

## **ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION IN ELECTORAL PROCESS IN NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*Social Studies Education has re-emerged as an important issue in electoral process. The purpose of this study is to examine key aspects of Social Studies models to teaching electoral process in Nigeria. It was a quasi-experimental study carried out in Delta State, the sample made up of eighty (80) students drawn from Delta States. The researcher used students' class performance test as methods of data collection. The Z-test was used in the testing of the hypotheses. The findings of this research indicated that students who were taught and exposed to the content of electoral process model, performed better than those who were taught, but not exposed to the content of electoral process in a Social Studies classroom. Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations were made. Policy makers, public bodies and professional organizations should reflect on the different models of electoral process and the essential components to be included in successful Social Studies education. In conclusion, this study further consolidates previous researchers on electoral process, which works had indicated the efficacy and indispensability of Social Studies in the teaching and learning process.*

**Keynote:** *Analysis, role social studies education, electoral process.*

### **Introduction**

Social Studies education has been in some form, an overarching goal of public school in every society. The task of socializing the next generation to the direction of the nation state has been so important that schools are directed by the governments. Social Studies like any subject else has to be learned, as young people do not become good citizens by accident (Parker, 1991; 2002). While Social Studies education can occur through a variety of sources, particularly through the family and the media, schooling remains the main source of formal Social Studies education for young people it is the one major avenue through which government can maintain high level of control, so, in Nigeria the school (formal school) is the primary instrument for Social Studies education.

Social Studies education takes many forms; there is a growing trend across the world that is based upon the concepts, processes and values of education for democratic citizenship (Patrick, 1999; Torney Purta, 1999; 2001 Print & Smith, 2000; Nabal, Print & Veldhuis, 2002). Yet in many countries, it is difficult to locate a subject in the school curriculum as Social Studies education. Many countries embed aspects of Social Studies within a school subject, often known as Civic Education, which in turn is usually blended with other learning such as moral education (Torney, Purta, 1999; Torney-Purta 2001).

There is general agreement that the development of electoral process is the central purpose of Social Studies instruction (e.g. See Barr. Barth & Shermis, 1997; Stanley, 1985). It is not surprising therefore that in many counties, such as as the United States of America, Social Studies education is significant, if not main source of citizenship transmission for students. (Print 1997, Torney- Purta, 2001; Gonzales, Rudel, Avery & Sullivan 2001). In Nigeria secondary schools, Social Studies is a compulsory examinable subject newly introduced for all students as a core subject from primary schools to junior secondary schools. Furthermore, in Singapore secondary schools, Social Studies is a compulsory examinable subject. Newly introduced from 2001 for all students at the upper secondary school level

from years 9-10 for the four years secondary course, and year 11 secondary course, and year 12 secondary school for the five years course.

As a result of the efforts of Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN), during the 1969 National Curriculum Conference, Social Studies Education has now assumed a pride of place in our educational system. It studies consists of about four orientations. A Social Studies orientation is a set of statements describing any one of the multiple emphasis in Social Studies Education. Each major emphasis has developed answers to the questions about content, method and purpose of teaching Social Studies. At the secondary level, three of these orientations have been developed.

The first is the Social Studies orientation emphasizing the transmission of citizenship learning such as morals, values and attitudes. According to the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2014) Social Studies curriculum include citizenship transmission which emphasises how individuals develop positive attitude to their rights, freedom, duties and obligations as citizens. The other two orientations are:

1. The one emphasizing structure of the Social Sciences which includes mainly the concepts of economics, sociology, anthropology, geography, political science and;
2. The orientation emphasizing problem solving through reflective inquiry.

This necessitated the development of the use of three traditions of teaching Social Studies in secondary schools. Barth and Shemis (1970) revealed that citizenship transmission is the most ancient and most pervasive of the three traditions. All societies, in some way tend to transmit a set of beliefs, loyalties and practice to their young ones.

