

TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM AS A TOOL FOR RESOLVING SOCIO-CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

David Babatunde Akinola¹ and Joshua Oyekale Oyesikun²

¹Social Studies Unit Department of Arts and Social Science Education Faculty of Education,
University of Abuja P.M.B. 117, Abuja

²Department of Arts and Social Science Education Faculty of Education, University of Abuja P.M.B. 117, Abuja

ABSTRACT

The focus of this study was to investigate teachers' assessment of social studies curriculum as a tool for resolving socio-cultural conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria. A sample of 350 teachers was drawn from all government owned Junior Secondary School in North-Central, Nigeria. A 36- item questionnaire was used, which was subjected to experts' scrutiny. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was computed using Cronach's alpha to arrive at a reliability index of 0.87. Percentages were used to analyze bio-data of respondents, while t-test and ANOVA were used to analyze two sample variables and more than two sample variables respectively. The findings revealed that there was no significant difference in graduate and non-graduate teachers in terms of the assessment of the curriculum contents of the subject. There is significant difference in male and female teachers in terms of their assessment of the use of instructional resources as a tool for resolving socio-cultural conflicts. The study recommended that social studies be made a core subject from early child-care education (ECCE) to Senior Secondary School. It was further recommended that teachers should be encouraged to attend conference, seminars and workshops. It was recommended that nomination of teachers for workshops, conference and seminars should always involve rural and urban teachers. Finally, gender should also be considered when sending teachers to attend and workshops.

KEYWORDS: Social Studies Curriculum, Socio-Cultural and Religious Conflicts, National Integration and Development

INTRODUCTION

Conflict according to Umar (2005) exist when two people or group want to carry out acts which are incompatible with those of other individual or group. Conflict of course, is inevitable in human society because inherent differences such as values, interests, opinions, goals and aspirations.

Usually, in nearly all human societies, there are functional and dysfunctional conflicts. Functional conflict reflects the differences and varieties of human opinion and activity which exist in the society. However, if this form of conflict is not suppressed together, and a society can become static and stagnant, lacking the development of new ideas and institution to take the place of old ones. (Umar, 2005).

Dysfunction conflict on the other hand is very negative in the sense that it is usually symptomatic of a failed state where conflict goes beyond control or beyond normal threshold. This could be very devastating to the entire system and could in a long run adversely affect national integration and development.

Specifically, in the past decades, Nigeria has been ravaged by incessant socio-cultural and religious conflicts. Some of which include: Jukun-Tiv, the 30 months blood-bathe, the maitasine massacre, the Udi massacre, Modakeke and Ile Ife massacre, Zango Kataff, Zyak-Biam, massacre and other bestial acts perpetrated by religious fanaticism and political differences as observed by the Berom Ministers Forum as cited in Bulya (2010).

The above mentioned conflicts and many more are posing serious threat to the cooperate existence of Nigeria as one indivisible entity. Also making development almost impossible in the affected areas. This is not in any way good for Nigeria. It must be emphasized here that several measure put in place to resolve such conflict in the time past, have not yielded positive results.

This informs why this study opted for social studies education a school curricular instrument which is widely known as a problem-solving discipline to be used as a panacea. Social studies curriculum, through variety of its component (objectives, contents, methods, resources and evaluation) has the capacity to play a vital role to promote cooperation and integration among people of diverse socio-cultural and religion backgrounds in a bid to resolving those age-long and persistent conflicts in Nigeria.

In essence, this study is out to investigate teachers' assessment of social studies curriculum as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria. The use of teacher is informed by the facts that they are well grounded in the ontology and epistemology of the discipline. Hence, the following variable of social studies, teachers' age, qualifications, teaching experience, location and gender were used.

