



Social Studies Education Curriculum Implementation in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on examining the problems hindering the effective implementation of Social Studies Education Curriculum in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper gives insight into the different concepts that form its basis and further concludes that inadequate funding, shortage of Social Studies academic staff, inadequate instructional materials, inadequate infrastructural facilities, brain-drain and strike actions are some of the factors militating against the effective implementation of Social Studies Education curriculum in Nigeria's tertiary institutions. It also highlights the increase in budgetary allocation to all Social Studies units in Nigeria's tertiary institutions as a panacea for effective curriculum implementation.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 19 Aug 2023

Received in revised form

20 Sep 2023

Accepted 21 Oct 2023

Keywords: Curriculum Implementation, Social Studies Programme, Tertiary Institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

National Policy on Education (FRN 2013), defined tertiary education as the education given after Post Basic Education in institutions such as Universities and Inter-University Centres such as the Nigeria French Language Village, Nigeria Arabic Language Village, National Institute of Nigerian Languages, institutions such as Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs), Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, and other specialized institutions such as Colleges of Agriculture, Schools of Health and

Technology and the National Teachers' Institutes (NTI).

Tertiary education according to Ogunode, Edinoh, and Nwafor (2023) is an education designed for post-secondary education. Tertiary education falls within institutions of higher learning that provide facilities for teaching and research and are authorized to grant academic degrees such as Bachelor's degree, Master's degree and Doctoral degree.

The implementation of the objectives of Nigeria's tertiary education system partly relies on the Social Studies Education curriculum to do its part. It is imperative that its curriculum content and objectives be effectively translated into impactful teaching and learning experiences for all its practitioners but for some glaring challenges its effective implementation is facing, hence, the need for this paper which is anchored on examining the problems hindering the effective implementation of Social Studies Education Curriculum in Nigeria's tertiary institutions.

THE TERTIARY EDUCATION

Tertiary education is a social agent of progress and development in the society and aids technological advancement. It is designed to help in the development of nations by providing the high as well as the middle level manpower needed for the social, economic and political advancement through the programme of teaching, learning, research and community services. This function places tertiary education at the apex in the ranking of educational institutions and it is designed to accommodate knowledge acquisition and production.

The goals of tertiary education according to the National Policy on Education (FRN 2013), shall be to; contribute to national development through high level manpower training; provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interests of all Nigerians; provide high quality career counseling and lifelong learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self-reliance and the world of work; reduce skill shortages through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market; promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community service; forge and cement national unity; and promote national and international understanding and interaction.

AGENCIES FOR TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

For effective coordination of programmes' development in tertiary institutions, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) established the following agencies: National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE); National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Universities Commission (NUC).

National Commission for Colleges of Education

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) is a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Education established by Decree 13 of 1989. The establishment of the Commission was a resultant effect of the utmost importance accorded to quality teacher education by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Since its inception, the Commission has continuously pursued the goals of quality assurance in teacher education. It has continuously reviewed and standardized the curriculum of colleges of education in the country through programme accreditation, which is carried out once in five years for all the federal colleges of education, state colleges of education and private colleges of education under the Commission (NEEDS 2014).

National Board for Technical Education

The National Board for Technical Education was established by Act No. 9 of 1977, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) is a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Education specifically created to handle all aspects of technical and vocational education falling outside University education. The Board supervises and regulates, through an accreditation process, the programmes offered by technical institutions at Secondary and post-Secondary school levels. It is also involved in funding of Polytechnics owned by the Government of Nigeria (NEEDS 2014).

