

Social Studies Education in Capacity Building for National Development

Aina Helen Ebiburun
Department of Social Studies
College of Education, Warri

Abstract

In this paper, social studies education in capacity building is identified as a prerequisite for national development. National development is an agglomeration of the factors necessary for societal development. It ranges from political, economic, technological, social, cultural, to educational sub-sector. Social studies equip students with sound judgment that will make them take appropriate actions considered productive to the growth of the society. Since development is critical and essential to the sustenance and growth of any nation, a country is classified as developed when it is able to provide qualitative life for her citizenry. To achieve this qualitative life, there is a need therefore to embrace social studies education as a veritable tool in capacity building for natural development.

Keywords: *National Development, Capacity, Building, Development, Social Studies, Education.*

Background to the Study

Capacity building is the hallmark of every country/nation with intent and goals aimed at development. It is a prerequisite requirement for sustainable national development and nationhood. However, capacity building cannot be achieved without proper and adequate social studies education. Lending credence to this opinion is Barrack Obama in his address to American's school children. He declared: "we will need the insights and critical thinking skills you gain in history and social studies to fight poverty and homelessness, crime and discrimination, and make our nation fairer and freer. You need the creativity and ingenuity you develop in all your classes to build new companies that will create new jobs and boost our

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economy According to Enu and Effiom (2012), this speech is established on the assumption that every citizen has got one way or the other to contribute to national development. To Enoh (2009), education is a potent factor to national development.

Social studies is an eclectic discipline that can be effectively used in any nation to inculcate the right types of values to the citizens which will help in achieving quality capacity, building. It can effectively be used to change the lives of citizens. This is because it is thought to pupils from primary to tertiary levels of education hence it has the capacity of becoming engraved in the minds of citizens. The concept of social studies education in capacity building for national development cuts across all aspects of societal development from political, economical, social, cultural, technological and educational, Enu & Effion (2012). To this end, social studies education can be seen as a potent instrument that can facilitate capacity building vis-à-vis national development by helping to produce responsible citizens who will maximally contribute to building a useful society. Aptly put, when the citizens' capacities and commitments are well developed through the curriculum, every citizen will become conscious of his or her responsibility to the growth of the nation. Social studies as stated earlier, can be used to change the lives of learners right from primary to tertiary educational institutions of learning because primary, secondary and tertiary institutions are the access to the success and failure of the whole democratic principles in the country. The learners are the product of the basic skills and knowledge acquired at the primary, secondary and tertiary institutions of learning, Matthew (2010). What that is needed to achieve this success in capacity building is a responsive curriculum that is flexible and dynamic enough to drive the society on the path of growth and development. However, curriculum of this nature must be interdisciplinary in character.

Statement of the Problem

This end, the vision of social studies education capacity building for natural development should encourage natural spirit-a spirit that will be fundamental to increasing a sense of belonging for each of the citizens and students as they engage in activities directed at capacity building and natural development.

Objectives of the Study

The main thrust of this paper therefore is to examine social studies education in capacity building for natural development. Therefore, it is the considering position of this paper that Nigeria's hope as a surviving sovereign nation depends squarely on the oneness task of capacity building through social studies education.

Literature Review

The Concept of Capacity Building

According to Wikipedia.com, capacity building is a conceptual approach to development that focuses on understanding the obstacles that inhabit people, governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations from realizing their development goals while enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results. The term capacity building emerged in the lexicon of international development during the 1990s. Today capacity building is included in the programs of most international organisations that work in development. Capacity building often refers to strengthening the skills, competences and abilities of people and communities in developing societies so they can overcome the causes of their exclusion and suffering.

One of the most fundamental ideas associated with capacity building is the idea of building the capacities of individuals geared towards national development. Building capacity be it at the local, regional or national level will allow for better national development that can lead to sustainable development and democracy. Capacity building is a process through which individuals, groups, organisations and societies enhance their ability to identify and meet development challenges. Capacity building according to Mallick (2013) is a systematic and integrated approach to develop and continuously improve governmental, organizational and individual competences and capabilities necessary for achieving program. As could be seen capacity building is closely related to education, training and human resource development, Enemark (2003). It all sum up to the fact that it is a way by which the overall goals are achieved.

