
**SOCIAL STUDIES NOW AND IN THE FUTURE:
EMERGING DIMENSIONS**

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Introduction

Let me begin my presentation with words of appreciation to the Almighty God our creator for making this day a reality and for the gift of life and the grace of good health bestowed on all of us. To the National President, Professor Yusuf Abdulraheem who has steadily piloted the affairs of this noble Professional Association with credible and visible results till date despite many avoidable distractions, he has remained focused, upright and unshakeable. Thank you for finding me worthy to assume the responsibility of delivering the 39th annual conference Lead Paper. I would like to also thank all members of the National Executive Council of SOSAN for your strategic support to the association and for endorsing my nomination as lead paper presenter today. Finally to all distinguished members of SOSAN especially our erudite Professors thank you for keeping faith with the vision of the founding fathers of our dear association. This is the only house we can call our own without any form of molestation or regret.

Two philosophical quotes from two eminent Philosophers will form the launching point of my presentation:

“The direction in which education starts a man will Determine his future life” ...Plato

“Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belong to those who prepares for it today” ...Malcolm X

Distinguished scholars, the two philosophical quotes above encapsulate the very essence of our intellectual convocation today. These two philosophers are not only great but considered as inspirational educational influencers across centuries. Plato's emphasis is that only the right quality education guarantees a secured future. On the part of Malcolm X, he stressed that to get a secured future, you have to prepare very well today. What are we doing here dear friends? We have gathered here as a community of reputable intellectuals to demonstrate what I will term a special tribute to our “Holy Creed; The Great Social Studies” which has been identified as the only path of our collective destiny for the restoration of Nigeria social education. We are here in line with Plato and Malcolm X to review our curriculum and ask questions if it's still consistent with current realities and possibly seek for a better and hopeful educational future for our younger generation facing an uncertain future. That is why refreshing our minds with the conference theme “Social Studies Now and the Future: Emerging Dimensions” becomes quite appropriate. What does this topic imply? Without any equivocation, it simply means there are gaps in the current curriculum structure and so there is need to rejig the curriculum with some quality contents to make it richer, inventive and prosperous in anticipation of anebulous future.

I commend the conference organizers for thinking futuristically. Their thinking is in line with the philosophy of Plato and Malcolm X who are considered educational futurists of all times. The fundamental question to ask is, would there have been a more plausible time to subject our discipline to more rigorous introspection and analytical review than now in the context of prevailing political and ideological inconsistency in governance, economic depression, cultural and values debasement across societies leading to pervasive moral decadence, cataclysmic environmental disasters, explosive technological paradigm shifts

within and across borders all of which have consequential outcomes that have affected the quality of educational delivery in the entire knowledge industry? The answer obviously is no. This is the right. We are fully aware and with visible and credible evidential foundation across decades, our ruling elites have never hidden their unpatriotic, seditious and perfidious disdain for education through their anti-education policies of none interest in funding education, a tendency that has led to low teacher morale, zero infrastructure base to support the functioning of the system with possible lack of technological conviction all of which account for the incredibility of the entire educational system.

We are in a moment of sad reality in the entire academic community as uncertainty surrounds the industry. The general public have casted serious aspersion on the industry and fundamental questions are being asked not just about the credibility of our educational system but its validity and reliability to equip the current generation of youths with what it takes to survive in the near future. This is on the heels of rising substantial doubt, lack of trust and confidence in the education system as expressed by significant number of people across boards. Visibly, we have seen how the value of our education has grossly failed to meet anticipated aspiration of the Hi-Tech and complex 21st century society as our graduates are finding it difficult to find jobs that matches their qualifications and be paid reasonable wages. There is diminishing quality in our education system which by all comparative measures cannot be denied. The global economy is on accelerated changes that have affected all conventional approaches to education that has proven to be impotent to the realities of our dynamic world order. The competition in this present generation is stiff and enormous as global economies are driven by knowledge, skills and technologies.

There are foretold limitations with our present school curricula shouting for review, innovation, rebranding, remodeling and repositioning to comply with global trend as globalization has taken a deep toll on all human affairs especially the application of technology in the management of educational fortunes across

societies. What are we to do as social educators given the curriculum challenge? We must win the war of curriculum deficiency in our education system that has brought low public expectations. We must re-build a new social education contract championed by the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire firmly established on applied critical and transformative pedagogy which is seen as the right quality education that will align us with global best practices and demonstration of full commitment to education by government and critical stakeholders by accepting system-wide innovations in our current curriculum as well as our approaches to teaching and research that must address cutting-edge issues.