Statement of the problem

Since early 80s, Nigeria has been experiencing series of conflicts under different guise, namely communal conflict, cultural conflicts, religious conflicts etc. these conflicts at one time or the other have slowed down the pace of development in the country and have brought in distrust suspicion amongst heterogeneous people of Nigeria. This is posing serious threat to national unity, harmony and integration. Worst still, are the recent conflicts between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers in North-Central states of Nigeria. These conflicts are detrimental to every efforts been put in place by all stakeholders to develop Nigeria, hence, a need to resolve them. It is based on this premise that this study investigated social studies curriculum as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' assessment of social studies curriculum as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Specifically, the objectives of the study were as follows, to;

- i. find out the extent to which teachers assess the curriculum objectives of the subject as having the capacity to serve as a tool to resolve socio-cultural and religious conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria.
- ii. determine the extent to which social studies teachers assess curriculum contents of the subject as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria.
- iii. assess the extent which social studies teachers affirm that the proper use of varieties of instructional methods of the subject can serve as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.
- iv. find out the extent to which social studies teachers affirm the use of instructional resources of the subject as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.
- v. find out the extent to which social studies teachers assess the use of variety of evaluation procedures as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religion conflict for national integration and development.

Research Questions

Five research questions guided this study:

- i. What is the assessment of social studies teachers on the capacity of the subject curriculum objectives as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria?
- ii. What is the mean assessment of social studies teachers on the use of the curriculum contents of the subject as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria?
- iii. To what extent do social studies teachers affirm the use of variety of instructional methods of the subject as a tool for resolving socio-cultural conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria?
- iv. To what extent to do social studies teachers affirm the use of instructional resources of the subject as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria?
- v. How do social studies teachers assess the requisite evaluation procedures of the subject as necessary tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Five null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of graduate and non-graduate teachers on social studies curriculum objectives as having the capacity to resolve socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of teachers based on their age on the use of social studies curriculum contents as a tool for resolving social cultural conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Ho3: There is no significant differences in the mean scores of teachers based on years of teaching experience on the use of instructional methods of social studies as a tool for resolving socio-cultural conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Ho4: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female teachers on the use of social studies instructional resources as tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Ho5: There is no significant difference in the mean score of urban and rural teachers on the use of requisites evaluation procedures of social studies as tool for resolving socio-cultural and religion conflicts for national integration development in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The design for this study was a descriptive survey research. It was considered appropriate because it involved the use of questionnaire and focused on description of the existing situation among a large number of respondents.

Population of the Study

The population of this study composed all the qualified social studies teachers in government owned Junior Secondary Schools in North-Central, Nigeria. There were 3551 social studies teachers in government owned Junior Secondary Schools in North-Central, Nigeria. Source (UBEC, 2013).

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size of this study comprised of three hundred and fifty (350) social studies teachers in government owned Junior Secondary Schools in North-Central, Nigeria. The sample size of this study was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) proposed table for determining sample size. Furthermore, the sample size for each state and FCT were selected using proportional sample random technique.

Instrument

The researcher structured a questionnaire that had a total of 32 items titled; Teacher's Assessment of Social Studies for Resolving Social-Cultural conflict in Nigeria (TASSRSCCIN). The questionnaire has sections A and B. Section a considered respondent Bio-data while Section B contained items on teachers' assessment level relevant for answering the research questions. The response format of the questionnaire was of the 4 –point modified likert -type rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The face and content validity of the instrument were ascertained by experts in social studies and test and measurement. Test retest method was used within 3 weeks interval to determine the reliability of the instrument. The scores of the tests were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPCM). A reliability coefficient of 0.877 was obtained and the instrument was therefore considered reliable.

Data Collection Procedure

Seven trained research assistants were used in the administration of the questionnaire. One research assistant for was assigned to each state and FCT to take care of the schools selected for the study. All the distributed questionnaire copies were retrieved and intact. Thus, three hundred and fifty (350) copies of the questionnaire were used.

RESULTS

Data Analysis

The data analysis of the five hypotheses were done by using t-test for two sample variables and ANOVA for more than two sample variables at 0.05 level of significance. That tested for the difference between the mean scores of respondents on social studies curriculum as a tool for resolving social cultural and religion conflicts in Nigeria.

