

Exploring Social Studies Teaching and Learning Capacity for tackling Corruption and Materialism in Nigeria

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Abstract. Social Studies Education is a problem solving discipline, hence the challenges of corruption and materialism confronting Nigeria is not an exemption. The course is a discipline in which the teaching and learning of attitudes and skills overshadow the acquisition of facts and information. The menace of corruption and materialism in Nigeria is a recurring decimal and it is through mass education like the being offer by Social Studies Education that can solve it. Therefore, this paper present the course as a catalyst in curbing the menace of corruption and materialism in Nigeria and proffer solutions like enactment of appropriate legislation, mass education and enlightenment on the evils of corruption, materialism, increase in salary, efficient accounting system, sanctions and protection of whistle blowers among others . Recommendations like enactment of appropriate legislation, training of staff of agencies fighting corruption, materialism, education, sanctions, efficient accounting system and international cooperation in the fight against corruption and financial crimes.

Keywords: Social Studies, Education, Corruption, Materialism

1. Introduction

Nigeria as a nation is blessed with human and natural resources which other nations are looking for to be great and greater than what they are but her development growth has been stagnated due to corruption and mind set of materialism among the elites that supposed to be agent of change.

The most populous black nation on earth with untapped mineral deposit like bauxite, columbine, tin, gold, coal, ore, diamond, crude oil among others. In fact, she is the most or one of the most endowed country in Africa in terms of human and natural

resources. While other nations of the word have been able to utilize their actual and potential endowments for national development and progress, Nigeria has over the years, become perpetually saddled and bedeviled by corruption. Corruption **according** to Bwai and Fwenji (2006) has become the biggest and most lucrative business in Nigeria and is believed to be a direct corollary of the critical phase of modernization and industrialization which the country is passing through. Corruption has become endemic, a cankerworm which are serious source of concern in this present day societies in many part of the globe but that of Nigeria is critical and exceptional (Chollom and Yuah, 2006).

According to transparency international, in a study carried out in 2004 on corruption in 146 countries of the world, Nigeria was ranked as the 3rd most corrupt nation in the world. The challenge of corruption in Nigeria has led government to enactment of laws and the enforcement of integrity systems, but success has been slow (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2016). It further state that, as at 2012, Nigeria is estimated to have lost over \$ 400billion to corruption since independence.

Social Studies as a discipline is a core subject in the primary and junior secondary school levels of education is a problem solving Social Science based curriculum which inculcates in the pupils/students knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and morals that will change individuals and society for development and foster harmonious relationship between man and man, man and his environment for the greater good of all.

2. Concept of Social Studies Education

Social Studies as a concept is of American origin. Its inclusion in the Nigerian educational system can be traced to the National Curriculum Conference of

1969; and has variously been defined by authors according to their perspectives and background as it covers a wide range of studies. According to Utulu (2004), Social Studies is the study of man as he interacts with his social and physical environments. It is an integrated approach to learning that helps to equip learners with appropriate knowledge; skills, values, and attitude that would enable them understand better their physical, social and technological environment and also contribute and participate as useful citizens of their societies. Social Studies in Nigeria was designed for functional citizenship and was meant to correct the irrelevant colonial education which was based on compartmentalization of Knowledge, facts and theories. Hence, Akor (2002) describe Social Studies as a study that serve as the great connector which splits Knowledge into real world in which citizens live and work not so divided.

Nigerian after independence needed loyalty, unity, and new commitment to nation building from her citizens particularly after the Civil War of 1967-1970. To this end, the Social Studies was designed to cushion effects of the Civil War bringing about reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation of Nigerian citizen; and to inculcate worthwhile values into the students to enable them live and contribute meaningfully to the advancement of their immediate communities in particular and Nigeria as a democratic society in general. Philip-Ogoh and Adus-Salam (2014) citing Danladi (2005) and Akinseye (2008) explains that Social Studies entails lifelong education stressing on learning and acquiring of positive social, economic and political values, attitudes and skills for judicious utilization of human and natural progress; a discipline which seeks to develop attitude and desire by individual to make positive contributions to maintenance of sustainable environment that increases quality of life. If a learner is well rooted in the concept of Social Studies Education he or she will always be loyal and dedicated to the nation and avoid corruption and materialistic tendencies that can ruin the nation and leads to underdevelopment. In essence, the love of one's country will make a citizen to shun and avoid any negative acts capable of making one nation to be at disadvantage no matter the financial inducement.