The Beginning of the Journey: Social Studies in Retrospect

It would be very appropriate to be retrospective in this presentation in respect of the status of social studies. Yes as we know, Social Studies is a product of public school expansion which evolved in the late 19th century and early 20th century in the US and then spread to other climes, though its evolution is still a contested issue even though It has endured in our academic vocabulary for decades now (Zevin,1991). Its evolution is traceable to the work of a Committee set up by the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education in the US appointed by the National Education Association in 1913. Engle (2002) identified the twenty-one man Committee which comprised of eminent high school teachers and administrators Chaired by Thomas Jesse Jones, a sociologist with James Harvey Robinson, a reputable historian and Arthur William Dunn, a veteran civic educator and others from the United States Bureau of Education. The outcome of this Committee Report became the building blocks that heralded the curriculum agenda of Social Studies from that time till date.

In what looks like the fear of the unknown from other parent disciplines after the emergence of social studies, the American Political Science Association and the American Sociological Society in 1916 and 1926 considered their disciplines to be short-

changed in schools and so set up Committees and issued reports on the teaching of these subjects in elementary and secondary schools. This came only after the American Historical Association issued the first of series of reports on the study of history in schools. According to Engle (2002), the development led to the coming together of a small group of Professors in 1921 who were concerned with teacher education, an initiative that founded the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), a body that assumed the advocacy responsibility for the survival of social studies and has remained to this date an umbrella body for Social Studies professional educators in the US.

A significant outcome of the Committee's discussions on the status of Social Studies identity was an official report to that effect authorizing the subject Social Studies by an eminent high profile intellectual Committee composed of historians, economists, political scientists, sociologists, geographers and school administrators. This makes Social Studies a vast academic domain populated by scholars from different disciplines. The Committee's report equally contained a wide range of content related areas necessary to achieve the expected objectives of citizenship education. This objective as emphasized in the report of the Commission is clearly seen as the central goal of social studies; citizenship enrichment.

Contemporaneously, in Nigeria, Social Studies was introduced in 1963 at Ayetoro Comprehensive High School, Ogun state under the sponsorship of United State Agency for International Development (USAID) on an experimental basis. However, it was accorded national recognition and approved as a subject at the 1969 National Curriculum Conference that was held at Lagos to review the post-independent Nigeria education system to ascertain its relevance to the local and national needs. That conference drew participants from across the relevant sectors of the society, professional bodies, captains of industries, the academia, religious leaders, students, and trade unions. Principally, Social Studies was introduced as a messianic subject to

help heal the wounds of the Nigerian civil war that left many citizens traumatized and disillusioned.

There are contentions and inherent dilemma at the moment in Social Studies that need to be resolved in respect of its theory, practice and research dynamics. Let me pose the following soul searching questions:

1. Do we agree on the appropriateness of Social Studies definition, if yes, then does the definition still have relevance in the face of current reality?
2. Are we still firmly in support of the current curriculum contents and scope, if so, how and to what extent are our current pedagogical practices likely to guarantee a sustainable future for the current generation?
3. Do we still agree on the relevance of the objectives of Social Studies curriculum?

Response to the above questions will provide further direction for us to navigate and find lasting solution to the current controversy on our curriculum. As we try to strike a balance with the present and the future Social Studies contents, we must remain thankful to eminent historians, sociologists, economists, political scientists and geographers whose intellectual contributions led to evolution of Social Studies as a subject. They remain the discipline's generational godfathers. Nevertheless, from the conception of building the house to the roofing level, the initiative was wholly theirs. They built the house in line with their desired architectural master craft to suit their purpose and goal. The house has really served the purpose which as elaborated in the Commission's report that sanctioned the birth of Social Studies is to fulfill the goal of democratic citizenship enrichment. We are now in the era of architectural smart houses with a lot of modernity and sophisticated technological devices. No child would still want to inherit a house built so many decades without modification of the house to suit modern time. On this premise, we are compelled to think of the future and remodel our discipline to comply with modern educational thinking.

Is it time for Social Studies Curriculum Justice and Re-Engineering?