H01: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of graduate and non-graduate teachers on social curriculum objectives as having the capacity to resolve socio-cultural and religions conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Table 1: t-test comparison of the mean scores of Graduate and Non-Graduate teachers on social studies curriculum objectives as having the capacity to resolve socio-cultural and religious conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria.

| Variable (p) | No. of sample | Df | Mean | SED | Ecal | Ecrit | Sign Level |
|--------------|---------------|-----|--------|-------|---------|--------|------------|
| Non-graduate | 125 | 348 | 22.832 | 1.360 | 0.633ns | 1.9679 | 0.527 |
| Graduate | 225 | | 22.729 | 1.513 | | | |

NS- Not Significant at 0.05 level.

The t-test presented on Table 1 was carried out to establish whether there were differences in the assessment of graduate and non-graduate teachers on social studies curriculum objectives as having the capacity to resolve socio-cultural and religious conflicts in Nigeria. With a significant value of 0.527 (higher than the 0.05 level of significance) the hypothesis was retained. It was therefore concluded that the graduate and non-graduate teachers were not different in their assessment.

H02: there is no significant difference in the mean scores of teachers on the use of curriculum contents of social studies as a tool for resolving national integration and development in Nigeria.

Table 2: ANOVA Comparison of the mean scores of teachers on the curriculum contents of social studies as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria with regard to their ages.

| | Sum of squares | Df | Mean squares | F cal | Fcrit | Sign level |
|----------------|----------------|-----|--------------|---------|-------|------------|
| Between Groups | 14.405 | 3 | 4.802 | 1.224ns | 2.62 | 0.301 |
| Within Groups | 1356.935 | 346 | 3.922 | | | |
| Total | 1371.340 | 349 | | | | |

ns- Not significant to 0.05 level.

Result of the ANOVA statistics on table 2 shows that there is no significant difference in the means scores of teacher on the curriculum contents of social studies as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria. (Fcal = 1.224 < Fcrit = 2.62; Df = 3,346,349; p > 0.05. therefore, hypothesis two was accepted.

H03: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of teachers on the use of social studies instructional methods as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria with regard to years of teaching experience.

Table 3: mean scores of teachers on the use of social studies instructional methods as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria with regard to years of teaching experience.

| | Sum of squares | Df | Mean squares | F cal | F crit | Sign level |
|----------------|----------------|-----|--------------|-------|--------|------------|
| Between Groups | 131.51 | 2 | 65.76 | 18.37 | 000 | Rejected |
| Within Groups | 1241.988 | 347 | 3.58 | | | |
| Total | 1373.49 | 349 | | | | |

Significant at 0.05 level

Table 3B: Scheffe post Hoc multiple comparison analysis Result

| | | | | |
|------------|----------------|-------|-------|----------|
| 1-5years | 6-10years | -1.65 | 0.000 | Sig. |
| | 11 years above | -0.73 | 0.051 | Not Sig. |
| 6-10 years | 11 years above | 0.92 | 0.000 | Sign |

The mean difference is significant at 0.05 level of significance the table was no significant difference between the mean responses of teachers with 1-5years and 11years and above teaching scores of 6-10years and 11years and above teaching experience on the use of variety of instructional methods of social studies as a tool for resolving socio-cultural conflicts.

H04: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Male and female teachers on the use of social studies instructional resources as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflict for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Table 4 T-test comparison of the mean scores of male and female teachers on the use of social studies instructional resources as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.

| Variable | No.of Sample | Df | Mean | S t d | t cal | tcrit | Sign level (p) |
|-----------------|--------------|-----|--------|-------|-------|--------|----------------|
| Male Teachers | 203 | 348 | 19.961 | 1.570 | 2.778 | 1.9679 | 0.006 |
| Female Teachers | 147 | | 20.442 | 1.643 | | | |

Significant at 0.05 level

From the table 4, there is significant different between the mean scores of male teachers (19.961) and female teachers (20.442) on the use of social studies instructional resources as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria at 0.05 level of significant therefore, hypothesis 4 is rejected.

