
**STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PEACE
EDUCATION-RELATED CONCEPTS IN SOCIAL STUDIES IN
IGBO-EZE NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENUGU STATE**

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Abstract

This study assessed the perceptions of teachers on the strategies for implementation of peace-related concepts in Social Studies in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu State, Nigeria. It adopted a descriptive survey research design. Two research questions guided the study. The population was made up of all the 23 principals and 23 Social Studies teachers in Igbo-Eze north local government area and there was no sampling because the population was manageable. A self-developed questionnaire titled Improving Peace and Conflict-related concepts of Social Studies Questionnaire (IPECSOSQ). The instrument was validated by Social Studies experts and was trial tested on 10 principals and 10 Social Studies teachers in Nsukka Local Government Area which was outside the study area. The internal consistency estimate was computed using Cronbach Alpha method and the internal consistency was 0.81 indicating high reliability. The study revealed that it is highly imperative to devise strategies for improving learning and practices of conflict-related and practices of peace education contents of

Social Studies and such strategies include the adoption of learner-centred methods, the reinforcement of students at both classroom and school level among others. The study recommended among others in-service training of teachers on how to enhance learning and transfer of learning.

Key words: *Strategies, Implementation, Peace education, Social Studies*

Introduction

One of the greatest goals of Nigeria as a nation is to achieve national integration and education has been recognized as the instrument for achieving transformations of the mind which is necessary for national integration especially in a multi-cultural society like Nigeria. Education is meant to equip the learners with long-life skills of effective peaceful living which include skills of peaceful conflict resolution, respect for others, sense of social responsibility and even tolerance. All these, Ofojebe (2014) opined, would be achieved if learners are provided with academic programmes that would support their consciousness of the importance of maintaining lasting culture of peace through peace education. This implies that the exposition of students to peace education related concepts issues is one way of targeting the mindset of young learners towards imbibing the culture of peaceful living. In view of this, Nigerian government introduced school subjects for the inculcation of the required knowledge, skills and values for the realization of peaceful and integrated nation. One of such subjects is Social Studies.

Social Studies is an integrated subject that has the potentials to instill in learners, skills, knowledge and attitudes to become responsible citizens in a multi-ethnic society. The goals of Social Studies Education curriculum design aimed at transforming the minds of the students to make it sound and balances and training them to be responsible, self-directing and intelligent (Opoh, Edinyang&Ogbaji, 2014, p.144). Social Studies has been playing vital roles in nation building at all levels in Nigeria since

independence. Of course, the aim of Nigeria since independence has been to build a strong and united nation. Social Studies is a subject that has the potentials to create in learners' right attitude, values and skills to live peacefully in the society. Ebirim, Emenyonu and Uzoagba (2012) argued that if other subjects can contribute to nation building in a multi-racial society, Social Studies is potentially more equipped to do that considering the integration of significant contents for nation building from different subjects and their presentation in a holistic manner in Social Studies instructional delivery to learners. In Social Studies curriculum, peace and conflict related issues are embedded in it.

Conflict is a social and inevitable issue that characterize every human society and the antidote to that is peace education (Thakore, 2013; Akubue & Ezegbe, 2013). Olowo (2016) asserted that there are instances of conflicts in Nigeria which require effective implementation of peace and conflict related issues to learners to enable them imbibe peaceful living in schools, families and communities. Peace and conflict related contents refer to those topics in Social Studies that have serious implications for reducing conflicts and promoting peace among learners. Peace and conflict-related contents that are found in Basic education curriculum include social issues and problems with such contents as corruption, cultism, drug abuse, meaning of peace, types, ways of promoting peace (tolerance, social justice and human rights), meaning and types of conflicts, examples of conflict (interpersonal and inter-tribal), causes, consequences and conflict resolution (Federal Ministry of Education [FME], 2007). There are topics like social problems that seem to be underlying triggers of conflicts like corruption and human rights denial. Drug abuse and cultism are also reasons most students reject peaceful conflict resolutions and exposure to the consequences will help students to avoid joining these evil gangs. Raising awareness of students on the consequences of war according to Olowo (2016) would help students cultivate the habit of peaceful conflict resolution and peaceful living.

Social Studies contents, if implemented effectively, could go a long way in developing skills of peaceful living in learners.

Effective implementation entails the use of appropriate methods, materials and resources in a learner-centred setting to facilitate learning of the contents of Social Studies which include the peace education contents. Hence, Akeke and Aluko (2017) clearly noted that the method adopted by Social Studies teachers is a strong factor that can affect learning of the contents. The conventional teaching methods (indoctrination, memorization and rote learning), that are common in secondary schools today has been found ineffective for the development of the values, attitudes and skills required for building the culture of peace in the learners (Falade, Adeyemi & Olowo 2011). To the aforementioned scholars, cultivating the culture of peace cannot be achieved through the autocratic curriculum design and implementation that take place in our society today. Ezeoba and Okafor (2019) found out that instructional methods like field-trips and discussion are good methods for teaching the contents of Social Studies and lamented that Social Studies teachers rarely use them in implementing the contents of Social Studies. Okafor (2012) is of the view that even when most Social Studies teachers may be professionally trained, they may lack the commitment for effective teaching. This implies that indeed Social Studies implementation in general may not be properly implemented including peace education concepts in Social Studies and this could be the reason for the persistent conflicts in Nigeria especially among young persons in school.