Unarguably, from the power and legacy of history, nothing is permanent. This squarely applies to all human endeavors including knowledge seeking. No subject or discipline can remain in the same trend forever. The global COVID-19 pandemic came down in history as the most sophisticated public health challenge that has ever ravaged humanity. That pandemic altered the entire process of human existence and the conduct of human affairs. Within this context, Social Studies as discipline that deals with man's way of life in the society imperatively is facing daunting challenges as we embrace the Post COVID-19 era. This era has brought some compelling narratives that must re-defined and re-shaped our Social Studies curriculum as the prevailing forces of educational paradigm shift dictates its contents. The time indeed is ticking and so there must be a comprehensive curriculum response to address and align us with global trends and perspectives. There must be a sharp departure from the old tradition. We must therefore demonstrate quality, character, credibility and consistency in our teaching and adopt cutting-edge researches as scholars heading to the right future. *This demands visionary, competent, innovative, resourceful and dynamic teachers as drivers of the entire curriculum process. In context and in practice, the pedagogical architecture in modern time must take into consideration the demands of the 21st century anchored deeply on transformative curriculum and critical pedagogy.*

Our National conference agenda today is centered on the pursuit of curriculum justice and re-invention that would reflect the prevailing dominant societal values in the in the 21st century. Our advocacy for curriculum justice at this time within the intellectual domain of Social Studies and across disciplines is quite compelling. According to Riddle, Mills, & Mcgregor (2023) this is a time for serious consideration of rich, common core curriculum that is committed to enriching individuals and their lives as well as developing the skills, knowledge, and critical capacities to enrich communities and societies more broadly. For sure, we need an

education system described by Fraser (2020) as having broader purposes committed to benefit the society and individual well-being beyond academic outcomes. This requires a rich socially just curriculum that must have re-distributive element. This implies integration of powerful knowledge meaningfully transmitted as part of the knowledge- building community of the school (Young, 2008). When the interests of the young people are represented within a rich, common curriculum and through a negotiated process of learning that is intellectually challenging and applicable to multiple contexts, Green (2021) referred to this as a dynamic process of powerful curriculum negotiation. This is the power of curriculum justice.

Apple (2004) made reference to Rawls a proponent of justice theory who asserted that for a Curriculum to be just, it has to be developed in ways that contribute most to the needs and interests of the least advantaged in the society. Such a curriculum requires a deliberate response to issues of marginalization, exploitation, powerlessness, colonialism and violence within schooling institutions, their policies and practices to contribute more fully and it should be established on the principle of recognition of the young generation's cultural and social experiences, community funds and individual world views of life.

Dear friends we have heard it loud and clear from Rawls. From what we see in practice, if it is discipline marginalization, can anyone tell me a discipline in Nigeria school system that is most marginalized like social studies? If it is discipline exploitation, there can never be any discipline in Nigeria school system that has been subjected to exploitation like social studies. Is it powerlessness? When our discipline has deliberately been depleted, duplicated and fragmented, or is it colonialism? Where policy makers recruit and empower none experts to design our curriculum and set minimum standards for us? How then do they expect Social Studies to contribute meaningfully to national development under this system of strangulation? In one accord we must demand for justice for Social Studies curriculum. We need liberation from oppressive government policies that have been

anti- Social Studies since its emergence as a school subject in Nigeria.

Collectively, we must break away from the yoke of curriculum imperialism and dependency which I mentioned earlier that predisposes us to low self- esteem and that has stagnated our thinking to embrace freedom and liberation. Riddle (2022) pointed out that we should not be unmindful of the uncertainties that characterized the future of our present generation of youths as serious consideration must be given to the curriculum which can be used to open up the possibilities for more democratic, sustainable, inclusive digital literacy and generative ways of learning in schools. It is a future of crisis and complexity in a dynamic world. We must therefore appreciate and understand the power of our Social Studies curriculum in the transformation of the social order in the society.

Social Studies as a Theology of Intellectual Regurgitation

Theology is the study of firm believes in God the Trinity. The believers do so without questioning the doctrines. The doctrines are held sacrosanct. This is what has come to be our inherited social studies. A content foisted on us by the founding fathers who themselves were originally not experts but because of their intellectual sagacity and deep knowledge of philosophical world views, they were able to design the discipline's contents that have stood for decades. However, as it is said, time and condition does not favor beauty so it is that the prevailing socio-cultural, economic and political values now seem to be demanding for a review of the Social Studies curriculum. Does the biblical declaration of "as it was in the beginning so shall it be world without end. Amen" apply in perpetuity? Certainly not. Even Martin Luther King rebelled against the Catholic Church. That is what has led to proliferation of churches in the world today especially in Africa.

