

Curriculum Design in Social Studies for the Attainment of Quality Assurance in Primary Education in Ogun State, Nigeria

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Article DOI: 10.48028/iiprds/ijasepsm.v9.i2.13

Abstract

The study examines the curriculum design in Social Studies for the attainment of quality assurance in primary education in Ogun State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. Population comprises of all Social Studies teachers in Abeokuta South local government area of Ogun State, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used for this study in which one hundred (100) primary school teachers were randomly selected for the study. Two research questions were raised and answered in this the study. Questionnaire was instrument used for the study. The data collected was analyzed using simple percentage statistical tool. The findings revealed that, Social Studies as an interdisciplinary subject instill in learners the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed for promoting civic competency which call for effective citizenship. It was revealed that, quality assurance involves the systematic review of educational programmes and processes to maintain and improve their quality, equity and efficiency. It was realized that, quality assurance can improve quality of instructions and pupils' academic achievement in primary schools as justified by the findings of the research. It is therefore recommended that, there should be constant supervision of Social Studies teachers by trained supervisors and inspectors, who could be able to give constructive advice to how best the subject should be handled and also government and quality assurance department should prioritize action emanating from quality assurance reports by implementing whatever reasonable recommendations and report made.

Keywords: Assurance, Design, Attainment, Curriculum, Quality

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Background to the Study

In the most general sense, education is an intentional enculturation process. This enculturation process not only helps children adapt to the society in which they live, but also aims to ensure that individuals become a productive citizen. Therefore, it is ensured that the citizens constituting the society interlock around common values and live with a common purpose (Baker, 2011). This intentional enculturation process has been implemented by almost all civilizations since the days when people began to have a communal life. In the societies of the antiquity, family played the most influential role in the enculturation process whereas the role of the family gradually decreased during the years following the Industrial Revolution (IR) and schools began to play this role thereafter (Erturk, 2006). Therefore, school played a main role in this intentional enculturation process by means of the lessons contained in the school curriculum and established its impact as an influential institution day by day.

The fact that the governments have explored the influence of education played a significant role particularly in the establishment of this impact (Fraser, 2009), and also raised some questions. How would this comprehensive enculturation process be organized? How would it be implemented? Most importantly, which information would be used in this process? Addressing these questions was required because the future of the society and the state depended on the new generations to adopt the culture of the society and to become productive members of the society. The answers to these questions were found in the lessons contained in the school curriculum. The culture would be a priority for the development of the school curriculum and the contents of the lessons included in the curriculum would be designed in this scope with an aim to ensure that new generations internalize the culture, adopt the value judgments of the society, and become productive citizens (Davis, 2015).

The main objective of Social Studies curriculum was to help individuals adopt the culture in which they live to become a natural part of the society through the socialization process as well as assuming citizenship responsibilities to be productive, to find solutions to various life problems, and to think critically whenever required as the members of the society, Social Studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines and to facilitate the acquisition and education of knowledge, skills, attitudes, morals and values (Akınoğlu, 2002; Sönmez, 2010). In order for this socialization process to become successful, Social Studies education was required to be comprehensive. The Social Studies curriculum, which is designed in line with the psychological development of the students based on the organization of the knowledge obtained from such fields as natural sciences and social sciences, has a suitable structure for broad field design. From this perspective, Social Studies accommodate a wide range of information network such as history, geography, sociology, anthropology, and physical sciences (Kenworthy, 2013). Therefore, it can be said that the nature of the Social Studies lesson is multi-dimensional. The primary requirements for a teacher to make students attain the objectives of Social Studies education are apt comprehension of the Social Studies as a subject and identification of its structure.

