

Appropriateness of Government Concept in the Social Studies Curriculum as Prerequisite for Offering Government in Secondary School

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Abstract: This study examined the appropriateness of government in the junior secondary schools. The sample include hundred and fifty-one teachers selected from 50 public secondary schools in three major towns of Osun state, namely: Osogbo, Ilesha, Ile-Ife. Out of the 151 teachers, only 75 were teaching both social study and government, while the remaining 76 were teaching one of the two subjects and they were not used in the analysis to avoid invalid view or opinion.

Researchers recognised seventeen (17) government concept or theme in the social studies curriculum. These were used to design on whether the questions were adequate as background for offering government. A purposive sample of all teachers of social studies and government in Osogbo, Ilesha and Ile-Ife was used. The questionnaire was meant for government and social studies teachers at SSS and JSS respectively. T-test was used for analysis of the data collected; and t value arrived at was used for interpretation of the result for proper interpretation.

Findings of the research revealed that there was significant difference among the view of all respondents on the adequacy of the government concept contained in JSS social studies curriculum as a background for offering government at SSS level.

The following recommendations were made; first that Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) should re structure each of the component disciplines including government that consist of elements that must be mastered for better understanding for succeeding subjects at Senior Secondary School. Secondary, social studies curriculum concepts should cover all subjects that have to do with aims and aspiration of the discipline. It also recommended that a modified form of multidisciplinary integration approach should be used in organizing social studies curriculum for Junior Secondary School.

Keywords: Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC), secondary schools.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social Studies is the study of man within the context of his social-physical environment (Adaralegbe, 1980). Is an area of study aimed at producing well-behaved citizens (Adaralegbe, 1980). Social Studies is an area of study where concepts, ideas and skills are meaningfully brought together to solve human problems and picking contents like Geography, Government, Economics, Sociology and History (Olawepo, 1983).

Okunloye (1944) social studies is an integrated subject which focuses on the study of environmental relationship for the purpose of citizenship education. Jekayinfa (2005) introduction of social studies into the Nigerian school system was based on philosophical consideration. First, social studies is to address social issues and man's problem of the life in their interrelatedness, as the occur in real life situations instead of tackling them in an un-interrelated matter as at occurred among those that learn through separate disciplines like Economics, Government, Geography, Religion, Sociology and

Anthropology. The Upper Basic Education in Nigeria was entrenched in the National Policy on Education (2004) with social studies as one of the academic disciplines. It is provided therein hopping to provide sufficient background disciplines at the senior secondary school level.

Government is a field of study at the Senior Secondary Schools level which embraces the study of types and functions of government. Government is an institution that deals with power exercises in relation with distribution of exercise and power. It is the study of complexity of political life in human society.

Government concepts in social studies were brought in answering specific social and national problems among which is political socialization. Political science aims at political socialization, national stability, and unity. Political science education broadens the outlook, horizon of thinking of people as far as public policy is concerned; it aids the understanding of both theoretical and practical aspects of politics (Owoeye, 1991).

It is clear that political science is of critical importance in man's social life but the quantity in which political science education to be introduced at Junior Secondary School (JSS) should be adequate enough in Social Studies Curriculum so as to serve as a basis for specialized study of government as a subject at the Senior Secondary School level.

The following are reasons for inclusion of government concepts in the Junior Secondary School curriculum;

- (i) To provide good background for study of Government at Senior Secondary School.
- (ii) To give sufficient political education/concepts in politics that would enhance their participation and contribution to politics in the society/nation.
- (iii) To broaden the outlook and horizon of their thinking as far as public policy in concerned.
- (iv) It would assist them in understanding complexity of political life, and behavior of the actors.
- (v) They would develop analytical mind and should be able to give correct interpretation about public issues.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research tends to find out whether the Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) curriculum for Social Studies provide appropriate prerequisite for the offering of government as at the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level. It was to find whether gender, experience, and qualification affect the views of teachers.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

There were five research questions and three hypothesis thus;

- (1) What are the views of Secondary School teachers who teach both Government and Social Studies concurrently about the appropriateness of government concepts in the social studies curriculum as prerequisite for offering government secondary schools?
- (2) What are the additional government concepts suggested by teachers who teach both social studies and government for inclusion in the social studies curriculum?
- (3) Do the views of male and female teachers of both government and social studies simultaneously differ significantly as regards the appropriateness of government concepts in the JSS social studies curriculum in secondary school?
- (4) Is there any significant difference in the views of moderately and highly experienced government and social studies teachers as regards appropriateness of government concepts within the JSS social studies curriculum as prerequisite for offering government in secondary schools?
- (5) Does qualification of government and social studies teachers significantly influence their views on the appropriateness of government concepts within JSS social studies curriculum as prerequisite for offering government in secondary schools?

The hypotheses are;

(1) There is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female teachers who teach both social studies and government concerning appropriateness of the government concepts in the social studies curriculum as a prerequisite for offering government.

(2) There is no significant difference between the views of varying length of experience teachers who teach both social studies and government on the appropriateness of government concepts in the social studies curriculum as a prerequisite for offering government.

(3) There is no significant difference in the views of teachers of social studies and government with high/middle qualifications on the appropriateness of government concepts as a background for offering government.

A total of fifty (50) secondary schools were sampled for the study. One hundred and fifty one (151) questionnaire copies were administered across the selected schools among government and social studies teachers. They were all filled and collected back as the researcher personally moved round the schools.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Hypotheses One (HO₁):

There is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female teachers who teach both social studies and government concepts in the social studies curriculum as a background for offering government.

To test this hypothesis, table 1 was used. The means of the two groups (namely 47.1 and 48.4) were quite similar. It is no surprise that the t-value is not statistically significant. The critical t-value is more than the calculated t-value.