By its nature, Social Studies is a diverse discipline with deep perspectives. It is supposed to be an intellectual force field that requires the application of inquiries and criticism in it teaching

and research. One would be right to say that Social Studies demands analysis and understanding of issues in a holistic approach. You must understand the connection of the past and the present in context to be able to appreciate a meaningful future precisely. Do we need a curriculum revamp to guarantee the future of social studies? Perhaps it is time for a transformative curriculum for Social Studies anchored on re-enforcement of critical pedagogy which according to Findlay (2010) grew out of the need to liberate poor people victimized by the oppressive forces of colonization. As a once colonized people, we need intellectual, cultural, social and economic liberation. No doubt, Findlay's liberation call would have been established on Paulo Freire, a 20th century educational influencer and his radical and critical works on "Pedagogy of The Oppressed, Pedagogy of Hope and Pedagogy of Freedom" as well as "Pedagogy of Revolution" which in the submission of Giroux (2004) formed the foundation of Critical Pedagogy. It is a philosophy of education that encourages learners to be critical minded towards the realization of their total environment.

However, the surrounding environment of the learners in our educational context particular seems to be too subduing with absolute control by the state educational structures that defined the sorting process of categorizing learners into higher and lower achievers. Indeed this is a deliberate structure of class division in the society akin to Marxist social class structure 'which is in existence in every society. The government control of education is what Antonio Gramsci referred to as the Theory of "Curriculum Hegemony". This is curriculum development and implementation processes that promote ideological, socio-economic, cultural and political dominance of those who control political and economic resources in any state (Maruatona, 1994). This theory is inseparable from Marxist analysis of education as a support base for capitalist mode of production. The state acting through educational institutions tie its phenomenal influence on societal structural determinants of power, ideologies, economic policies, norms and values system on the helpless students or learners.

Education is therefore seen as a deliberate political instrument in the society to perpetrate class structure. This hidden power dimension of education that breeds inequality and social injustice is what critical pedagogy seeks to pursue. This according to Tolman (2019) can be achieved when educators addresses issues that encourages social justice and promote inclusive academic environment, ensure that prevailing inequalities perpetrated in educational institutions are tackled appropriately so that socially constructed ideas foisted by agents of oppression and exploitation are eliminated. At the end of the day, critical pedagogy would have been able to build inclusivism and tolerance in a diverse classroom by loosening the firm grip of dominant class on the entire education system through critical thinking and independent thought pattern.

However, in the light of the above, one critical element of Freire's writing in respect of his advocacy for a paradigm shift in the curriculum considered relevant according to Findlay (2010) is his "metaphor of the banking system". Stating further, Freire (2007) explained that "Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. The teacher instead of communicating, he rather issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize and repeat". In the context of being anti- oppressive, Freire's metaphoric analysis in which the student is equated to an empty bank account that should remain open for the teacher to continue to deposit money was strongly rejected and criticized as being a very dehumanizing and oppressive methodology to both the students and the teacher. It was then submitted that education should rather be a liberating instrument and not to sustain oppressive attitude in the society. This is where the relevance of critical pedagogy as espoused by Paulo Freire comes to bear. Critical pedagogy is all about emancipation from oppression through an awakening of the critical consciousness that encourages learners to become change agents in their world through social critique and informed political actions in order to gain self- actualization.

The question to ask is does the above scenario exculpate Social Studies teachers from the metaphor of the banking system? The answer first is no because teaching generally in our context is more teacher-centered rather than exploratory and learner-centered as it has always been and secondly, most times, teaching is devoid of critical thinking that is more learners involving. That is why Ross (2017) described Social Studies as profoundly conversing in nature. He refers to Social Studies as an engine room of illusion factory whose primary aim is reproduction of existing social order where the ruling ideas exist to be memorized, regurgitated, internalized and sustained. The author concluded by saying that Social Studies teach myths instead of encouraging critical exploration of human existence. A regrettable indictment of the whole idea of the banking system is that schools are seen fundamentally as authoritarian, hierarchical institutions meant to encourage the production of myriad oppressive and inequitable by-products and then Social Studies is an integral component of this process of conspiracy and oppression. As a departure from this kind of intellectual regurgitation, we truly have to redefine and hone our pedagogical approaches to embrace either Thinking-Based Teaching or Learning, Competency-Based Teaching and Learning or Problem-Based Teaching and Learning. Each of this approach has the internal capacity to develop in learners critical thinking and creative skills which are essential partners of future educational enterprise.

