudes are products of an individual's socialization, with schools playing a crucial role in cultivating personalities that embody desirable attitudes and social values. This process includes fostering predisposed attitudes that encourage social action in both interpersonal and intergroup interactions. Consequently, attitudes function as a central focus of cognitive awareness, significantly shaping behaviors conducive to meaningful civic engagement within society.

In this context, Nwagwu (2014) reinforces the idea that attitudes and values are intricately interconnected, each drawing sustenance from the other in a symbiotic relationship that individuals must strive to cultivate, particularly positive attitudes, to thrive within society. He further emphasizes the importance of valuing attitude education to instill virtues such as discipline, diligence, optimism, cooperation, punctuality, and interdependence, which are essential for developing sensitivity to the feelings of others and fostering meaningful societal interactions.

Orlandi (2010) categorizes the attitudinal objectives of social studies instruction into two fundamental categories:

- i. Attitudes for Desirable Intellectual Behavior: This category encompasses traits such as empirical reasoning, open-mindedness, objectivity, precision in data collection, analysis, and interpretation, a propensity to seek multiple causes for human behavior, and a belief in natural causation over supernatural influences, alongside empathy and tolerance.
- ii. Attitudes for Desirable Social Behaviour: This pertains to virtues such as interest, responsibility, involvement, and awareness. A primary objective of educational institutions, particularly through social studies, is to foster loyalty and commitment to societal responsibilities among learners. If students develop a strong commitment to these ideals during

their academic years, they can be trusted to acquire the necessary knowledge to address new challenges and make balanced judgments thereafter.

To further elucidate this theory, Murkherjee (1980) identifies three components of attitudes that align closely with the area of investigation:

- i. Cognitive Component: This entails the necessity of possessing knowledge about a subject, issue, or environmental aspect before articulating one's views.
- ii. Affective Component: The cognitive aspect influences the nature of an individual's affective responses.
- iii. Operational or Behavioural Component: Here, the affective component shapes the operational or behavioural attitude, establishing a balanced system.

The significance of attitudes in social studies cannot be overstated, as the development of positive attitudes fosters good citizenship, a fundamental objective of social studies education. Organdie's observation (1984) indicates that minimal progress has been made in altering or shaping the behaviours of Nigerians, with social issues such as Boko Haram, kidnapping, banditry, IPOB, corruption, and indiscipline on the rise. This underscores the necessity for realistic education aimed at nurturing future societal developers. Finally, the acquisition of the ideals of national identity among students in various schools should not be left to chance; it must be systematically learned and cultivated through the relevant processes associated with classroom instruction in social studies.

Nationalism

Nationalism is a concept that emphasizes loyalty and dedication to a nation or nation-state, positing that these obligations supersede individual or group interests. Emerging in the 18th century, nationalism underscores cultural cohesion and the aspiration for a distinct and independent nation.

Types of Nationalism

1. *Liberal Nationalism*: This variant underscores equality and individual rights, gaining prominence in the 19th century and significantly influencing both the middle and working classes.
2. *Conservative Nationalism*: This form prioritizes tradition, authority, and national unity. Otto von Bismarck employed it to unify Germany in a conservative and authoritarian manner.

Nationalism vs. Patriotism

Although often used interchangeably, nationalism and patriotism encompass different meanings. Patriotism denotes an attachment and commitment to a country, with origins tracing back to Greek and Roman antiquity, and is grounded in principles such as a love for law and the common good. In contrast, nationalism pertains to a spiritual connection to a nation, emphasizing cultural unity and distinctiveness.

However, excessive nationalism can engender a belief in the superiority of one nation over others, potentially fostering division by highlighting differences between nations and leading to conflict. Thus, extreme forms of nationalism, such as chauvinism and jingoism, are often associated with hyper-patriotism.

Nationalistic Ideals or Attributes

- I. Patriotism: Love and devotion to one's country
- II. National Identity: Shared culture, history, and values
- III. Sovereignty: The desire for independence and self-governance
- IV. Unity: Emphasis on national cohesion and solidarity
- V. Pride: Pride in national achievements and symbols
- VI. Cultural Preservation: Efforts to maintain national traditions and customs
- VII. Economic Protection: Safeguarding national interests

The Effects of Social Studies on the Nationalistic Attitudes of Learners

The instruction of nationalism and core values has garnered substantial attention in both theoretical and practical contexts. According to Coenders and Scheepers (2003), chauvinistic nationalism is characterized as the belief that one's ethnic in-group and country are unique and superior, while patriotism embodies love and pride in one's people and nation. Some political scientists contend that it is not nationalism itself that poses challenges, but rather exclusionary nationalisms (also referred to as ethnic or essentialist nationalisms), which can adversely affect outcomes such as democracy (Tudor and Slater, 2020), the prevention of genocide (Straus, 2015), and the provision of public goods (Miguel, 2004). Scholars have posited that a common national identity serves as a crucial mediator for at least one significant outcome—democracy.