The Concept of National Development

National development refers to the ability of a nation to improve the lives of its citizens. Measures of improvement may be material, such as increase in the gross domestic product, or social, such as literacy rates and availability of health care. The goal of all national development is to improve the lives of citizens in question within the context of a growing economy and an emphasis on the good of the community as a whole. Development as a concept is a victim of definitional pluralism, Lawal and Oluwatoyin (2011). It is a difficult word to define. However, attempts have been made by scholars to conceptualize it. To Gboyega (2003) development is an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramification. It implies improvement in material well being of all citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone, in a sustainable way such that today's consumption does not stop the future consumption, it also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced. Noami (1995) opines that development is usually taken to involve not only economic growth, but

also some nation of equitable distribution, provision of health care, education, housing and other essential necessities of life all with a view to improving the individual and collective quality of life. Development is a process of societal advancement where improvement in the well being of people are generated through strong partnership between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. From the foregone definitions, national development can be seen as a phenomenon that embraces a whole nation. It can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be described on the country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government.

Discussion

Social Studies Education as a Tool Capacity Building in National Development

Capacity building can mean self development with a view to becoming better prepared to make positive contributions to the society in order to attain national development. Social studies education contributes significantly to capacity building especially in culturally diverse and democratic society within an independent world. It equips learners to be able make sound judgments and take appropriate actions that will contribute to sustainable development of human society and the physical environment.

Albert learning (2000) define social studies as a subject that assist students to acquire basic knowledge skills and positive attitudes needed to be responsible citizens and contributing members of the society. Education is a basic force for the socio-economic and political transformation of the society. As a force for societal transformation, the building of capacity is one of the cardinal mandates. This is a unique characteristic of social studies curriculum that other disciplines are lacking. It promotes the inculcation of the rights types of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and Nigeria. This is contained in the National policy on education (2004). Capacity building helps students and citizens to contribute effectively to become productive members in the society.

To buttress their point, the national council for social studies (2001) noted that a primary goal of public education is to prepare students to be engaged and become effective citizens. Being effective citizens according to national council for social studies is one who has the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to assume the office of citizen in our democratic society with the quest of achieving this goal National Council of Social Studies (NCSS) demands that every student must participate in capacity building activities every year. This activities should include civic knowledge, develop participatory skills and support the belief that in a

democracy, the action of each person make a difference social studies curriculum possesses the in-built capacity to provide students with the opportunities to apply their civic knowledge, develop participatory skills and values as they work to solve real problems in their schools, communities and the nation at large. To this end, social studies is apparent, given the knowledge that students will eventually confront social injustice, inequality, racism, cultural stances, social structures, power that will challenges good citizens. It is only a sustained and properly articulated social studies education that can produce capacity building that has an important component of value on national development. The educational content of social studies is so vast that it prepares the young ones for full adult lives in this complex and dynamic world. Social studies is being considered to be responsible to the challenges of future life and should be strengthened as a major pedagogical paradigm shift for use to actualize the quest for national development. Emah (2009) observed that such a curriculum takes cognizance of vital changes and challenges in the environment and prepares the learners to meet them. The current trend of social studies curriculum is well responsive enough to equip students with requisite skills that will make them function effectively and contribute productively to the growth and development of the society.

Conclusion

Social studies education remain very relevant in our nation's history, Enu and Effiom (2012) students must be equipped to handle emerging global issues of rapid change which are complex in nature. Cultural and religious violence, and the increasing inter-dependence of nations in a global economy for our democracy to survive in this challenging times. There is a need to educate students to understand, respect and uphold the values enshrined in the national document. Students must leave school with a clear sense of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. They should be properly equipped to handle situations and conditions geared towards national development that is why in this paper emphasis is placed on the need for capacity building for national development. It is a truism that capacity building is the hallmark of any national development efforts. Therefore social studies education grooms students for the future because it can be seen as a nation building discipline.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that social studies education should be properly empowered for capacity building vis-à-vis national development.

1. Citizens should be empowered psychologically and otherwise to take challenges and decisions that will contribute to national development.
2. The spirit of entrepreneurship should encouraged among students so as to checkmate the over reliance on the government for jobs.

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