Analysing Social Studies Definition

An interesting narrative considered very compelling for our attention and interest is the first sub-theme of our conference that is agitating for a new Social Studies definition and re-stating its objectives. This singular call justify the urgency for a critical review of Social Studies definition and other vital aspects that goes with the discipline for a better and more realistic integration of its curriculum contents as we brace up for the new Social Studies education paradigm shift that would be considered embractive enough to equip the learners with intellectual and critical minded

skills. However, for time, space and intensity of discussion on this, my presentation will be limited only to definitional analysis. Discussion on the objectives will be for another day. Social Studies has variously been defined by different scholars. Such definitions have been influenced by disciplinary orientation of individual scholars being a vast domain populated by scholars from many fields. In each case, the definitions do not only point to establish a connection between man and his environment but also exposes its interdisciplinary character of the subject within knowledge domain. It would be fair to review some definitions for proper contextual analysis of Social Studies definition to ascertain if there is need for definitional review. Social Studies is defined as an integrated study of man and his relationship with his environment which could be social, economic, cultural, political, physical, psychological etc. Social Studies is a course that deals with human relationships and the way the society and its institutions works to enhance human existence. Social Studies is concerned with the relationship between man and his environment and the influence of the environment on man and how the environment in turn influences man. Social Studies is also defined as part of a school or college curriculum concerned with the study of social relationships and the functioning of society and usually made up of courses in history, government, economics, civic, sociology, geography and anthropology. Edgar and Wronski (1958) famous definition of Social Studies defined "Social Studies as the social sciences simplified for pedagogical purposes".

Nevertheless, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (1994) the umbrella professional association of Social Studies in the US provided a more comprehensive definition of Social Studies thus:

...the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy,

political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. The primary purpose of Social Studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an independent world (Pg: 3).

All the above definitions have two common elements across that keep resonating which are the element of man in the center of environment, the manipulative influence of both entities and the element of interdisciplinary character of social studies. However, the NCSS definition of Social Studies with emphasis on the development of democratic citizens in the society gives impression that democratic advancement should be the central concern of an academic domain whereas there are other critical areas of concern that should have been looked at such as character formation and quality leadership. We should be worried that despite the much stressed development of democratic culture by Social Studies all through, regrettably, the quality of democratic governance has been on the decline. Obviously, we need to emphasize the acquisition of productive values especially strengthening of family values that would impact positively on all aspects of life including the quality of governance. Therefore contextualizing the Social Studies definition upon the two basic assumptions above would certainly be consistent with the current upsurge in what determines existing content values chain across societies. This requires a review and re-alignment of Social Studies definition, restating its objectives and goal in compliance with the prevailing social, economic, cultural, technological and political order in the 21st century.

Even the NCSS Curriculum Standards that provide the framework for teachers and professionals in the US in 1994 has admitted in its reviewed 2010 National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies that much has changed in the world and in education since the time of publication of the original curriculum

standards. In an effort to align Social Studies practitioners with the new socio-economic and educational order, NCSS re-focused its thematic areas to address cross cultural and cross border issues affecting humanity. These delineated themes which cut across environment, culture and people, governance, technology, democratic ideals and economy constitute genuine justification for re-definition of Social Studies and possibly re-stating the contents.

Interestingly, far back, Stanley & Nelson (1994) have raised doubt over what determines the boundaries of social education to be taught in schools. They noted that what we must know as Social Studies requires decisions about what social knowledge is most important, which skills and behaviors are most valuable, what values are most significant and what sequence of contents and skills best fits the subject matter and the students. All the above have plunged Social Studies into deep intellectual battles on the basis of its objectives, content, pedagogical imperatives and certainly its definition since it emerged as a school subject in the 20th century.

In the context of all the mixed views, and in an effort to balance and adopt a common position, in my view therefore, the over emphasis of NCSS's Social Studies definition in promoting civic competence which rest on commitment to democratic values expressed through citizens ability to reason and take informed actions as the primary interest of Social Studies need further expansion and integration to accommodate more critical elements. The dynamics of the new world order demands a modification of Social Studies definition that is consistent with emerging issues of contemporary and historical impact on human existence.

We must migrate from the criticism of the sacredness of its definition to the criticism of its relevance within the context of anticipated global trends. The obvious uncertain future provides enough justifications to launch an assault on what seems to be the fortress of Social Studies definition and objectives. In search of a new definition of Social Studies that would fit modern time, I define it thus:

“Social Studies is an irrepressible, accountable, distinctly inseparable integrated curriculum treasure that studies man’s interactions with his environment in search of deep intellectual, humanistic and citizenship enrichment as well as institutional arrangements in the society and their pattern of relationships in promoting human experiential certainty”.

The definition above seems to be more integrative, dynamic and elaborate than the traditional definitions centered only on the study of man and environment relationship and promotion of civic competence.

