



**Restructuring Social Studies Curriculum through Information Communication
Technology for National Sustainability**

Dr Shaibu Joshua Shaka

Social Science Education Department,
Kogi State University, Anyigba

Dr Obajemu Gilbert Olatunji

General Studies Department,
School of Education,
Kogi State College of Education
(Technical), Kabba.

&

Dr Abubakar Yunusa Idu,

Registry Department,
Kogi State University,
Anyigba. Kogi State.

Abstract

The paper examines restructuring social studies curriculum through Information Communication technology (ICT) for national sustainability. It discusses the concept of Social studies curriculum and Computer, Philosophical goals and Objectives of social studies, Objectives of Computer Education, in Nigeria, Rationale for inclusion of Social studies in Nigerian school's curriculum, Rationale for restructuring social studies curriculum and Information Communication technology (ICT) for national sustainability. The paper further looks at the training needs of teachers in the utilization of computer in teaching and learning process. The study recommended that social studies professionals should be trained enough to handle classes using computer as an instructional tool, government and non-governmental organization should lay emphasis on the training and retraining of teachers in all educational institutions and government at all levels should provide enough technological tools to aid teaching and learning in all educational institutions.

Key words: National sustainability, information communication technology, restructuring and social studies curriculum.

Introduction

Research evidence revealed that the teaching and learning of social studies at various times necessitated the use of different instructional tools as supplements to the verbal descriptions by which teachers make their points more meaningful, interesting and compressible to the learner. These instructional materials include chalkboards, slides, work models, charts, overhead projectors, maps, tapes and simulators employed by a teacher to improve the effectiveness of instruction, (Adekeye, 2008; Shaibu & Utulu, 2014; Ogunbiyi, 2018 & Shaibu 2020).



However, modern day trend has considered the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) an effective alternative to traditional teaching methods in substantiating and advancing classroom instruction (Shaibu & Utulu, 2014 & Shaibu, 2020). Research also revealed that various bodies like Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN), Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) and other agencies have made efforts through research to improve the teaching and learning of Social studies in our schools (SOSAN, 2006) and ICT is one of such.

Adamu (2004) sees ICT as sets of technological tools and resources used to communicate, create, disseminate, to stores and manage information easily through computer technology. This media equipment is electronic machines which can receive, store and retrieve information at will for instructional purpose.

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN (2004), the nation's computer objectives are to bring about a computer literate society in Nigeria within a short space of time, to enable the present generation of school children of all levels appreciate the potentials of computer and to enable them to be able to use computer in various ways of life and later education.

Since, social studies is a field of study necessary for generating realities of everyday societal living with the desire to making learner or learners acquire the knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills required to overcome the barriers of time and place as Information Communication Technology (ICT) introduce new choices and opportunities, the call using Information Communication Technology (ICT) through computer technology for restructuring social studies curriculum become a necessity in advancing classroom instruction.

Concept Clarification

In the context of this paper, there are terms that need some brief explanation. These terms are: National Sustainability, Information Communication Technology.

The Concept: Information Communication Technology (ICT)

Research studies show that various authors have viewed what is Information Communication Technology (ICT) differently. Variations in definition reflect different orientation or training of scholars. Yusuf (2007) see ICT as an electronic technology used for accessing, processing, gathering and manipulating presentation and communicating information. In this paper, Information and Communication technology (ICT) is an electronic-based technology for accessing, processing and retrieval information such as computer technology used in advancing classroom instruction.

Computer as a Concept

Another concept to understand in this study is the concept of computer. The term Computer has been defined severally by different scholars and at different times. Nkokelonye (2006) referred to computer as electronic equipment that can be used for receiving, storing and retrieving information. This implies that computer is a labour saving device.

Elsewhere, Tolorunleke, Odawn and Tsebam (2006) defined computer as an electronic machine capable of accepting data, process and analyze same to generate information in a specified format for immediate use as stored to be used later on.



In this paper, computer means an instructional medium that can be used in advancing classroom instruction. It is also an electronic machine capable of accepting data, process and analyze same that enables the teachers and manager of schools generate information for immediate use as stored to be used later on

Restructuring: Contextualized

Research revealed that the idea of restructuring means a different to many authors. However, the term restructuring as used here mean re-arranging or re-organizing instructional method in a new and different way from what the practice has been in advancing classroom instruction to modern demands and practices.