3. Objectives of Social Studies in Nigeria

There are several objectives of Social Studies Education in Nigeria as enunciated by different scholars, the following are germane to this current discuss:

- To make the learners to understand the structures and functions of government.
- To make the learner to understand and appreciate the inter-relationship between him, other people, government and the global community.
- To develop in the learner a sense of national pride and loyalty.
- To develop in the learner, the spirit of self-discipline and selfless sacrifice and service to the country.
- To expose the learner to the peculiar needs problems and potentials of the county and to enable them to select democratic alternative for solving these problems.
- To develop the spirit of patriotism in the learner.
- To make the learner to become a good citizen (Dapel, Kyesmang, Fwang'an and Puusmut (2012).
- To make the learner to understand the inter-relationship between their rights and their duties within the country and beyond.

To Mu'azu (2015) Social Studies Education in Nigeria is to achieve the following objectives:

- Assist man to acquire skills for solving societal and environmental problems;
- Influence man's attitude positively to social, cultural, economic, political values and the total environment.
- Create awareness and sensitive to man's environment.
- Encourage voluntary participation in social and civic duties as well as develops the sense of responsibility.
- Equips men with the basic understanding of the knowledge of the total environment. Meanwhile the following are the general objectives of social studies to develop in the students;

- The ability adapt to their changing environment;
- A desire and capacity for independent; learning through the collection of facts and information, necessary for taking rational decision in human affairs;
- The right type of values, skills and attitudes;
- Good citizens, capable and willing to contribute to the development of the society;
- The spirit of national consciousness and national unity.

Social Studies class room should not be boring and the curriculum should be diverse to accommodate topical issues like corruption and materialism and the scope, sequence, aims and purposes of the field should not be described as unclear diffuse, or atypical (Darling Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Ogundare (2010) is of the opinion that social studies classroom should be a stimulating "workshop" of ideas. A tag can be boldly caption "kill us". He also commented on d work of Corbin (1983) that there should be something on the wall, floor, and surfaces of the classroom which will help: (i) stimulate children to think critically and openly; (ii) motivate them to continuous effort; (iii) display individual and group achievement; (iv) display interesting and challenging ideas; (v) provide places for group and individual activities with instructional materials, and (vi) store equipment for use with instructional materials.

The issue of corruption and materialism in Nigeria can be tackled if appropriate legislation are enacted and curriculum strengthen it will go a long way in solving the menace.

4. Concept of Corruption

According to Umar (2013), Corruption is dishonesty, especially by people in position of power or authority. It is an immoral behavior which leaders practice in form of getting undue advantage or favor to themselves and their cronies. This of kind practice makes it possible to treat the equals unequally and placed mediocracy above merit, especially in socio-economic and political considerations. Mohammed and Ahmad (2007) quoting ICPC act section 2 say that Corruption Includes vices like bribery, fraud and other related offences. From the forgoing, corruption can be summarily be put as the abuse or misuse of

power or position of trust for personal or group benefit which may be monetary or otherwise. Corruption is said to come in a systematic nature and affect the whole life of an organization or society if care is not taken.

The Black's Law Dictionary in Akinola (2013) define corruption as an act done with the intent to give some advantage that is inconsistent with official duty or rights to others; or the act of an official or judiciary person who under or fully uses his station or position to procure some benefits for himself or for another person contrary to duty and rights of others. It is the misuse of entrusted power for private benefits. These benefits could be money, power or status.

The Economic and Financial Crime Commission (2005) views corruption as a behavior which involves individual or group of individuals violating rules against the exercise of certain types of rights and duties for personal and private gains. Some of these are bribery, kick-backs, nepotism and misappropriation of funds, misuse of trust and many others. While Transparency International (2002) simply define corruption as the abuse of public office for private gains.

Based on the foregoing, corruption is a monster that can destroy the fabric of any society that allows it to thrive and once it has become cancerous, it is education that can adequately and efficiently tackle it. Therefore, Social Studies education is a veritable tool in tackling the menace of corruption that occurs as a result of materialistic tendency of many Nigerians.

4.1 Types of Corruption

Okpe (2015) identified the following categories of corruption:

Bribery: This involves the payment (in money or kind) that is taken or given in a corrupt relationship and includes kick backs, gratitude pay of sweeteners greasing palms etc.