Emerging Perspectives and Dimensions in Social Studies

When we look at the curriculum of social studies, we know that it is one of the broadest school subjects or disciplines which Ross (2017) had earlier described as a social education that studies all human enterprise over time and space. The emphasis on time and space aspects of Social Studies curriculum has significantly dominated our entire pedagogical concern as social educators; theory, practice and as researchers interested in content development and reconstruction within the limit of our discipline in particular and generally as we consider the future of educational enterprise and human societies.

Moving forward in the context of compelling paradigm shift in Social Studies theory, practice and research, this section will be addressed through two broad thematic areas but not exhaustive though considered adequate enough to contain emerging perspectives and dimensions of Social Studies for a realistic and secured future. The two distinct areas that need full scale intensification of curriculum are as follows:

Firstly: Issues of Contemporary Impact on Human Existence. This entails: Globalization and Geopolitics; Emerging technological advancement; The future of Humanity with Emphasis on Digital Literacy; Leadership and Governance; and Quality of Global Citizenship

Secondly: Issues of Historical Impact on Human Existence. This entails: Ethics, Moral and Family Values; Environmental Woes; Peace and security; and Social Justice and Global Inequality

Issues of Contemporary Impact on Human Existence

Globalization and Geopolitics: When we strengthen our curriculum to include learning experiences that provide students with understanding of global connections and interdependency that shows we are fully aware that the global system is more intensely connected and more mutually interdependent now than ever. This is an effort in the right direction as the interconnectivity has triggered mass movement of people, free flow of information and distribution of resources across geographical boundaries like never before.

In the context of geopolitics, Kennedy(2003) identified the construct of integration of global economies, politics, social and culture into one central fold as this give the geopolitical interpretation of a process where countries of the world, businesses, terrorist organizations and other supra-territorial formations try to accomplish their political goals by controlling geographical territories of the world. It is a combination of influence and power over territorial space and used such to make meaning out of global affairs(Doddi, 2019). Never forgetting the fact that geopolitics is future oriented and so this must be an area of interest to all social educators for further curriculum expansion. NCSS(2010) identified global connections to include social, economic, political, and cultural as well as environmental which consequently have increased at the personal, groups, local, national and international levels. This trend has provided multiple opportunities and challenges. This justifies why we need to introduce the current generation of youths to the understanding of increasing complexity of the contemporary global system.

Emerging Technological Advancement: The burning wave of technological transformation across the globe has impacted deeply into the core of all aspects of human life as individuals

across age brackets; groups alike, institutions and the entire societies are no more in isolation of the desire to embrace technological culture. A typical characteristic of the 21st century is man's technological dependency as no aspects of man's life is hardly isolated from technology.

The most profound area of technological impact in the 21st century is education. The application of technology in education popularly called EdTech has become increasingly high worldwide perhaps due to the phenomenon of globalization that has altered the entire aspects of human relations. There is technological revolution that has changed and reshaped all that is to be done in the classroom with the application of Artificial Intelligence and advanced robotics spear-heading the digital exploration. The force of globalization and its impact on global economies is akin to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) according to Quereshi (2020).

This is the power of technology and so to key into the global digital agenda, an understanding of science and technology in their social contexts allows learners to question and analyze the impact of science and technology on society, both in past and the present, as well as what the future may unfold (NCSS, 2010). It is the mandate of the new Social Studies curriculum to integrate learning experiences that provides for the study of the relationship between science, technology and environment.

The Future of Humanity With Emphasis on Digital Literacy: Are we not worried of the future of mankind in the context of evolving sophistication in the enterprise of science and technology? We must express serious concern on this. Scientists are developing more ways of letting computers take over human reasoning through adaptive learning. However, automation, AI, virtual reality are being frantically developed to displace mankind as all human works are being programmed to be carried out by computers. What then is the essence of being human? In full realization of this technological threat, how and to what extent are we shaping our educational institutions to model the youths of this generation to acquire fundamental skills according to individual's

comparative advantage? Without adequate preparation of the current generation in readiness for the reality of life, the assault on the fortress of humanity by the application of AI will be monumental.

The new global technological agenda requires the acquisition of essential skills deemed necessary for survival in the new social order. That is why there should be curriculum emphasis on digital literacy in our school system. On this note, Jegede (2022) proposed that our education system must redraw the design of what we teach and how we teach, and shift from knowledge transmission to knowledge transformation centered on innovation, creativity and critical thinking as essential weapons for survival in the 21st century.