Social Studies as a Concept

It is pertinent to note here also that Social Studies have been defined by various scholars. Some of the definitions of Social Studies as held by scholars are as follows:

Zaria and Bulya (2006) defined Social Studies as a programme of study which a society uses to instill in students, knowledge, skills, attitude and actions it considers important concerning the relationship human being have with each other, their environment and themselves. According to Shaibu (2020) opine that any definition of Social Studies that fails to take cognizance of the fact, that social studies is an academic discipline that brings the realities of everyday societal living to the learners with the desire to making them acquire the knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills required to be responsible and disciplined members of the society will be failing in its scope and relevance.

Contextually, social studies as used here constitute a deliberate field of study necessary for generating realities of everyday societal living to the learners with the desire to making them acquire the knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills required to overcome the barriers of time and place as Information Communication Technology (ICT) introduce new choices and opportunities.

National Sustainability

The concept of sustainability is germane to the study. Research indicates that an attempt to find a clear and comprehensive definition of what is sustainability has been a challenge to authors. It is a concept that does not just address the current classroom instruction, issues and challenges but to overcome the barriers of time and place as technology introduce new choices and opportunities in advancing social studies classroom instruction is sustained.

Social Studies Curriculum

Research indicates that curriculum has been defined by various scholars. According to Obanya (2004a), curriculum is the total package of what is to be taught or learnt. Obanya describes curriculum as a process of translating national educational objectives into 'within-school do-ables'. Elsewhere, Offorma (2005) see curriculum as the planned learning experiences offered to the learner in the school. In this study, social studies curriculum connotes a vehicle of what is to be taught or learnt outlined in the National Curriculum manual designed to achieve the prescribed objectives.

Philosophical Goals and Objectives of Social Studies in Nigeria



In order to understand and appreciate the aims and objectives of Social Studies in Nigerian schools, it is necessary to know the bases on which these objectives are founded. This is because no policy on education can be formulated without first identifying the overall philosophy and objectives of the Nation. In Nigeria, the National objectives provide an insight into the foundation of the aims and objectives of Social Studies in Nigerian schools. These national objectives are itemized as follow;

- (i) A free democratic society
- (ii) A just and egalitarian society
- (iii) A united strong and self-reliant nation
- (iv) A great dynamic economy
- (v) A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (National Policy Education, 2004).

These objectives in turn are designed to serve as the overall objectives of Social Studies at the primary and Junior Secondary level of education as to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) Develop the ability to adapt to his or her changing environment
- (b) Become responsible and disciplined individuals capable and willing to contribute to the development of their societies;
- (c) Inculcate the right types of values;
- (d) Develop a sense of comprehension towards other people, their diverse cultures, history, and those fundamental things that make them human;
- (e) Develop the capacity to recognize the many dimensions of being human in different cultural and social contexts;
- (f) Develop a sense of solidarity and sharing based on a sense of security in one's own identity (National Policy Education, 2004).

Philosophical Goals and Objectives of Computer Education in Nigeria

The specific objectives are stated for each level of schools and institutions in Nigeria. For example, secondary schools curriculum content emphasizes on:

- (i) The rudimentary knowledge about information system, information processing techniques and the role of computer;
- (ii) The historical overview and development of modern day computer, knowledge of basic components and uses to which computers are put in everyday life;
- (iii) Understanding the basic principles of operating a computer;
- (iv) Hands on experience using pre-programmed package which are relevant to the interest of the students as instructional materials in different subjects;
- (v) In introduction to the concepts of different computer languages and their application
- (vi) Appreciation of problem-solving methods and technique as they apply to the computer programme design, coding and documentation (Shaibu, 2013; Shaibu and Utulu, 2014 and Shaibu, (2020).

Rationale for inclusion of Social Studies into Nigerian School Curricula

The inclusion of the social studies into school's curricula was strongly aided by the mandatory demand by the National Policy on Education (2004) that it should be taught in Nigeria



schools. The policy highlights the following as the major reasons for including Social Studies into the curricula of Nigerian schools:

- (a) To emphasize the social – political,
- (b) Economic and
- (c) Technology realities of our environment or society.