HO4: There are no significant differences in the mean scores of Rural and urban teachers on the use of variety of evaluation procedures of social studies as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Table 5: t-test comparison of the mean scores of rural and urban teachers on the use of variety of evaluation procedures of social studies as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national development in Nigeria.

| Variable | No.of Sample | Df | Mean | S t d | t cal | tcrit | Sig. level (p) |
|----------------|--------------|-----|--------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|
| Rural teachers | 235 | 348 | 20.379 | 1.543 | 2.691 | 1.968 | 0.007 |
| Urban teachers | 115 | | 19.904 | 1.561 | | | |

Significant at 0.05 level

The result on table 5 shows that rural and urban teachers differ in their assessment of the use of variety of evaluation procedures of social studies as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria at 0.05 level of significance (tcal=2.691 > tcrit 1.968; df=348; p<0.05. therefore, hypothesis 5 was rejected.

Summary of Findings

1. There was no significant difference in the mean scores of graduate and non-graduate teachers on the use of social studies curriculum objectives as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.
2. Most of the respondents agreed that the use of social studies curriculum contents can serve as a tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.
3. The findings of hypothesis three revealed that majority of teachers affirmed that the use of instructional methods can serve as a tool for resolving socio-cultural conflict for national integration and development.
4. There was significant difference in the mean scores of male and female teachers on the use of social studies instructional resource as tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.
5. There was significant difference in the mean scores of rural and urban teachers on the use of variety of evaluation procedures of social studies as tool for resolving socio-cultural and religious conflicts for national integration and development in Nigeria.

Discussion of finding

The findings of hypothesis one revealed that social studies teachers assessed the curriculum objectives of the subject as capable to serve as tool for resolving socio-cultural conflicts for national integration and development. The findings is in line with Philip (1997) who assert that social studies learning activities should be developed purposely towards the realization of objectives which was further confirmed by Okam (2000) who stated that teachers should cognitively alert to the aims and objectives of the subject to enhance the capacity of the subject to restore problems such as socio-cultural conflicts.

The findings of hypothesis two revealed that quite a large number of teachers agreed that curriculum contents of social studies could help students to responsible citizens who will promote peace and abhor conflict for natural integration and development to be attained. This is in line with Danladi (2005) who asserted that curriculum contents of social studies if properly and carefully selected organized and related to contemporary issues problems students would be build a capacity in them to resolve personal and societal problems.

The findings of hypothesis three revealed that majority of teachers affirmed that the use of instructional methods can serve as a tool for resolving socio-cultural conflict for national integration and development. This is line with Bank (2002) who stressed the importance of methods in social studies by stating that no matter how well objective are stated, contents selected and evaluation

designed, all may be fruitless, if appropriate methods to transmit contents and achieve objectives are not adopted.

It was reveal that majority of teachers indicated strongly agreed and agreed that social studies instructional resource have the capacity to enhance the resolution of socio-cultural conflicts in Nigeria. This is in line with Oyesikun and Danladi (2010) who opined that teachers will be able to translate the contents of the subject matter in social studies classroom dispensation, if necessary instructional materials are used to motivate learners which will further equip the adequately to resolve personal and societal conflicts.

The finding of hypothesis five revealed that the use of interviews, anecdotal, socio-metric and some test tool techniques of evaluation are paramount in assisting to prepare learners to resolve socio-cultural conflicts in the society. The finding is in line with Mezeiobi (2008) who asserted that evaluation in social studies is an inter related part of all teaching and learning this is also essential in resolving learning of difficulties and problems (personal or societal).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendation were made;

1. Social studies should be made a core subject from early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) to Senior Secondary School level of Nigerian Education system.
2. Social Studies teachers should be encouraged to attend conference, seminars and workshops where they will be availed the opportunity to interact and share ideas on the proper use of variety of instructional methods.
3. Location and gender should be considered when nominating teachers for conference, seminars and workshops so as to help address differences in their opinions as regards the use of instructional resource and variety of evaluation procedure as having the capacity to resolve socio-cultural confliction Nigeria.

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