Leadership and Governance: Nigeria is a nation stuck in mud like a lorry by its own doing. The lorry is deliberately driven by reckless, unconscionable, wicked, visionless, un-purposeful and corrupt drivers. This is a true description of Nigeria leadership and governance travails with the exception of the first republic leaders who were full of patriotism. The leadership trajectory has grown from bad to worse as this impact grossly on national governance space. Nigerian leaders have failed the citizens and they have only two agenda to promote which are looting the national treasury and perfecting wicked strategies of rigging elections to remain in power. Despite Social Studies emphasis on the promotion of civic competence that builds democratic values, surprisingly, democracy in Nigeria in recent time has proven beyond reasonable doubt to be the central cause of citizen's economic hardship, poverty, exploitation, deprivation and out right sufferings.

As an interesting area that affects the mass majority of the people, the new Social Studies curriculum experiences should not only enhance but intensify learning the structure and system of power and authority relations and governance in the country where students as future leaders are groomed to become critical thinkers and effective problem solvers and to become informed democratic citizens who can contribute to the democratic process

as this will help to build future global citizens. Such learning experiences should be value-based that are truly transformational enough to impact on the spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cultural and personal development of the learners who are future leaders.

The Quality of Global Citizenship: This dimension probably should be considered as one of the most important areas of Social Studies curriculum intensification fully aware that every person is a citizen of the world. It is interesting to note that decisions taken in one part of the world will likely have an effect on others in other parts of the world. So if we are able to groom responsible and informed global citizens that means people are going to make better decisions for the ultimate good of humanity.

As a critical area of interest, the new Social Studies curriculum should integrate learning experiences that provide for learners to study the ideals, principles and practices of citizenship in a democracy. NCSS(2010) uphold that an understanding of civic ideals and practices is fundamental goal of education for citizenship in democratic society.

Issues of Historical Impact on Human Existence

Ethical, Moral and Family Values: Nigeria like nations in the league system has declined despicably to the bottom of the league table on almost all issues relating to ethics, morals and values. The failure of Nigeria is not so much traceable to the structural foundation of governance, but sincerely, it is the failure of national values and vision. Values are the unseen web that synthesizes a society together. In support of this claim, Enu (2007) asserted that there is total collapse of our over- all value system. Stressing further that moral values are compromised and sacrificed because of greed for materialism especially the ruling elites, mediocrity, corruption, sycophancy, ethnicity, religious intolerance, zero integrity, sexual promiscuity among others. We must have a launching point as social educators and cosmopolitan reformers in the struggle for the re-invigoration of fitting moral and values laden curriculum for the future. Through the mystique of our

remodeled Social Studies curriculum, we must re-build Nigeria by strengthening family values, the foundation of national integrity and uprightness. Our curriculum must emphasize the training of kids to acquire responsible adult life. As part of effort to build family values, we should be concerned if parents are doing enough to inculcate good manners in kids? Remember, bad habits are not inborn, they are acquired through socialization. Parents must take responsibility to instill acceptable values and morals in children especially in very hostile morally bankrupt societies.

The question is how do we move forward? We must understand and appreciate the power of our Social Studies curriculum in the transformation of social order in the society. We must domesticate our indigenous moral curriculum in strengthening the foundation of our values system and not on vacuous adoption of foreign values that will not only destroy us but makes us inferior. The starting point for values reconstruction is to introduce a national values attainment code to be ingrained by all citizens across the country; codes for national leaders, the citizens, democratic institutions like the executive, legislature, judiciary, civil society, law enforcement agencies, students, the academia and religious leaders. This effort should be supported by an integrated national framework for values system reboot. This will fortify the foundation of our ethical, moral, social and political reconstruction and therefore transform us by lifting us to a higher position in the league table.

Unending Environmental Woes: Mankind will spend the entire time on earth struggling to attain maximum environmental standard and quality all in vain. The global system is sharply divided between the North and the South. The North is represented by the advanced industrialized nations while the South is represented by the developing nations of the world. The battle for environmental sustainability will be won by the advanced industrialized nations of the world and will be lost by the developing nations of the world. The pursuit of environmental justice is like the pursuit of peace and security. These are the twin

phenomena man will continue to chase without achieving any success. We are appreciative of the finite capacity of the earth resources given the fact that man must exploit the bounties of the earth for his survival just like Enu (2007) stated that people must satisfy their basic needs by harvesting and using the earth resources like water, air, plants, fish, wildlife and soil. So there is need for responsible actions toward the resources of the planet earth.