Curriculum is typically an experience which includes many dimensions of learning, including rationale, aims, content, methods, resources, time, assessment, etc; which refers to various levels of planning and decision-making on learning (for example, at the supra-, macro-, meso-,

micro- and nano-levels); or, international, national, local, classroom and individual levels; and which relates to multiple representations of learning (Gatawa, 2008). Beach and Reinhatz in Anderson and Adediran (2021), see curriculum as a prescribed series of courses to take which has the following characteristics that comprises the experiences of children for which the school is responsible, it has content, it is planned and it is a series of courses to be taken by students. In addition, a curriculum considers the learners and their interaction with each other, the teacher and the materials; the output and outcomes of a curriculum are evaluated. Bringing all these points together, the curriculum is viewed as a composite whole including the learners, the teacher, teaching and learning methodologies, anticipated and unanticipated experiences, outputs and outcomes possible within a learning institution.

Curriculum can be understood as the totality of what children learn while at school, including what they learn through classroom activities; in interdisciplinary tasks; across the school, for example, in the playground, at lunch time when eating (civic responsibilities, etc.). This curricular totality also includes opportunities for wider achievement through sport, music, debating, and the like. Similarly, curriculum is, in the simplest terms, a description of what, why, how and when students should learn (Sergiovanni and Starrat, 2013). The curriculum is not, of course, an end in itself. Rather, it seeks both to achieve worthwhile and useful learning outcomes for students, and to realize a range of societal demands and government policies.

It is in and through the curriculum that key economic, political, social and cultural questions about the aims, purposes, content and processes of education are resolved. The policy statement and technical document that represent the curriculum reflect also a broader political and social agreement about what a society deems of most worth that which is of sufficient importance to pass on to its children. For the purpose of this paper, curriculum is defined in a holistic, process-oriented way (Dorgu, 2021). This definition is based on the belief that, while curriculum might commonly be perceived as a set of documents, the quality of those documents is closely connected to the processes used to develop them and to the means through which they are put into practice.

A principal objective of a quality curriculum is, in a fair and inclusive manner, to enable students to acquire and develop the knowledge, skills and values, and the associated capabilities and competencies, to lead meaningful and productive lives. Key indicators of curriculum success include the quality of the learning achieved by students, and how effectively students use that learning for their personal, social, physical, cognitive, moral, psychological and emotional development. A quality curriculum maximizes the potential for the effective enhancement of learning. Underlying this paper is the premise that educational quality should be understood primarily in terms of the quality of student learning, which in turn depends to a great extent on the quality of teaching. Of prime importance in this is the fact that good teaching and learning are greatly enhanced by the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the curriculum.

The subject of quality assurance is a very important matter in the sphere of primary education because it serves as the foundation for other educational systems. Quality as a concept is fluid

and can be interpreted within the broadest sense. It is often considered against local content and benchmarks (Ottan, 2010). Generally; it is most often defined as 'fitness for purpose' in relation to user and customer needs. Quality can also be taken to mean 'product conforms to standards, specification and requirement' (Grosby, in Wilkinson, Redman, Snape and Marchoton, 2008). The totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy state needs is called quality. Babalola, Adedeji and Erwat (2006) opined that quality is the ability of education to satisfy customer's needs including the learning environment (process) and students' outcomes (grandparents). Furthermore, Babalola et al asserted that the graduates should be able to go out to the society and prove their worth by their level of performance in the society.

Quality assurance which literally means supervision of instruction is a vital weapon in achieving goals of education. Quality assurance involves the systematic review of educational programmes and processes to maintain and improve their quality, equity and efficiency. Quality assurance may also mean a systematic management and assessment procedures adopted by educational institutions and systems, in order to monitor performance against objectives. Quality assurance in education, therefore, aims at preventing quality problems and ensures that the products of the system conform to standards (Harman in Abdulkareem, Fassai and Oyeniran 2012). Quality assurance is a holistic term that is directed towards education as an entity. While the design of quality assurance mechanisms (tools, processes and actors) varies across national contexts, their common objective is to improve teaching and learning with the ultimate goal to support the best outcomes for learners. Ajayi and Adegbesan (2007) contended that quality assurance is related to accountability both of which are concerned with maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of educational systems and services in relation to their contexts, missions and stated objectives. Thus, quality assurance is a planned and systematic review process of an institution or programme to determine whether or not acceptable standards of education, scholarship and infrastructure are being met, maintained and enhanced (Adediran, Adelegun and Balogun, 2013).