National Universities Commission

The National Universities Commission (NUC) is a parastatal under the Federal Ministry of Education. The Commission was established in 1962 with the task of developing and managing University education in Nigeria. Its functions include: granting approval for all academic programmes in Nigerian Universities; granting approval for the establishment of all higher educational institutions offering degree programmes; and ensuring quality assurance, through regular accreditation of all academic programmes in Universities. The Commission currently regulates the academic programmes of federal, state and private Universities in Nigeria. The Role of National Universities Commission (NUC) in system performance cannot be overlooked. The functions of National Universities Commission (NUC) include: advising the Federal Government on the establishment and location of Universities, creating new facilities and post graduate units in the Universities; advising Government on the fundamental needs of the Universities; carrying out periodic plans on the general programme to be pursued by Universities staff; preparing periodic plans on the general programme to be pursued by the Universities; receiving and disbursing Federal grants to Federal Universities, establishing and maintaining the minimum academic standards; accrediting the degrees and other academic programme awarded by the universities (NEEDS, 2014; Lassa, 1992).

The National Universities Commission (NUC) in (2007) came out with a document containing all programmes that are being offered in the Nigerian Universities. The BMAS documents were produced for the under listed academic disciplines: i) Administration; Management and Management Technology; ii) Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Home Economics; iii) Arts; iv) Basic Medical and Health Science v) Education; vi) Engineering and Technology; vii) Environmental Sciences; viii) Law; ix) Pharmaceutical Sciences x) Medicine and Dentistry; xi) Science; xii) Social Sciences; xiii) Veterinary Medicine. Science programmes in recent times in the Nigerian higher institutions are facing many challenges which range from poor supervision to poor administration. Social Studies Education and others not specifically mentioned here are parts of the programmes offered at the Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Concept of Social Studies Education Programme

Social Studies is an integrated course of study whose major emphasis is the study of man's interaction with his socio-economic and political environments and how he copes with problems and issues in the society. It is based upon the various social sciences and humanities as a foundation and source of conceptual framework and methodology. It employs the system of analytical approach to the identification and the study of problems of man in his multi-faceted environment.

The inclusion of Social Studies Education in the Curricula of Nigerian Schools was done with the hope that it would address some of the deficiencies and dysfunctionalities of the previous educational system. Ediyang, Uninike, Ubi, Opo and Iwok (2015) described the introduction of Social Studies as similar to the coming of "a Social Messiah" who would salvage Nigeria from its many ills. This description is not

carried too far as the introduction of Social Studies Education all over the world was done with the hope that it would solve contemporary problems, especially, in terms of remolding learners and breeding a more responsible citizenry.

There is a definite goal for adopting any innovative educational programme, and that is, change for the better. The National Philosophy of Education (NPE) in Nigeria recognizes the need for Social Studies Education to build the desired social orientation needed, after independence, to mobilize the young citizens for national development. The traditional subjects also encouraged learners to know more about the colonial masters' country than about their own environment and the pressing problems in their society. Social Studies Education in several nations of the world was, essentially, introduced to meet certain specific needs and aspirations of the people. In Britain for instance, Social Studies was introduced into the school curriculum after the first and second world wars as panacea for social problems resolution (Edinyang et al, 2015). The Nigerian society is not an exception to this. This, however, partly explains why Social Studies Education is given a pride of place at all levels of Nigerian educational system. The corruption free, humane, moral and integrated society which Nigeria is craving for cannot be achieved without a sound foundation, as well as instructions in Social Studies Education. Social Studies Education, as a unique area of discipline, is committed to transmitting and forming the values of citizens of this great nation.

Social Studies Education according to Edinoh, K. (2016) has come to be accepted as "a school subject that should assist students to acquire the basic knowledge, skills and positive attitudes needed to be responsible citizens and contributing members of society. National development remains a challenge that preoccupies all nations of the world that aspire for greatness. Social Studies Education touches on all aspects of societal development; be it political, economic, social, cultural, technological or educational. In the Nigerian context, the goal of Social Studies curriculum design is aimed at building a sound and balanced mind as a foundation for functional social education directed towards the development of intelligent, responsible and self-directing citizen.

Integrating and dispensing social knowledge through the instrumentality of Social Studies Education curriculum design in Nigerian schools is directed towards, self-confidence and initiatives; power of imagination and resourcefulness; desire for knowledge and continued learning; sense of compassion for the less fortunate; sense of respect for and tolerance of the opinion of others; social values and attitudes such as: cooperation; participation; interdependence; open mindedness; honesty; integrity; trustworthiness; diligence and obedience and as spirit of national consciousness and patriotism Oluwatoyin (2014).

