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**TEACHERS' COMPETENCE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF JUNIOR SECONDARY
SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM**

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Abstract

The study assessed the competence of Social Studies teachers in Ogbomoso North and South Local Government areas in Oyo State. The descriptive survey research design of ex-post facto type was adopted for the study. The research was carried out using ten Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) that were randomly selected from Ogbomoso North and South Local Government areas, Oyo State. Forty-seven teachers were selected through purposive sampling technique. Two research instruments were used for data collection namely: Social Studies Academic Qualification inventory (SSTAQI) and Social Studies Implementation Checklists (SSIOC). The data analysed using simple percentage revealed that 40% of the teachers were competent to teach Social Studies in junior secondary schools as they possessed the required qualifications and exhibited satisfactory performance in classroom teaching. Thus, improving students' performance in Social Studies would be a great factor in enhancing improvement on teachers' competence in teaching. This in turn will improve Social Studies curriculum implementation.

Key words: Competence, Implementation, Curriculum and Social studies

Introduction

Implementation of any given education or school programme is always with the aim of achieving success. There are set goals which require principles to follow for the attainment of desirable behaviours in students. Social Studies is the study of Man, what he does and how he affects and being affected by his environments. It is a Social Science Subject that teaches virtue of peaceful coexistence among human beings. Social Studies, according to the Board of Directors of National Council for Social Studies (1992), is the integrated study of the social science and humanities to promote civic competence. The NCSS (2002) further pointed out that within the school programme, Social Studies provides a coordinated, and systematic study, drawing from such disciplines as Anthropology, Archaeology, Economics, Geography, History,

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Law, Religion, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology, as well as appropriate content from Mathematics, the humanities, and natural sciences. The Council explained the primary purpose of Social Studies is to help young people to develop the ability to make informed decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse democratic society in an independent world.

However, partly as a result of the scientific and technological progress and civilization which have extended the frontiers of knowledge, resulting in a more complex environment, Social Studies does not appear to have desired positive effects on the lives of youths (Adegbite, 2012). Youths are seen with wrong attitudes negating the objectives of Social Studies. Such attitudes include prostitution, drug abuse, drug addiction, armed robbery, theft and laziness which may be traced to the wrong use of some technological products like the mobile phone and the computer. Individuals that are expected to be productive turn out to be dependent, notorious, and even useless depicting that the expected goals and objectives of Social Studies are not being achieved. The number and quality of teachers, the structure, content and organization of the curriculum, the teaching and learning process, the quality of the learning environment and the entry behaviour, background of the students are a few factors that can determine the outcome of implementation of the Social Studies curriculum. Meanwhile, Olakulehin (1989) evaluated the Social Studies curriculum for secondary schools and found out that the curriculum was well formulated. Therefore, the study assessed the number of Social Studies teachers in JSS under study in Oyo State, their academic qualifications and competence in teaching and learning.

Findings of some of the previous studies on the achievement or non-achievement of Social Studies curriculum objectives in JSS revealed that evaluation of affective domain of the learner is difficult leading to ineffective curriculum achievement. Others showed overcrowded in Social Studies classes as a defect (Olakulehin 1995, Ojedokun 2006, Adegbite 2012 & Ayandele 2016). However, the gap in the previous studies which this research intends to bridge is in the area of teacher's competence in the implementation of JSS Social Studies curriculum.

Meaning of Social Studies

The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC,2006) sees the integrated Social Studies as a genuine attempt at an interdisciplinary study of man and his environment. In it, the study focuses on man's problems of survival and how that environment in turn influences man. The comprehensive definition given by Barth and Shermis (1990) suggests that Social Studies is:

1. Citizenship transmission which assumes that there is a body of existing knowledge, skills and values to be transmitted to the younger generation in order to produce good citizens out of them.
2. Social Sciences simplified for pedagogical purposes, whereby Social Scientists have created a body of knowledge, which is then transmitted, in a simplified version to the young.
3. Reflective enquiry, whereby good citizens who can make rational decisions within a socio-political framework are developed.