These are with a view of effectively harnessing the resources for:

- (a) National development,
- (b) Equipping Nigerians right from the primary schools with intellectual skills essential for rational decision making, identification of problem and analytic problem solving;
- (c) developing in Nigeria the value, attitude, abilities crucial for effective social living;
- (d) producing participatory, responsive and functional citizens who would foster integrative nationalism and positively contribute to national unity;
- (e) Fostering national understanding and relationship in so far as they contribute to the nation social-political and economic stability and wellbeing (Umeh, 2001).

Rationale for Restructuring Social Studies Curriculum through Information Communication Technology for National Sustainability.

The dispensability of computer as an instructional tool in teaching and learning cannot be over-emphasized when the instructions are well designed and well managed.

It is pertinent to note that the political entity known as Nigeria today was before 1960 a colony of Britain. The policy and system of education before and immediately after independence was that of Britain. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN (2004), the nation's computer objectives are to bring about a computer literate society in Nigeria within a short space of time, to enable the present generation of school children of all levels appreciate the potentials of computer and to enable them to be able to use computer in various ways of life and later education.

Thus, the call by Onyemchukwe (2003) for the implementation of computer assisted learning (CAL) or Computer Assisted based education otherwise called computer literacy. Onyemchukwe further stressed that times are changing and we have to change with the time. Satharasinghe (2006) asserts that the excitement and benefits computer offers to teaching and learning is inestimable.

Ater, Tiough and Nevkar (2006) in Shaibu (2020), observed and reported that when information Technology (IT) is used in education, the teacher becomes less the sole voice of authority and more of facilitator, mentor and coach, from “stage on stage to guide on side”. The teacher main task and role becomes to guide students on how to ask question, locate information and to critically assess the information found in relation to the problems poses. Thus, the call for restructuring social studies curriculum using ICT in advancing classroom instruction is in order.

Training of Teachers in the use of ICT for the Teaching of Social Studies

Research evidence indicates that advances in technology have brought instructional materials especially the projected and electronic materials to the forefront as the most radical tools of nationalization and social development which have affected the classroom teaching-learning situation positively. Such technological breakthroughs as networked and non-networked; projected



and non-projected; visual, auditory, audio-visual electronic materials are important landmarks in knowledge transfer. With them both teaching and learning become very pleasant experiences (Ema & Ajayi, 2006; Shaibu, 2020).

Ema and Ajayi (2006) in Shaibu (2020) reported that ‘without the teacher who is knowledgeable, instructional materials cannot create change and that the only time instructional materials can make impact is when the teacher begins to make use of it and allows it to take over its values’. Thus, the knowledge of the teacher cannot be overemphasized in the use and handling on any instructional gadgets for effective learning. Ater, Tiough and Nevkar (2006) in Shaibu (2020), observed and reported that when information Technology (IT) is used in education, the teacher becomes less the sole voice of authority and more of facilitator, mentor and coach, from “stage on stage to guide on side”. The teacher main task and role becomes to guide students on how to ask question, locate and to information critically assess the information found in relation to the problems poses.

Elsewhere, Shaibu (2020) also observed that children or rather students go through stages in their mental development and that teachers should be aware of the limitation of the mental process at each stage, as well as using curriculum material to promote this process. The microcomputer is fast becoming a curriculum material. Teachers need to realize that there is probably no one best way of teaching, but rather that the use of a variety of teaching material is most likely to enhance leaning. Shaibu (2020) advised that, ‘there are ever increasing number of audio and visual materials available to schools, that teachers should take advantage of the opportunities to procure excellent films and recordings covering a wide range of subject matters in Social Studies curriculum’

Suggestions

The following are recommendations made by this study:

- (i) Social studies professionals should be trained enough to handle classes using computer as an instructional tool. This may go a long way to improve teacher’s attitude towards computer usage in the teaching and learning.
- (ii) Government and non-governmental organization should lay emphasis on the training and retraining of social studies teachers in all levels of educational institutions and
- (iii) Government at all levels should provide enough technological tools to aid teaching and learning of social studies in all educational institutions.
- (iv) Social Studies educators should be made to meet the needs of the 21st century generation through stronger emphasis on technological tools in advancing classroom instruction in all levels of educational institutions
- (v) Classroom instructions and learning packages should be driven by the fast-moving communication technologies.
- (vi) Teacher education should focus on training teachers to be reflective in practice, be active in learning and be innovative, creative and partnership building.

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