These values are considered necessary for sound Social Studies Education for functional citizenship education. However, whenever this adoption is accompanied by lack of preparation and enthusiasm by people who must make the new programme operative in a given setting, the chances of realizing the benefits of the programme would not only be greatly reduced, but the very existence of the programme itself will eventually be at stake. This further affirms Okam's (2012) submission where the author states that, Social Studies Education in Nigerian schools and colleges has failed in its educational mission in Nigeria or rather is falling in this enterprise. A nation that is tending towards growth and development must lay emphasis on a reorientation and reorganization of institutions and a transformation of the people's welfare.

Concept of Implementation

Implementation is the systematic way of carrying out planned document or projects. It is the act of executing policies, programmes and projects. Implementation is a process of coordinating activities or carrying out drafted planned, policies and projects. Franklin (1982) defines implementation as activities which include amassing resources needed to mobilize and carry out responsibilities, planning specific programme designs, using legislation and translating them into specific regulations, organizing staff and creating or amending appropriate routines and providing the benefits and services to intended recipients. Hyder (1984) considers implementation as the act of putting policies into practice. It is often the complex process of planning, organization, coordination and promotion which is necessary in order to achieve policy objectives.

Concept of Curriculum Implementation

There are many definitions of curriculum implementation. Obanya (2004) defines implementation of curriculum as the day-to-day activities which school management and classroom teachers undertake in the pursuit of the objectives of any given curriculum. Curriculum implementation according to Fullan and Pomfret, (2007), Loucks and Lieberman (2003), is the rolling out of a new practice to establish how it looks like when it is actually used in a school system. John (2003) views curriculum implementation as that state in the curriculum process and system whereby all relevant curriculum inputs are brought into direct contact with the learners through a wide variety of activities so that learning experience can be maximized. In another vein, curriculum implementation as defined by Chikumbi and Makamure (2000) entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects.

The teacher is identified as the agent in the curriculum implementation process. Curriculum implementation therefore refers to how the planned or officially designed course of study is translated by the teacher into syllabuses, scheme of work and lessons to be delivered to students. Implementation is said to take place when the teacher-constructed syllabus, the teacher personality, the teaching materials and the teaching environment interact with the learner. Implementation further takes place as the learner acquires the planned or intended experiences, skills, knowledge, ideas and attitudes that are aimed at enabling the same learner to function effectively in the society. The learner is therefore seen as the central figure of curriculum implementation process.

Challenges facing Social Studies Education Curriculum Implementation in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

There are many problems hindering effective implementation of Social Studies Education Curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Some of the problems include; inadequate funding, shortage of Social Studies academic staff, inadequate instructional materials, brain-drain and strike actions.

Inadequate funding

Inadequate funding is one of the major problems facing the implementation of social studies curriculum in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The budgetary allocation released for the administration of Social Studies Education curriculum implementation in tertiary institutions in most tertiary institutions is not adequate. Tertiary institutions is structured in a way that faculties and departments receives allocation from their institutions (Ogunode, and Adihikon, 2023; Sarkinfada, and Kyari, 2022). The inability of Vice-chancellors, Rectors and Provosts to access adequate funding for the running of the institutions is responsible for the poor development of the respective institutions in Nigeria (Tunde and Issa, 2013; Okebukola, 2018; Ogunode, Haliru, Shehu, and Peter, 2023).

Ogunode and Ahmed 2022; Ogunode, Peter and Ayoko, 2023; Ogunode, (2023) maintain that tertiary institutions in Nigeria are underfunded and this has affected curriculum implementation of programmes in the various institutions. The problem of inadequacy of funds in Nigerian higher institutions can be linked to many factors. The poor funding of public Universities in Nigeria is responsible for the poor quality of education and decaying infrastructural facilities. The inability of the government to objectively implement the UNESCO 15%-20% recommendation for the funding of education in Nigeria has contributed to the poor performance of the public Universities in the country (Ogunode and Abubakar, 2023).