According to Obed (2009), Social Studies focuses on the study of human beings, their interaction with the environment in the past and present with due consideration of the future. It is through this subject that students are expected to gain a lot of skills, knowledge, attitude and values that will enable them to effectively deal with contemporary environmental issues. This necessitates functional teaching of Social Studies to change children's and youth's attitudes and behaviour towards the environment. Kissock (1981) defines Social Studies as the study of people and their beliefs in relation to where they live, the work they do and the ways by which they organize themselves. Kissock's definition seems to agree with that of Adaralegbe (1980) who sees Social Studies as a problem-solving oriented subject through which Man studies and learns about problems of survival in his environment. He concludes by referring to Social Studies as a way of life.

Growth and Development of Social Studies and its Curriculum in Nigeria

As Nigeria approached independence, there were efforts to indigenize the content of the courses in the primary and secondary schools. This was to correct the lopsided nature of colonial education. When independence was achieved in 1960, there was the opportunity to experiment "American" education. It was the experiment that brought the new Social Studies into Nigeria. In 1963, Social Studies as an integrated subject were introduced to secondary school pupils in Aiyetoro Comprehensive High School in Ogun State of Nigeria. The school was established by the Americans as an experimental comprehensive school in Africa. It was referred to as "The Ohio Project". The school started many new subjects, among which was Social Studies, in junior classes of the school. At that time, Social Studies were initially taught by a few Americans assisted by two Nigerians. By 1967, the Department of Social Studies in the school had twelve members of staff.

The National Curriculum Conference in 1969 that was held in Lagos outlined the Social Studies syllabus for secondary school classes I and II and this was assigned to the Department of Social Studies in Ayetoro Comprehensive High School. With the assistance of the Ford Foundation Aid, the Department produced textbooks for classes I and II in 1963. The trial and experimental teaching of Social Studies as produced in the booklet did not go on well in the Eastern States owing to the civil war. Following the creation of six states from the former Northern region, the educational committee of the Interim Common Services Agency decided that Social Studies should be introduced into schools and colleges in the Northern states. In 1969, the Department of Social Studies was established in the Institute of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, and Zaria. Social Studies began to get national recognition when in 1969, the National Curriculum Conference was held in Lagos through which part of the designed national objectives of education could be achieved. In 1971, the first National Curriculum Workshop was held in Ibadan under the auspices of Nigeria Education Research Council (NERC) and the first national Social Studies syllabus for primary schools was produced. The syllabus explains the nature and concept of the subject.

In spite of many conferences, seminars and workshops for social studies, the subject did not receive the blessing of so many schools in the country immediately. Some were scared by its newness, others by a lack of understanding of its nature, while others rejected it because of shortage of teachers. Some saw it as a big challenge to their disciplines and campaigned against it. This challenge necessitated the formation of Social Studies Association of Nigeria, (NECD, 1982). The Social Studies curriculum was written and formulated to prepare students to

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become well informed citizens who would be able to contribute to the advancement of their community. Social Studies is a selection from that part of our culture known academically as the social sciences, together with a good deal of information from everyday experience. The content of the course is man, his nature as a species, the forces that shaped and continue to shape his humanity (Brunner 1980; William, 1993, Bolarinwa, 1996).The desire to bring about the desirable changes both in the individuals and nation at large brought about the need to look critically into carefully planned and well implemented curricula in the different school subjects.

NCSS (2002) Social Studies Curriculum Guidelines

The history of Social Studies coming into Africa by way of the London Oxford Conference of African Educators that resulted in the Mombasa Conference of 1968 which planted the African Social Studies Programme (ASSP) is well-known. In each member country including Nigeria, independent educators and those who dabble into the Social Studies – social sciences controversy often forget that the social sciences needlessly bring into the junior secondary school classrooms a touch of medieval scholasticism. The fact is however, that a subject that stresses the vertical or chronological approach, like History can never present adequately the horizontal or contemporary. Some expansive and sentimental educators, sensing the popularity of Social Studies and seeing its social utility have referred to Language and Art even as Social Studies.