An academic institution is only as good as the quality of its teaching staff; they are heart of the institution who produces its products, its research products, and its service to the institution, community and nation (Manteru, 2007). Okebukola (2011) defined quality assurance, using system approach that involves a host of activities that are designed to improve the quality of input, process and output of the education system. The utility value of quality assurance in education can be seen through the provision of information to the public and other interested parties about the worth of the education delivery system. It equally ensures accountability in respect of the investment of public funds on education. The input segment includes students, teachers, curriculum and facilities. On the process side, emphasis is on teaching/learning interactions, internal efficiency, research, evaluation procedure and management practices. The output includes the quality of products as well as the system's external efficiency.

The term 'quality assurance', according to Vroeijenstijn (2005), referred to systematic, structured and continuous attention to quality in terms of quality maintenance and improvement. Sofowora (2010) described quality assurance as a mechanism used to evaluate the efficiency and appropriateness of teaching and learning in schools so as to ensure the

delivery of high quality education. The quality assessment of Social Studies curriculum must put into consideration the use of effective teaching methodology (action-oriented or activity-based) as well as efficient instructional resources to teach the student in order to facilitate the acquisition and education of knowledge, skills, attitudes, morals and values (Adediran, 2007). For the betterment of teaching and learning processes for utmost benefit of the child, as he is the center point of imparting education.

It is evidently clear from the various submissions that quality assurance revolves round the learner, teaching-learning processes, the contents (curriculum) as well as the learning outcomes and that supervision plays a pivotal role in ensuring the quality of school programmes. According to Iyang – Abia and Esu (2004), asserted that teaching of Social Studies in respect of its scope and nature, which is multidimensional, integrative and dynamic, cannot effectively take effects without the adequate supervision by the school heads and respective educational bodies and agencies of instructional materials, the teaching of Social Studies contents must focus not only on making teachers competent at using such instructional materials, but at the same time, promote strategies that enables the integration of instructional materials that enhances teaching and learning of Social Studies goals and objectives (Kochar in Adediran,2007). As the development of any modern nation or state is linked to the quality of education provided for its burgher over time. It is also known that the vision of greatness is achieved through comprehensive quality educational provisions. As stated in guidelines for quality assurance in basic education in Nigeria (2015) quality cannot be attained on a platter of gold but must be doggedly pursued, maintained and sustained for the educational goals of any nation to be realized. In other words, quality assurance can be achieved by facilitating effective teaching and learning in the school through overseeing, watching, monitoring, gathering and analyzing available educational data, and checking the activities with the aim of correcting mistakes where necessary.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the research is to examine the curriculum design in Social Studies for the attainment of quality assurance in primary education in Ogun State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Determine the role of Social Studies curriculum for the attainment of quality assurance in primary education in Ogun State.
- ii. Identify the areas of Social Studies education curriculum where teachers need improvement.

Research Questions

- i. What are the roles of Social Studies curriculum for the attainment of quality assurance in primary education in Ogun State?
- ii. What are the areas of Social Studies education curriculum where teachers need improvement for the attainment of quality assurance in primary education in Ogun State?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Population comprises of all primary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used to select ten (10) primary schools' teacher which were randomly selected from each of the chosen school to make a total of 100 as sample for study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. It was developed in closed-ended of Yes or No. The instrument was moderated by experts who affirmed its validity. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected was analyzed using simple percentage statistical tool.

Results

Table 1.

Research Question One: What are the role of Social Studies curriculum for the attainment of quality assurance in primary education in Ogun State?