Table 1: T-test of the views of Male and Female Teachers on Appropriate of Government Concepts in Social Studies Curriculum for offering of Senior Secondary School Government

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	T-Critical
Male	52	47.1	4.6	1.15	1.96
Female	23	48.4	4.5		
Total	75				

Hypothesis Two (HO₂):

There is no significant difference between the views experience teachers who teach both Social Studies and Government and have varying lengths of experience on the appropriateness of the government concepts in the Social Studies curriculum as prerequisites for offering government.

To test this hypothesis, table 2 was used. The mean score of 47.1 and 47.7 for moderately experienced and highly experienced groups are quite close. It is not surprising that the t-value is not significant.

Table 2: T-test of all views of Moderately and Highly Experienced Teachers on Appropriateness of Government Concepts in the Social Studies Curriculum

Experience	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	T-Critical
Moderately Experienced	25	47.1	4.5	0.53	1.96
Highly Experienced	50	47.1	4.7		
Total	75				

Hypothesis Three (HO₃):

There is no significant difference in the views of teachers both Social Studies and Government, and with high/middle qualification on the appropriateness of government concepts as a background for offering government.

Table 3 was used to test this hypothesis. This mean score of 46.8 and 47.9 were close. It is not surprising therefore to see that the t-value is not significant.

Table 3: T-test of the views of Teachers with different level of Qualifications on the Appropriateness of Government Concepts in the Social Studies Curriculum

Qualification	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	T-Critical
N.C.E	26	46.8	5.9	0.98	1.96
Graduate	49	47.9	3.7		
Total	75				

4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

All the seven groups of teachers namely; all teachers taking Social Studies and Government together, male/female, moderately experienced/highly experienced and moderately qualifies/highly qualified endorsed the following concepts as appropriate for offering government; loyalty, co-operation, integration, citizenship, political institutions, leadership, political organization, identity, socialization and endorsed by six groups, common heritage by four groups while civil rights, civil obligation, national symbols and conflicts were endorsed by only one group. Graduate teachers endorsed more concepts than all the other groups. There were ten concepts in all which were judged appropriate out of seventeen government concepts in the social studies curriculum.

Using ranks of between 1 to 5 as high priority and ranks of between 6 to 11 as low, all the seven groups of teachers ranked political crises and revenue allocation high in the suggestions of additional concepts which must be included in the social studies curriculum to make it an appropriate background for offering government as a single subject. Nine other concepts were ranked high by one of five groups in the following order: Military rule, Pressure groups, Democracy, Ethnicity, Political process, Constitutional development, rule of law. No group ranked local government as high.

The research also found out that there was no significant difference between the views of the male and female teachers; between highly qualified and moderately experienced teachers of both government and social studies students on their views on the adequacy of the government concepts contained in the JSS Social Studies curriculum as a background for offering government.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULT FINDINGS

Teachers who taught both Government and Social Studies viewed most of the seventeen government concepts contained in the Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum as appropriate background to the study of Government at Secondary School.

Secondly, it was found that teachers of both Social Studies and Government suggested eleven additional concepts of government for inclusion in JSS Curriculum.

Also, it was found that government concepts in JSS Social Studies Curriculum was patterned on the individual Social Science subject rather than in Social Studies as an integrated Social Science.

The hypothesis that there was no significant difference in the views of male and female teachers was not rejected. Also, the other two null hypotheses regarding similarities of views between graduate teachers and N.C.E. teachers one hand; and highly experienced teachers were equally rejected.

It was also found that graduate teachers suggested more additional concepts for inclusion into Social Studies Curriculum. Notably however, there was no statistical significant difference.

6. CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that JSS Social Studies poses some threat to the depth and breadth of Secondary School Government. The single specialist approach tend to make essence of Government inadequately reflected in Social Studies. Whereas, Social Studies curriculum is meant to provide general social education to all students whether they go for further studies or not; and to provide academic foundation for the study component subjects in it (i.e. Government, History, Geography, Economics, Sociology, Religious Studies etc).

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve the status of government in the Social Studies curriculum and makes it good background for the study of government in Secondary School, the study recommends that;

- (i) There should be revision of Junior Secondary School Social Studies with a view to incorporate concepts of the various subjects to meet the essence of the programme,
- (ii) A panel of experts should be constituted to identify the essence of each of the component discipline including government in the social studies curriculum
- (iii) Social studies curriculum should not be based on interdisciplinary integration but on a modified form of multidisciplinary integration
- (iv) Teachers of social studies and government are recommended for in-service training up-date their knowledge and acquire necessary information.

8. WEAKNESS OF THE STUDY

First, study was limited to selected fifty (50) schools in three major towns of Osun State (Ile-Ife, Ilesa and Osogbo).

Therefore, the findings may not be generalisable. The need for similar study in a wider coverage is therefore necessary; this should possibly include rural schools.

Similarly, the study was restricted to Government concepts in Social Studies Curriculum, whereas Social Studies is integrated in composing of all Social Sciences like Geography, History, Religion Studies, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology etc. therefore the need to extend similar studies to Geography, Sociology, History, Psychology, Religion Studies and Anthropology concepts in Social Studies curriculum is necessary.

The study engaged views of teachers only to ascertain whether Government component/concepts in the Social Studies are adequate.

There is need to seek views of students in the Senior Secondary School (especially in SSS Class One) now studying government after completion of JSS.

Similarly, performance correlation of students that offered Social Studies at Junior Secondary School and those who did not offered Social Studies at Junior Secondary School was not accessed.

9. STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

The study added to knowledge of students and teachers about the composition/structure of Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum. It equally exposed the position of government concepts in the Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum.

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