- (a) The framework of the standards set forth by the NCSS (p.13) is briefly itemized below:
- (i) The Social Studies programme should be directly related to the age, maturity and concerns of students.
 - (ii) The Social Studies programme should deal with the real social world.
 - (iii) The Social Studies programme should draw from currently valid knowledge representative of human experience, culture and beliefs.
 - (iv) Objectives should be thoughtfully selected and clearly stated in such form as to furnish direction to the programme.
 - (v) Learning activities should engage the student directly and actively in the learning process.
 - (vi) Strategies of instruction and learning activities should rely on a broad range of learning resources.
 - (vii) The Social Studies programme must facilitate the organisation of experience.
 - (viii) Evaluation should be useful, systematic, comprehensive and valid for the objective of the programme.
 - (ix) Social Studies education should receive vigorous support as a vital and responsible part of the school programme.

Statement of the Problem

In 1977, the Federal Military Government of Nigeria promulgated National Policy on Education. In this policy which was revised in 2004, education was to help develop in the youths a sense of unity, patriotism and love of the country. Some of the measures designed to achieve the above objectives included the study of social norms and values of the different communities in the country by every school child. Hence, Social Studies curriculum was

designed to achieve this objective. In spite of the implementation of Social Studies curriculum in both primary and secondary schools since 1968, the social problems such as; rioting, hooliganism, stealing, insurgency, seeking vengeance with arms and many others still remain largely unresolved in Nigeria till date. It is necessary to assess teachers' competence in the implementation of Social studies curriculum in JSS in Oyo state considering the fact that the standard of education depends largely on the quality of the teachers provided in the implementation of the curriculum.

Research Objectives

1. What are the numbers of Social Studies teachers available in JSS?
2. Are the academic qualifications of the Social Studies teachers as stipulated in the National Policy on Education?
3. Are Social Studies teachers competent in the teaching of the subject in Oyo State junior secondary schools?

Significance of the Study

The social attitude of the youth in Nigeria gives many people concern. Parents are even questioning the schools about the type of moral lessons given to students. As such, this study will provide information to Social Studies teachers in particular on the gaps in the implementation of the curriculum in the junior secondary school. It will also create awareness for education officials on the quality of Social Studies teachers in Nigerian junior secondary schools.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study consisted of five junior secondary schools randomly selected from Ogbomosho North and South Local Government areas of Oyo State. It focused on Social Studies teachers' competence in the curriculum implementation.

Methodology

The study is a descriptive research design of an ex-post facto type. The population of this study consisted of 47 Social Studies teachers that were selected through purposive sampling technique from 10 JSS that were randomly selected in Ogbomosho North and South Local Government areas.

Instrumentation

Two research instruments were used for data collection. These are: (i) Social Studies Academic Qualification Inventory (SSAQI). (ii) Social Studies Implementation Observation Checklist (SSIOC). SSAQI was administered to Social Studies teachers. The instrument was made up of two sections A and B. Section sought Socio-demographic information of the respondents such as the name of the school, gender, rank/position of the respondents in the school. Section B was an open-ended item that sought information on number of Social Studies teachers' available, qualification, area of specialization and teaching experience. The draft of SSAQI was given to four lecturers in Social Studies Department in order to establish the face and content validity of the instrument. Suggestions of the lecturers were used to revise the instrument.

The researcher made use of SSIOC as an observation guide to assess the classroom interaction of the teaching/learning in Social Studies. The checklist as adapted from the work

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of Flander (1970) classified classroom interaction into six major sections based on important role of teachers as:

- (i) A planner.
- (ii) An introducer.
- (iii) A questioner/sustainer.
- (iv) A manager.
- (v) A rewarder.
- (vi) A value investigator.

With the use of SSIOC, the researcher made on-the-spot assessment of teaching/learning of Social Studies in JSS. The scoring of SSIOC was based on rating scale 4, 3, 2 and 1 representing regularly, frequently, sometimes and seldom. The content and face validity of SSIOC was carried out through expert review of the instrument and trial testing. In order to ascertain the level of agreement among the raters, their ratings were compiled using inter-rater reliability (Scott's). The value obtained was 0.66.