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		TOTAL	
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %
1.	Social Studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines	64.00	64.00	36.00	36.00	100.00	100.00
2.	Social Studies facilitates the acquisition and education of knowledge, skills, attitudes, morals and values	46.00	46.00	54.00	54.00	100.00	100.00
3.	Social Studies curriculum helps individuals adopt the culture and live to become a natural part of the society	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL		160.00	53.30	140.00	46.70	300.00	100.00

The study shows that, majority of the respondents 64.00% chose 'Yes' for item 1 while the remaining 26.00% opted for 'No'. For item 2, majority of the respondents 46.00% chose 'Yes' while the remaining 54.00% selected 'No'. 50 of the respondents 50.00% selected 'Yes' for item 3 while the remaining 50.00% chose 'No'. Since, the cumulative values of YES (53.3%) is higher than NO (46.7%) responses, this therefore implies that Social Studies curriculum play roles on the attainment of quality assurance in primary education in Ogun State. The above findings is in agreement with the opinion of Sönmez (2010) who says that, the main objective of Social Studies curriculum was to help individuals adopt the culture in which they live to become a natural part of the society through the socialization process as well as assuming citizenship responsibilities to be productive, to find solutions to various life problems, and to think critically whenever required as the members of the society, Social Studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines and to facilitate the acquisition and education of knowledge, skills, attitudes, morals and values.

Table 2.

Research Question Two: What are the areas of Social Studies education curriculum where teachers need improvement for the attainment of quality assurance in primary education in Ogun State?

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		TOTAL	
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %
1.	Primary school teachers needs to improve on family and religious institution for the quality education	96.00	96.00	4.00	4.00	100.00	100.00
2.	Education and health section are another area needed to be improved.	52.00	52.00	48.00	48.00	100.00	100.00
3.	Primary school teachers need to improve on pedagogical and methodological of Social Studies	84.00	84.00	16.00	16.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL		232.00	77.30	68.00	22.70	300.00	100.00

The study shows that, majority of the respondents 96.00% chose 'Yes' for item 1 while the remaining 4.00% chose 'No'. For item 2, majority of the respondents 52.00% selected 'Yes' while the remaining 48.00% selected 'No'. Majority of the respondents 84.00% opted for 'Yes' for item 3 while the remaining 16.00% chose 'No'. Therefore, since the cumulative value of Yes (77.3%) is greater than No (22.7%) value, it is therefore showing the teachers needed improvement in Social Studies education curriculum of the primary schools in family institution, educational institution, health institution, religious institution and pedagogical and methodological of Social Studies aspect. The finding in table 2 is in line with the opinion of Iyan – Abia and Esu (2004), who said that teachers must continue to learn through improvement programs. Orakwe (2000) also stated that, teachers lack preparation in regular and sandwich programmes. Therefore, teachers must continuously go for retraining or improvement programmes through approved practices or methods.

Conclusions

It is an established fact that the development of any modern nation is linked to the quality of education provided for its citizens over time. However, it is worth noting that quality cannot be attained on a platter of gold but must be doggedly pursued, maintained and sustained for the educational goals of any nation to be realized. Curriculum is the totality of all the activities and experience a child is expected to be exposed to under the auspices of the school. Therefore, quality assurance involves the systematic review of educational programmes and processes to maintain and improve their quality, equity and efficiency. It was cleared and realized that the role of quality assurance cannot be over emphasized, the fact that it improves quality of instructions and pupils academic achievement in primary schools as justified by the findings of the research. However, quality assurance contributes in assuring good and cordial relationship between quality of instructions and pupils' academic achievement.

Recommendations

1. There should be constant supervision of Social Studies teachers by trained supervisors and inspectors, who could be able to give constructive advice to how best the subject should be handled.
2. There is a need for training and retraining of Social Studies teachers on the philosophy, objectives and methodology of Social Studies.
3. Government and quality assurance department should prioritize action emanating from quality assurance reports by implementing whatever reasonable recommendation and report made.
4. Providing enough instructional materials/teaching resources to the Social Studies teachers and quality assurance officers as well as introducing new methods and ideas to them.
5. The Social Studies curriculum and the materials required in association with the curriculum should be reviewed in order to take into account the present social, economic and political issues.
6. Workbook sets containing further activities in addition to textbooks and activity books could be designed and provided to schools with a view to significantly improve the quality of teaching.
7. Quality assurance of curriculum development for the African education sector should be done through the lens of the 21st century skills and the demands of globally recognized benchmarks such as the sustainable development goals with a focus on the local and international educational needs.
8. There is need for supply of adequate resource materials necessary for effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in primary schools.

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