National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) has contributed to these efforts of reaffirming citizenship education as the primary purpose of Social Studies by identifying the unique goals and essential characteristics of Social Studies programmes designed to accomplish this purpose which is very necessary for electoral process.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean score of Social Studies taught using the dramatization method and those taught using reflective inquiry method in post-primary schools in Delta State.

Based on the research question outline, a working null hypothesis was formulated

**Hypothesis**

1. What is the connection between electoral process and Social Studies in post primary schools in Delta State?

**Research Question**

The following research question was raised to guide the study  
The NCSS delegates voted overwhelmingly in November, 1992 to approve the final version of the definition of Social Studies presented by the NCSS Board of Directors. Within the school programme, Social Studies provides coordinated systematic study of such discipline as Anthropology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, Mathematics, and the natural sciences. The primary purpose of Social Studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse democratic society in an interdependent world.  
Social Studies is a term used to describe the broad study of the various fields which involve past and current human behaviour and interactions (Sears, 1984; Print, 1997). Rather than focused on any one topic in depth, Social Studies provides a broad overview of human society past and present. Examples of subject typically covered in Social Studies are History, Economics, Geography, Government, culture, Psychology and Sociology.  
NCSS's statement essentials of the Social studies" (NCOS, 1990) identifies citizenship transmission as the primary purpose of post-primary Social Studies. Social studies aim to educating students to become well informed citizens realizing and connecting the Social Studies to one's sense of freedom and everyday lifestyle: examining the code of behaviour within one's diverse society (for example morals, values, rule/law).

### Analysis

Post-test Scores of Students Exposed to the Reflective Inquiry Method and the Dramatization Method

Reflective Inquiry Method					Dramatization Method				
21	16	20	18	17	15	7	12	13	17
24	22	21	19	20	12	20	17	8	9
18	26	20	18	21	17	9	11	16	13
14	28	23	20	17	21	12	15	14	17
17	20	14	16	23	19	13	9	8	8
25	21	18	13	22	14	9	24	21	12
19	12	22	18	18	13	15	17	9	10
21	17	19	22	24	17	6	11	13	7

Z-test of Difference Between Two Means

Method	Mean	SD	N	Standard Error	Z-cal	Z-crit
Reflective inquiry	19.60	3.43	40	0.87	7.30	1.96
Dramatization method	12.25	4.32	40			

Reflective inquiry method			Dramatization Method		
$\bar{X}_N$	=	19.6	$\bar{X}_r$	=	13.25
$S_N$	=	3.43	$S_r$	=	4.32
$n_N$	=	40	$n_N$	=	40

### Conclusion

Social Studies is taught mainly as a citizenship transmission yet a significant feature of the Social Studies syllabus is the focus on developing thinking skills in students. As electoral process, Social Studies seeks to socialize students to a particular set of values, and knowledge at both cognitive and affective levels, focusing on the nation, common culture and shared values. However, the transmission process may be mitigated by developing thinking skills in student, a process of counter socialization necessitated by an intensively global economy. This is the cause of Social Studies in Nigeria today. Thus, the study shows that attention be given to the electoral process, and context of Social Studies.

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### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study and the review of relevant literature, the following recommendations were made to help improve the citizenship transmission model of teaching Social Studies in post-primary schools:

1. Social Studies students both in primary and secondary levels should be aware of the fact that electoral process has many content and it should be learnt in such a way that all the contents should be blended together so that pupils and students will have an organized integrative experience.
2. Teaching of electoral content in Social Studies classroom will enable students to learn from experiences of other countries to build and sustain a politically vibrant Nigerian.
3. Teaching the content of electoral process will develop citizens who have empathy towards others and who will anticipate responsibly and sensibly in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious society when exposed to the ideas, issues, values, skills, knowledge of electoral process.
4. Electoral process as one of the traditions of Social Studies (Barth, Barr & Shermis, 1977). the state possesses an ideal conception of society and citizenship and this should be taught to students in order to help them become loyal believers in the particular set of truths necessary to guarantee the survival of society.

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