John Stuart Mill asserted that "free institutions are next to impossible in a country composed of different nationalities" (1861, p. 289). Alexis de Tocqueville further proclaimed that "there is nothing in the world but patriotism and religion that can propel the universality of citizens toward a common goal" (2000 [1835], p. 89).

Research indicates that the objectives and pedagogical approaches of Social Studies education are pertinent to the cultivation of students' nationalistic attitudes across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions.

Materials and Method

Study Area

The schools selected for the study include: G.D.S.S Izge, G.S.S Gwoza, G.S.S Bama, G.S.S Uba, G.S.S. Askira, G.S.S Kumshe, G.G.S.S Ngoshe, G.D.S.S Wamdeo, G.G.S.S Lassa, G.D.S.S Kirawa. The population of this study consists of junior secondary school students II the ten (10) selected schools out of the secondary schools of the Gwoza educational zone of Borno state

Research Design

The study employed a survey research design. The population comprised all Junior Secondary School (JSS) III students enrolled in social studies at selected secondary schools within the Gwoza educational zone of Borno State, totaling 1,000 students. A sample size of 300 was determined using the Research Advisors table for sample specification.

Instrument for the Study

The instrument utilized was titled "J.S.S III Students' Responses to the Effects of Social Studies Education on Students' Attitudes toward Nationalistic Ideals about Nigeria." This tool consisted of a modified Likert-type questionnaire comprising twenty items, with response options including Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire, named the "Social Study Education towards Nationalistic Ideal Questionnaire (SSETNIQ)," was adapted by the researcher. Experts in measurement and evaluation, as well as specialists in social studies, conducted face and construct validity assessments of the questionnaire.

Validation of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was established using the techniques outlined by Nwankwo (1983), which aimed to evaluate participants' responses regarding the effects of social studies education on students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals. This evaluation was based on the objectives of social studies education, the delivery process, and assessments of cognitive and psychomotor dimensions of nationalistic ideals.

Research Technique

To facilitate a comprehensive investigation of the population, the study randomly selected ten institutions, representing approximately forty percent of the total population, as the sample. Thirty students from each school were chosen, resulting in a total sample size of three hundred students from ten secondary schools. The responses obtained from the instruments were scored, and totals were calculated prior to statistical analyses to address the study's objectives. The scoring was aligned with the following scale: Strongly Agree - 4 Points, Agree - 3 Points, Disagree - 2 Points, and Strongly Disagree - 1 Point.

Research Procedure and Analysis

The three hundred questionnaires administered to respondents were accurately completed and retrieved with assistance from a research assistant, and these were utilized for analysis. The mean and standard deviation were employed to derive solutions to the study's objectives. This methodological approach aligns with Anderson (1977), which focuses on gathering information about a population to explore the incidence, distribution, and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables.

A validated 50-item test assessing social studies education objectives, delivery, and cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions was also utilized. The chi-square (χ^2) statistic was employed, as it permits analysis of enumerative (nominal/ordinal) data that are non-parametric in nature, and it facilitates the testing of variable independence.

Results and Discussions

The data collected after the administration of questionnaire from the responses of the participants which were scored in line with the provision of likert scaling system, the result obtained were summarized according to factors under study as follows (table 1):

The table showed the respective scores obtained in relation to study of the effects of social education on students attitudes to nationalistic ideals. The result showed that the respective factors under study has agreed responses means ($\bar{x}$) 278, 237, 297, 187 and 204 with standard deviation (SD) 26.1, 83.3, 7.04, 124.3, 111.89 respectively. The agreed means ($\bar{x}$) in each case are well above the theoretical highest possible estimates where the mean ($\bar{x}$) is more than half of the maximum possible frequency (in this case 300). On the other hand, the standard deviation (SD) in each case, there are less than the limits of the estimates of about one fifth ($1/5^{\text{th}}$) of the maximum possible frequency (Nwana, 1979). This is suggestive of the positivity of the relationship between the above variables or factors under study.

As seen above the descriptive statistics showed that the students performed or responded highly on it relates to the effects of social studies education (objectives and delivery) on nationalistic ideals (Cognitive). Thus, it could be suggested that the students have positive attitudes towards nationalistic ideas. However, with affective and psychomotor items receiving fairly low responses from the students, they are suggestive of students' negative attitudes nationalistic ideals. The computed Chi-square (χ^2) showed that $\chi^2 = 718.2$ with critical value at 40.11, at 27 = and df 0.05 = a the calculated value $\chi^2 = 718.2$ is greater than the critical value as shown Table 2. This means that the hypothesis, that there is

no significant relationship between students attitudes to nationalistic ideals considered in terms of cognitive dimension and social studies education delivery.