Ogunode, Abubakar and Ajape, 2021; Ogunode and Onyekachi, 2021; Ogunode, Onyekachi, and Ayoko, 2023; *Sarkinfaada and Multafu (2022)*, identify the factors responsible for inadequate funding of public Universities in Nigeria to include lack of political will, corruption, increase in population, inflation, fall in national revenue and poor financial planning and the implications of underfunding of the public universities include; inadequate infrastructural facilities, shortage of academics staff, poor quality of education, brain-drain and strike action.

Shortage of Social Studies Academic Staff

National Universities Commission Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) for undergraduate programmes (2007) stipulated that Social Studies academic staff mixes, rank mixes and ratios shall be such that admits 20% in the professorial grade, 35% in the Senior Lecturer grade and 45% in the Lecturer I grade and below. Most departments of Social Studies Education in Nigerian tertiary institutions do not have the number of academic staff as recommended by NUC and this has affected implementation of Social Studies programme at various tertiary institutions.

Generally, tertiary institutions, especially the universities are faced with the problem of shortage of academic staff. The report of Dateline (2022) as captured in National Universities Commission data indicated that federal universities in Nigeria suffer a shortage of full-time Professors. According to the data, no federal university scored up to 50 per cent in the ranking of full Professors. This implies that no federal university has the required number of full Professors. Some of the federal universities ranked in the top 10 are the Usmanu Dan-Fodiyo University, Sokoto, with 36.44 percent; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, 35.80 percent; the University of Ibadan, 32.43 percent; Federal University of Technology, Akure, 27.28 percent; Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, 27.25 percent; the University of Abuja, 25.33 percent; the University of Benin, 23.26 percent; University of Port Harcourt, 21.26 percent; the University of Calabar, 21.20 percent; and the University of Ilorin, 21.12 percent.

Ogunode and Adamu, 2021; Ogunode and Okwelogu, (2022) conclude that underfunding, poor manpower planning, poor motivation, government policy on the embargo on recruitment, corruption (Ghost worker) and strike action problems are the causes of inadequate academic staff in the public universities in North-central Nigeria and the implications of the shortage of academic staff in public universities include poor implementation of teaching programme, high student-lecturers ratio, heavy workload for lecturers, poor local and international ranking, bad international image, poor coverage of scheme of work and poor academic programme accreditation.

Inadequate Instructional Materials

Inadequate instructional materials is another problem facing curriculum implementation of Social Studies Education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Oluwagbohunmi, and Abdu-Raheem, 2014; Okhakhu, Oladiran, and Omoike, 2016; Ogunode and Josiah, (2023) maintain that the school system is designed to function with the application and deployment of instructional materials. Instructional

materials are very essential to the development of education. Instructional materials are one of the critical components of the educational system. Instructional materials are used in all forms of educational institutions. In tertiary institutions, instructional materials are meant to support teaching and learning. Lecturers in educational institutions teach well with the deployment of instructional materials. These materials are meant to serve as a channel between the lecturers and the students in delivering instructions and also serve as a motivation for the teaching-learning process. In consonance with this, is where NUC (2007) submits that, the availability of resources is sine-qua-non for effective and efficient implementation of Social Studies Education programmes in tertiary institutions. It therefore means that resources must be adequate and be provided as required. Patrick and Etukudo (2014) note that most of the instructional materials are not available for teaching. Ogunode and Atobauka (2021) argue that many Social Science Departments including Social Studies programme are faced with the problem of shortage of instructional materials. Abdul (2018) opines that the non-availability of materials in some Nigerian school has affected teaching and learning.

Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities

National Universities Commission Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) for undergraduate programmes (2007) stipulates that for effective implementation of Social Studies Education curriculum programme in the tertiary institutions especially in the Universities, the following infrastructural facilities should be provided in each Social Studies Department. The facilities include; Academic offices, classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories, studios, staff offices, adequate classrooms, lecture theatres, auditoria, laboratories, studios, staff offices, workshops for technical and vocational education and others. All these should be provided to ensure proper implementation of the programme in all tertiary institutions. Every Faculty of Education should have a computer laboratory, Internet Access and Resource Room. The case is the reverse in many Social Studies Education units in Nigerian tertiary institutions and as Oluremi and Oyewole, (2014) assert that many public universities in Nigeria do not have adequate lecture halls, laboratories and offices for both students and academic staff. Many academic and non-academic staff do not have offices and peradventure they have, one is been shared by five to six lecturers. Ogunode, and Jegede, 2021; Ukozor and Ogunode (2022) submit that factors responsible for inadequate infrastructural facilities in Nigerian public Universities include; underfunding, increased student population, corruption, poor infrastructural facilities planning, poor supervision and inflation. The implication of inadequate infrastructural facilities in the Nigerian public Universities according to Sarkinfada, 2013; Ishaya and Ogunode (2021) includes; poor quality of education, poor teaching and learning, low productivity, brain drain and overcrowding of lecture halls.

Brain-drain

Another problem that has prevented effective implementation of Social Studies Education Curriculum in Nigerian tertiary institutions is the problem of brain-drain. Brain-drain refers to the movement of professionals from developing countries to developed countries for a better job offers. Brain-drain is a situation whereby professional individuals are migrating from their countries to another country to seek greener pasture. Many lecturers and researchers in the Social Studies Education units are leaving public tertiary institutions in Nigeria to other parts of African countries and Europe for a better job offer and conducive working environment. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) former President, Prof. Biodun Ogunyemi, notes that a sizeable number of Nigerian Professors are leaving the shores of the country. Factors responsible for Brain-drain in Nigerian public Universities according to Ololube, 2016; Ogunode 2020; Ogunode and Atobauka, 2021, include; poor motivation, an unconducive working environment, insecurity, underfunding and political interferences. The implication of brain-drain in the

Nigerian public Universities includes; a shortage of lecturers, poor quality of education and a high students-teacher ratio.

Strike actions

Strike actions in tertiary institutions in Nigeria have affected implementation of Social Studies Education curriculum. Ogunode, 2020; Ogunode, Yiolokun, and Akeredolu, 2019; and Okoli, Ogbondah, and Ewor, (2016) note that strike actions in the Nigerian public universities is another problem facing the administration of public universities in Nigeria. The Nigerian public universities are known for continuous strike actions by different union groups in the public universities. The continuous strike actions by these different union groups are frustrating the administration of public universities in Nigeria. The reasons for the strike actions by different union groups according to Lawan, and Ogunode (2021) include; underfunding of the public universities, inadequate infrastructural facilities, and poor implementation of agreement reached with union groups and poor working condition. The implications of the continuous strike actions on the public universities include; disruption in the academic programme, poor quality of education, bad image for the universities, poor ranking internationally and poor patronage of public universities in Nigeria. Ogunode (2020a) and Ogunode, Ugochukwu, and Jegede (2022) conclude that the strike action embarked upon by the different unions in the higher institutions in the country has affected the administration of many programmes including Social Studies Education in the Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper examined the problem hindering effective implementation of Social Studies Education Curriculum in the Nigerian tertiary education. The paper depends on secondary data. The secondary data were collected from online and print publications. The paper concluded that inadequate funding, shortage of Social Studies lecturers, inadequate instructional materials, inadequate infrastructural facilities; brain-drain and strike actions are factors militating against effective implementation of Social Studies Education programme in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. To enhance effective curriculum implementation of Social Studies programme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, the paper hereby recommends the following:

- 1) Increase in funding of Social Studies Education programme in tertiary institutions;
- 2) Employment of more Social Studies Education lecturers in all the departments of Social Studies in all tertiary institutions in Nigeria;
- 3) Provision of adequate infrastructural facilities to all Social Studies units in all tertiary institutions across the country;
- 4) Provision of adequate instructional materials in all department of Social Studies in the country;
- 5) Managers of tertiary institutions should motivate all the academic staff by increasing their salaries and welfare packages to prevent brain-drain; and
- 6) Government should implement agreement reached with different union groups in the tertiary institutions to prevent future strike actions.

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