For some time now, The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has kept faith with the struggle for solution to environmental challenges. Some of the problems are local in nature but with time if not addressed they increasingly develop the potentials of becoming regional and sometimes global problems. Some of these environmental concerns are pollution, climate change, global warming, deforestation, over population, loss of biodiversity, household and industrial wastes, ozone layer depletion, mining activities, littering and landfills among others. From the array of environmental problems listed, they are all anthropocentric in nature implying that man is the originator of his own environmental crisis through unsustainable socio-economic activities and ostentatious economic policies of governments of the world which have contributed to environmental degradation that alters the ecological integrity. According to Lagarde (2014), environmental degradation is the newest and greatest challenge of our era with obvious implications. We must intensify and expand our curriculum offering by making environmental literacy knowledge a mass movement both at the formal and informal settings to emphasize the full impact and connection between man's activities, environment and the society at large (Enu, 2005).

Peace and Security: The world and Nigeria need peace and security to advance development and ensure economic, social, political and cultural prosperity. Without peace and security, it will be difficult to achieve any meaningful development and prosperity. That is why Kimanuka (2018) emphasized that a peaceful and secured environment is critical to every society since

it affects all aspects of economic and social development in a country, and is a necessary *sin-qua non* to the realization of human potentials.

As a country of huge diversity in ethnic formations, religious affinity, cultural orientation and linguistic differential, we social educators have the mandate to intensify our curriculum building effort in the direction of education for intercultural understanding that promotes awareness, knowledge and understanding of many aspects of other people's culture for purpose of living together peacefully and harmoniously. Buttressing this point, UNESCO (2010) stated that education for intercultural understanding helps to promote peace and social harmony among learners and develop in them understanding and knowledge about other people's culture; learn the values of mutual respect, tolerance, care, compassion and empathy as they place themselves in the position of others.

Social Justice and Global Inequality: Across the globe, wide spread inequality exist between people, groups, states, regions and in all sectors of national life. Nigeria scenario calls for more concern as social, economic and educational gap between the rich and the poor keeps expanding beyond imagination. There is little or no conscious effort to salvage the plight of the poor masses that are being exploited, oppressed, deprived, pauperized and robbed of basic means of survival in a country that is so richly blessed through crass impunity and corruption of the ruling class that has resulted to gross mismanagement of national resources.

Given the fact of negative, unpatriotic political antecedent in this country, and in full realization of uncertain educational future, it has become most expedient to subject the current generation of youths who are citizens of the future and potential leaders to transformative learning experiences in areas of human rights education, elimination of discrimination and exclusion among persons and groups, redressing previous injustice committed against people, combating ethnicity, religious bigotry and global racism in all aspects of life and a thorough understanding of societal structures that promotes injustice in all ramifications.

Conclusion

Social Studies will remain the intellectual partner for the future of humanity and social education. This is the unsung hero identified as the star to bring the needed light so many years ago after the end of the US revolution in an effort to rebuild the US society by harnessing the great human potentials found in the ability of man as a member of the social groups in the society. In rebuilding the US society, the curriculum needs could only be met by attending to man's contemporary and future social aspects and not the past. Therefore social studies, a new curriculum initiative, found to be flexible and unregimented was adopted to meet the transformative aspirations of the expected progressive new society. Even in Nigeria, Social Studies was introduced as a social curriculum to heal the wounds of the civil war that ravaged and traumatized the entire citizens. These two instances clearly shows the strength and power of our Social Studies curriculum in societal transformation and reconstruction.

All through the decades of its existence, Social Studies will continue to be in a state of flux, retreat, recreation, re-validation and consolidation in response to obvious innovations and expansion within the frontier of global educational thinking. In thinking ahead, one singular element to be concerned with is the teacher factor that is in the center of the curriculum enterprise and transformation. In educating for the future, we have to prioritize the quality of teachers, the quality of teaching and of course the quality of research carried out. A teacher of the future must be a facilitator of knowledge and not a content deliverer.

We note further that our world is fast changing and the changes are dictated by technologies and so the education sector must adopt the new education order that demands increasing acquisition of skills both vocational and literacy as the era of job for survival seem to have vanished like bubbles. This is the era of knowledge economy with huge dependent on access to information and skills. Therefore how we teach must change to embrace the radical digitization going on in the world. The question to ask are how prepared are we as curriculum managers?

Do we teach for skills acquisition and critical transformation? Do we teach for critical thinking required of the 21st century? Do we teach for democracy and good governance? Do we teach for Environmental sustainability? Do we teach for peace and security, the reliable partner for development and prosperity? Do we teach for character and moral development in a world of declining moral decay? All these should be essential contents of our social curriculum as we advance into an uncertain educational future.

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