Conflicts exist everywhere in Nigeria. The 21st century Nigeria has been experiencing series of conflicts owing to inability to tolerate others, accept others and co-exist despite the differences. There have been conflicts of various forms such as Boko Haram terrorist attacks with their bombings, issues of farmer-herder clashes, protests and agitations by the youths and minority ethnic groups, kidnapping and armed robbery. Nigerian school children witness conflict at home, in schools and observe violence all around them especially in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State. There are cases of bullying in schools, fighting in schools and so on. It is quite disheartening that despite the implementation of Social Studies, these worrisome

situations still persist. It is therefore pertinent to determine strategies for improving the learning of peace related contents of Social Studies such that there will be sustainable learning and learners could transfer this learning to life situations. This study seeks to determine the perceptions of teachers on the strategies for improving learning of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to determine the strategies for improving learning and practices of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. determine teachers' perceptions of how necessary is it to improve learning and practices of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies in Igbo-eze North local government area of Enugu State
- ii. ascertain teachers' perceptions of the strategies for improving learning and practices of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies in Igbo-Eze North local government area, Enugu State

Research Questions

- i. How necessary is it to improve learning and practices of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu State?
- ii. What are the strategies for improving learning and practices of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state, Nigeria?

Methods

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. In this research design, the researcher is interested in describing the attitudes, behaviours, or characteristics of a given

population(Creswell, 2012). It was conducted in junior secondary schools in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area. The population was made up of all the 23 principals and 23 Social Studies teachers in Igbo-Eze north local government area and there was no sampling because the population was manageable. A self-developed questionnaire titled “Improving Peace and Conflict-related concepts of Social Studies Questionnaire (IPECSOSQ). The instrument was validated by Social Studies experts and was trial tested on 10 principals and 10 Social Studies teachers in Nsukka Local Government Area which was outside the study area. The internal consistency estimate was computed using Cronbach Alpha method and the internal consistency was 0.81 indicating high reliability. Pallant (2011) noted that values above 0.7 are considered acceptable but values above 0.8 are preferable. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The benchmark for acceptance or rejection was be 2.50. Any item with a mean of 2.50 and above was accepted while items with mean less than 2.50 were rejected.

Results

Research Question 1:How necessary is it to improve learning and practices of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu State?

Table 1: Frequency of the responses of principals and teachers on how necessary it is to improve the learning and practices of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies

S/N	Item	Highly necessary	Necessary	Not Necessary
	Principals	23	-	-
	Teachers	23	-	-
		46		

Table 1 indicated that all the teachers agreed that it is highly imperative to device strategies for improving the learning and practices of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies

Research Question 2: What are the strategies for improving learning and practices of peace and conflict-related contents of Social Studies in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu state, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviation of respondents on strategies for improving teaching and learning of conflict-related contents of Social Studies.

S/N	Item	Mean	Std. D	Decision
1	Classroom reinforcement of students who display peaceful practices in classes	3.02	0.87	Accepted
2	Employment of learner –centered methods	3.82	0.41	Accepted
3	Paying attention to individual student learning difficulties	3.77	0.54	Accepted
4	Bringing conflict scenes to learners in classrooms through audio visual aids	3.94	0.30	Accepted
5	Providing lunch for learners will motivate them to learn	2.37	1.51	Rejected
6	Teachers should encourage collaborative works by assigning students into group tasks	3.90	0.31	Accepted
7	Termly recognition of students who obey rules and respect others by the school	3.69	0.59	Accepted
8	Integrate service learning in Social Studies to provide opportunities for students to analyse societal problems and proffer solutions	3.74	0.58	Accepted
9	Involving parents in the teaching of conflict-related contents and practices of peace education	3.52	0.72	Accepted
10	Teachers should be models of peace in their approach to issues and speeches so learners can model after them	3.80	0.41	Accepted

The result of the study showed that the respondents agree that reinforcement, adoption of learner centered methods, encouraging collaborative work and involving learners and acting as role models are the strategies for improving the ability of learners to learn peace and conflict related contents of Social Studies and transfer learning to peaceful living in the society. The respondents also disagreed that providing lunch for learners will motivate them to learn peace and conflict related contents of Social Studies as the mean score is less than 2.50 benchmark.

Discussions

The study revealed that Social Studies teachers believe that it is highly necessary to devise strategies for improving learning of peace and conflict- related contents of Social Studies in Nigeria today. This is in line with the finding of Deveci, Yilmaz & Karadag (2008) that the respondents agreed that there is a great need for effective implementation and learning of peace contents. The assertion of Agbaje (2020) that there is an urgent need for innovative and methodological approaches to the study of peace education in Nigeria also supports the finding. The study further showed that the strategies include reinforcement at class and school levels, adoption of learner centered methods, encouraging collaborative work and involving learners and acting as role models are the strategies for improving the ability of learners to learn peace and conflict related contents of Social Studies and transfer learning to peaceful living in the society. This is in line with the views of Asiyaii (2015) that learner-centred methods, conducive environments and teacher and the whole school modelling peace are strategies of instilling the culture of peace in learners. This is in consonance with the findings of Akudolu and Umenyi (2016) that teachers non utilization of learner- engaging methods and engagement of learners is one way of causing learners' inability to achieve the contents of peace education and adopting peace-prone strategies improves effecting learning of peace and conflict issues. This is also in line with the findings of Deveci, Yilmaz & Karadag (2008) who reported that the

respondents agreed that methods and activities that encourage student participation should be used to improve effective learning of peace education.

Conclusion

Based on data presented and analysed, it was discovered that it is highly necessary to devise strategies for improving students' learning and practices of peace and conflict related contents of Social Studies. It is also important to utilize the following strategies to achieve the above: reinforcement, adoption of learner-centred methods, encouraging collaborative work and involving learners and acting as role models are the strategies for improving the ability of learners to learn peace and conflict related contents of Social Studies and transfer learning to peaceful living in the society.

Recommendation

Based on the conclusion, the study recommends that teachers should be given in-service training on how to motivate learners and enhance students' retention and transfer of learning.

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