Procedure for Data Administration and Collection

SSAQI was administered on the subject and collected immediately. SSIOC was used by the researchers to observe classroom interactions of Social Studies teachers and students in JSS under study.

Data Analysis

Frequency counts and percentages were used to answer the research questions.

Results and Discussions

The number and percentage of the teachers who were qualified to teach Social Studies in the schools under study were obtained. The respondents' scores on competence in the observation checklist were added and used to build a measure of performance expressed in percentage of the maximum score of 100. The teachers in a school were said to be competent if half of the sum of their percentage in both qualification (for qualified only) and performance surpassed 50%. The result is presented in the table below.

Table

Teachers' competence measured in terms of qualification and performance.

No of Schools	No of teachers available to teach Social Studies in the schools	Qualification				Performance		Average percentage	Remarks
		Qualified		Not qualified		Score on measure	%		
		F	%	f	%				
1	4	1	25.00	3	75.00	10	100	62.50	Competent
2	6	3	50.00	3	100.00	8	80	65.00	Competent
3	5	2	40.00	3	60.00	8	80	60.00	Competent
4	7	4	57.14	3	42.86	2	20	38.57	Not Competent
5	4	4	100.00	0	0.00	5	50	75.00	Competent
6	8	2	25.00	6	75.00	5	50	37.50	Not Competent
7	4	0	0.00	4	100.00	9	90	45.00	Not Competent
8	2	0	0.00	2	100.00	6	60	30.00	Not Competent
9	6	2	33.33	4	66.67	6	60	46.67	Not Competent
10	1	0	0.00	1	100.00	8	80	40.00	Not Competent

The Table above shows the competence measured in terms of qualification and performance exhibited by teachers in the schools. It can be seen from the table that 04 out of the 10 schools (40%), teachers were found to be competent in terms of their qualification and performance. It can therefore be concluded that generally teachers in the study are not competent enough to teach Social Studies in the schools.

When teachers' competence was measured in the area of qualification and classroom demonstration of skills (teaching competence), it was discovered from the results in the Table that 40% teachers were not competent in terms of qualification and performance. This finding supports that of Sanders & Rivers (1996) who found that the achievement gained from a combination of teacher's variables (qualification and competence), goes a long way in enhancing students' performance. Also, Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain (2005) found that teacher quality differences reflect in the demonstration of skills. Past findings of researchers such as: Ehnenberg & Brewer (1994), Summer & Wolfe, (1975)& Vogt (2001), indicated positive relationships between teacher educational qualifications and classroom performance. Their findings however include: showed a stronger positive relationship between teacher's competence and certificate. In contrast, Hanushek (1986) disagreed with the direct relationship of teacher's qualification/experience on classroom performance; meaning that, teacher's certification does not matter in teaching rather it is their skill in impacting the content that is important. Findings from authors like Goldhaber & Brewer (1997), and Greenwald, Hedges, & Laine (1996) found that the teacher's advanced degree of competence is usually associated with his/her performance in classroom teaching.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The results showed that 40% of the teachers were competent to teach Social Studies in junior secondary schools as they possessed the required qualification and exhibited satisfactory performance in actual classroom teaching. The study concluded that adequate policy formulation in Social Studies may not necessarily translate into effective implementation without adequate attention placed on teachers' competence and certain implementation related factors. The National Social Studies curriculum objectives could be better implemented in the classroom if the issue of teachers' competence was considered and addressed. Thus the following are suggested recommendations.

Government should stand by the policy made. The issue of change in administration and change in policy should be shunning in order maintaining sustainability of reformed curriculum. Teachers should display their professional competence all the time. Teacher should be relevant in their field of studies. This can be made possible as they daily update themselves with current and relevant information.

When there is curriculum reforms at any point in time, provisions should be made by the Government in meeting with demands of curriculum for effective implementation of same. Curriculum agencies should discharge their role as and when due simply because they serve as link between the school and the curriculum planners. Therefore, they should be objective in their decisions and suggestion.

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