Discussion

The findings of this study have substantiated the academic position regarding the utilitarian value of social studies education in fostering attitudinal development and instilling desirable traits in learners, as supported by Dubey (1981), Kissicok (1981), Okobiah (1985), and Uba (1991). The Chi-square (χ^2) analysis revealed significant relationships among the variables examined. In relation to the first objective, the results indicated a significant correlation between students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals and their cognitive engagement with social studies education, with $\chi^2 = 209.2$ and a critical value of 40.11 at $\alpha = 0.05$ and $df = 27$. This finding aligns with the expectations of early social studies advocates in Nigeria, including Adeyoyin (1979) and Dubey (1980), who asserted that social studies education should cultivate Nigerians with a robust understanding of their environment.

Regarding the second objective, the findings demonstrated a significant relationship between students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals and the effective dimension of the social studies curriculum content. This is consistent with Jekayinfa's (2005) assertion that social studies education should enhance students' moral and social attitudes. Conversely, the results pertaining to the second objective revealed no significant relationship between students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals and the objectives of social studies education in the context of psychomotor dispositions. This outcome is in agreement with Okam's (1998) perspective that social studies should cultivate skills and techniques pertinent to nationalistic development. Ezegbe (1994) and Kazi (2000) identified essential Nigerian values that should be instilled in youth to promote human welfare and nation-building.

Overall, the findings suggest that there exists no significant relationship between students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals, when assessed through the cognitive dimension, and the delivery of social studies education. Jekayinfa (2000) posited that the objectives of social studies education can be achieved through effective delivery processes. Descriptive analysis of the findings indicates a relationship between the objectives of social studies education and its delivery concerning students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals in the cognitive domain. However, the descriptive data also revealed no significant relationship in the average performance of JSS III students concerning social studies education objectives and delivery in relation to their attitudes toward nationalistic ideals. The absence of a relationship in students' average performance across certain variables is noteworthy, particularly given that all students followed the same curriculum. Therefore, one would not anticipate disparities in average performance on nationalistic ideals assessments.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The JSS III students within the Gwoza educational zone of Borno State exhibited a strong understanding of nationalistic ideals, as evidenced by their average performance on nationalistic assessments. The objectives associated with nationalistic ideals are being fulfilled through social studies education, despite certain constraints. Furthermore, it has been established that the aims of social studies education can be effectively realized through appropriate classroom delivery processes. Such processes include the provision of a sufficient number of qualified teachers, relevant and adequate instructional materials, and the utilization of effective teaching methodologies. These measures are essential for fostering students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals within the Nigerian context.

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the implementation of social studies education for the development of students' attitudes toward nationalistic ideals: The curriculum for social studies in Junior Secondary Schools should undergo periodic reviews to address inadequacies and ensure its relevance to the socio-political needs of contemporary Nigeria, as mandated by the National Policy on Education.

1. Given the numerous opportunities available for social studies educators, including seminars, workshops, conferences, and in-service training organized by SOSAN, universities, colleges of education, and polytechnics, it is imperative for the government and other stakeholders to prioritize sending social studies teachers to participate in these programs. This will facilitate their attainment of the professional qualifications necessary for effective practice in social studies classrooms.
2. Encouraging teachers to pursue advanced education is likely to alleviate the monotony associated with traditional and ineffective teaching methods in social studies.
3. Social studies teachers should be advised to reduce reliance on imported or pre-packaged teaching aids and should be encouraged to utilize resources available within their local environments for instructional purposes.
4. To address the shortage of textbooks, it is essential to intensify efforts through conferences, seminars, and workshops to encourage indigenous authors with expertise in social studies to develop textbooks on a variety of topics suitable for use in secondary schools (JSS levels) and colleges of education, supported by financial assistance from the government and relevant organizations.

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Tables**Table 1:** summary of measures of participant’s responses in respect of the effect of social studies education on student’s attitudes to nationalistic ideals

Factors	Frequency of agreed responses	frequency of disagreed responses
Social studies education objectives	2775 * 278 * 26.1	225 * 23 * 11.9
Social studies education (delivery)	2369 * 237 ** 83.3	631 * 63 ** 55.3
Nationalistic ideals (Cognitive)	2965 * 297 * 7.04	35 * 3.5 ** 19.3
Nationalistic ideals (effective)	1867 * 187 * 124.3	113 * 113 ** 51.16
Nationalistic ideals (psychomotor)	2039 * 204 ** 111.89	961 * 96 * 125.87

Note: * mean (x) of frequency of responses

** Standard deviation of frequency of responses

Table 2: summary of Chi-square (χ^2) computation on the significant relationship between students attitudes to nationalistic ideals, considered in terms of cognitive dimension and students education delivery.

r	df-N-2	a	critical value	decision
718.2	27	0.05	40.11	significant