Fraud: This involves some kind of trickery swindle and deceit, counterfeiting racketeering smuggling and forgery.

Embezzlement: This is the theft of public resources by public officials. It is when a state official steals from the public institution in which he is employed. This is very common in Nigeria.

Extortion: This is money and other resource extracted by the use of coercion violence or threat.

Favoritism: This is a mechanism of power abuse implying a highly brazen distribution of state

resources to favoured friends, family members and close associates.

Nepotism: This is a special form of favoritism in which an office holder prefers his/her kinfolk and family members. This occurs when one is exempted from the application of certain laws or regulations or given undue preference in the allocation of scarce resources.

5. Concept of Materialism

The word materialism is deeply rooted in consumer research. Belk (1985) views materialism as a collection of personality traits. His current view of materialism includes three original traits of envy, non-generosity, and possessiveness; and a fourth trait of preservation, which was added in sub-sequent cross-cultural studies of the materialism scale. He sees envy as a desire for others' possessions; the envious person resents those who own what he wants. Non-generosity is defined as "an unwillingness to give or share possessions with others", which also includes a reluctance to lend or donate possessions to others and negative attitudes toward charity. Finally, possessiveness is defined as a concern about loss of possessions and a desire for the greater control of ownership. Since this possessiveness focuses on physical objects, it was originally conceptualized as including a tendency to make experiences tangible through souvenirs and photographs. However, this tendency to make memories tangible was later redefined as a trait named preservation and is no longer subsumed within possessiveness.

In contrast, Fournier & Richins (1991); Richins (1994a, 1994b); Richins and Dawson (1992) sees materialism as a value (the basic enduring belief that it is important to own material possessions) rather than a behavior of personality variable. This includes beliefs about acquisition centrality and the role of acquisition in happiness and success. Acquisition centrality refers to the importance materialists attach to acquiring more possessions which allows acquisitiveness to function as a life-goal for them. Materialists also hold strongly to the belief that owning or acquiring the right possessions is a key to happiness and well-being. Finally, the definition of materialism can be sum up as people who believe success can be judged by the things people own.

6. Causes of corruption and Materialism in Nigeria

Several factors are responsible for corruption and materialism in Nigeria. Several scholars identified some of these reasons for increase in cases of corruption and materialism. For instance, Akinola (2013) attributed some of these reasons as responsible for corruption and materialism in Nigeria:

- Societal value
- Socio-cultural factor
- Love of money
- Leadership factor
- Followership factor
- Poor salary scale
- Family system
- Corrupt practices are not properly punished
- Higher levels of market and political monopolization
- Low levels of democracy, weak civil participation and low political transparency
- Higher levels of bureaucracy and inefficient administrative structures
- Low press freedom
- Large ethnic divisions and high levels of in-group favoritism
- Gender inequality
- Low levels of government decentralization
- Resource wealth
- Poverty
- Political instability
- Weak property rights

In Nigeria today, many people including the youth can go to any length to gain wealth and identification because of the high value placed on materialism. Some people marry many wives and give birth to so many children which they cannot provide for. This is

coupled with the practice of being our brothers' keepers whereby an individual has to provide for extended family members. Nigerian leaders do not lead by good examples, many of them goes into politics because of greed and materialism. During elections they buy votes, this in turn breeds corrupt followership and these followers are always expecting their leaders to do the impossible to meet their demands and desires. Also contributing is among the issue of uneven smallest wages, whereby there is privileged salary scale for some sectors of the labour force particularly the political office holders. Most significantly is the obvious failure of the government through its relevant agencies to exactly deal with corrupt person to serve as restriction.

7. Social Studies, Corruption, Materialism and Education

Social Education is a multidimensional concept which can be described as the inculcation of adequate knowledge, skills and desirable attitudes cherished by the society and considered for harmonious living. The monster corruption has crept into education system in varying forms and nomenclatures such as cultism, alcoholism, examination malpractice, prostitution and pimping, drug abuse, misappropriation of funds, poor funding, politicking and unethical sharp and corrupt practices. Worst still is the fact that these anomalies have assumed pitiable proportions and a national tragedy that has weakened the credibility of our educational system (Bozimo, 2011).

Corruption in the education sector also includes mismanagement of funds leading to gross inadequacy of facilities and resources and of course mass failure due to overcrowded classrooms. All these can be attributed to attitude and value problems, which Social Studies Education primarily addresses. The almost total neglect of the National norms and values by the citizenry what one might call ethical deprivation; has in no small measure resulted in corruption in both low and high and high places.

In most developing countries and Nigeria inclusive certificate syndrome breeds corruption and materialism. Crazy for wealth and materialism make people to look for certificate at various levels of education as a matter of do or die. Some of these malpractices and sharp practices of corruption in educational sectors are:

- Certificate Racketing.

- Armed-chairs research by Academics.
- Plagiarism.
- Admitting unqualified candidates due to bribe.
- Graduating deficient students.
- Examination malpractices.
- Sex abuse and intimidation of students, and sex for grades.
- Defying minimum standards during recruitment of teachers.
- Extortion.

8. Ways by which Social Studies can curb Corruption and Materialism in Nigeria

Social Studies as a subject in the school Curriculum is intended to lead to the inculcation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and positive disposition to issues relating to public good. Hence, the issue of corruption and materialism in our society will be treated in classroom when discussing topic like values, nationalism and patriotism, among others.

Value as a concept can be used to address the challenges of corruption and materialism. Some of Nigeria value system includes: believes, behavior, patterns, attitudes, virtues, honesty, respect for sanctity of life and mutual respect for one another. Anything that can bring family name to disrepute in any form should be shunned away.

The primary aim of Social Studies Education is to help young people to develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for public good and make them citizens of cultural diverse democratic society in an interdependent world. The subject Social Studies Education is also meant to produce society devoid of selfishness, callousness, greedy, violence, lopsidness, cheating, embezzlement, resources mismanagement and other social vices that are antithetic to the communal living and peaceful co-existence of human society.

Social Studies Education is also perceived as discipline on learning about people, how and where they leave, how they perform structures and societies, how they govern themselves and provide for their eternal and psychological needs, and why they love

and hate each other and how they use and misused the resources on the planet. All these if well taught in a classroom environment can arouse students to judiciously conserve scarce resources for future generation.

Social Studies also seek to prove that all forms of human knowledge are related and contribute essentially to the development of mankind. It gets information and knowledge from other disciplines such as history, (events of the past) geography (spatial distribution of human and natural phenomena) political science (power relations) economics (use of scarce resources in satisfying unlimited human wants) sociology (values customs and cultures of groups and relationships among men in general). Information gathered from these disciplines is used in an integrated way to study understand and solve social problems.

There are some noticeable pedagogical strategies for meaningful teaching and learning in social studies education that can bring about change in attitudes to mitigate the menace of Corruption and Materialism in Nigeria. For instance role play can be used to teach learners of our past leaders patriotism in handling national wealth for the common goods of all citizens devoid of corruption and materialism. Leaders like Sir Ahmadu Bello, Tafawa Balewa, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Chief S.M Akintola, Murtala Muhammed among others serve diligently. Learners can emulate their patriotism in the service of their fatherland.

Dramatization as a teaching strategy can be used to act a play to depict the evils and consequences associated with corruption and materialism and what are likely to happen if not check. Therefore, dramatization is a strong strategy that can be channeled to change ills of the society to a reformative one.

Nigeria as a nation made concerted efforts to stem the tides of corruption and materialism among citizens. Some measures taken so far are as follows:

- The introduction of the National pledge to install commitment and participation in Nigerians (in 1976 by Obasanjo)
- Introduction of ethical revolution by Shagari regime in 1979
- Introduction of War Against Indiscipline (Buhari/Idiagbon regime)

- Introduction of code of conduct Bureau
- Introduction of Economic Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and independent corrupt practices and other related offences commission (ICPC) (By Obasanjo in 1999)

9. Conclusion

The challenges emanating from Corruption and Materialism can only be effectively tackled with mass education at all levels, social studies education should be fully explored to remedy the situation for reorientation of citizens in order to achieve desire growth and sustainable development in Nigeria.

10. Recommendations

- Social Studies Education should be taught by experts at all levels so as to tackle the challenges pose by Corruption and Materialism.
- Corruption and Materialism should be declared as enemy of progress and an act abominable.
- Corruption and Materialism laws should be enacted in the constitution.
- Adequate enlightenment on the evils of Corruption should be given publicity.
- A special tribunal on Corruption related matter should be established to handle high profile corruption cases.
- Training of personal involve in anticorruption crusade.
- Need for transparent leadership in all levels of government.

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