

## ACHIEVING NATIONAL GOALS THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This paper is a comprehensive endeavor to explain the place of Social Studies Education as a vehicle for achieving national goals in Nigeria. The study is anchored on structural functionalist theory. It is a reviewed work which expounds such conceptual issues as the concept of Social Studies, the concept of state and state failure, the beginning of Nigeria's failure, achieving Nigeria national goals through the instrumentality of Social Studies Education and the Role of Social Studies Education in averting national failure. The paper takes a cursory look at Nigeria after decades of independence shows that most of the variables of national unity and development as desired have deteriorated thereby demonstrating further and quicker reasons to manifest failure. The onus of social engineering and re-engineering lying on Social Studies is a challenging task. Though Social Studies by its mandate is the most complex discipline among its contemporaries, the pragmatic realization of the objectives of the Nigerian nation is contingent on the efficiency of Social Studies Education. Thus, the work advocates that teachers training and retraining relative to the methodology and Social Studies goals must be given priority. The limitation of Social Studies instruction to classroom should also be deemphasized to emphasize a school- community based curriculum that will enable the interface between the learners and their community in identifying real community problems and applying cognitive based solutions in conjunction with community members. It also calls for effective use of resource persons and places in identifying and addressing problems of social dimensions*

**Keywords:** Social Studies Education, State Failure, Nigeria National Goals.

### Introduction

Nigeria is a product of disparate heterogeneous entities brought together under British colonial rule in the late nineteenth century for administrative convenience. In 1956 oil was discovered in commercial quantities and by 1960, the country achieved political independence which boosted the oil discovery for economic and political prosperity of the nascent nation. The fledgling nation therefore, hoped for a bright political and economic future as a result of her internal fortunes including geographical, cultural, religious, ethnic and ecological diversities that define the young nation. Unfortunately, these

advantages have become the lever for national failure as a result of unpatriotic leadership that have conditioned followers to any form of self defense for survival using religion, ethnicity, greed, crime, etc. as dazzling tools. Gordon (2011) captures this scenario by positing that Nigeria has been called the best example of the "paradox of plenty." Its natural resources, especially its light "sweet" crude oil, create great wealth that begets extravagant corruption, deep poverty, polarized income distributions, and poor economic performance. Largely because of this paradox, Nigeria has not achieved its economic potential. Instead of capitalizing on the revenue from its oil sales to

grow into a strong, stable, and democratic country, Nigeria became infamous for its numerous military coups, lawlessness, rampant corruption and extreme poverty.

The multiplier effects are that ethnic cum religious violence and general insecurity have become commonplace, social infrastructure is at its lowest ebb, all indices of poverty are dangerously high and the standard of living is abysmally low. Furthermore, absence of critical infrastructure and under-investment in health care, education, science, and technology, power are also encouraging brain drain in which Nigeria's most talented and educated citizens are leaving the country for green pasture. As a consequence, all indices of development are gasping for breath, an indication that Nigeria is on the verge of failure. In specific terms, the *Fund for Peace and Foreign Policy* magazine ranked the nations of the world from those most to least likely to fail based on institutional corruption, criminality, the ability of a government to regulate the economy and collect taxes, internal displacement of citizens, sharp economic decline, group grievances, institutional discrimination, the emigration of the intelligentsia, and the state of the ecology. The ranking unsurprisingly reveals that Nigeria was ranked 17th most likely to fail on the list of 148 countries studied for the 2007 Failed State Index. The areas of greatest concern for Nigeria's failure includes uneven economic and social development, a failure to address group grievances as manifested through active insurgency and armed banditry, intractable corruption and a perceived lack of government legitimacy. Lending credence, the World Bank (2008) report list Nigeria as a country with less than 25<sup>th</sup> percentile effectiveness in governance.

A cursory look at Nigeria after more than a decade of these assessment and catastrophic reports shows that the situation report about most of the variables observed have deteriorated thereby demonstrating further and quicker reasons to manifest failure. In a more dangerous dimension, failed state index researchers conclude that failed states take a long time to recover. The World Bank surveyed states identified as failed in 1980 and found that they

are still failed 28 years later. In fact, statistical analyses suggest that most of these states will likely require another 28 years, for a total of 56 years to fully recover. According to the *United States Commission on National Security* (2010), state failure results in "an increase in the rise of suppressed nationalisms, ethnic or religious violence, humanitarian disasters, major catalytic regional crises, and the spread of dangerous weapons. The failure of Nigeria as the giant of Africa will therefore be a problem not only to Nigerians alone but to Africa and the world at large. In short, failed states are a danger not only to their own people but also to their regional neighbors, and in a highly globalized world; they are a probable danger to the world economy and the vital interests of other nations (Rotberg, 2010). The objectives of this paper is to examine the mission of Social Studies Education and the extent to which insecurity, poverty and parochial tendencies are barriers to the achievement of national goals in Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the Functional theory known as structural functionalism propounded by Herbert Spenser (1820-1903). The major thrusts of this theory are: (1) that the society is holistic but polarized into functional structures with every morpheme of the structure contributing to the well-being of the whole. (2) That the importance and continued relevance of any sub-unit of this structure is relatively contingent on its contribution to the whole. The place of Social Studies as a core curriculum envisages a prudent and effective leadership as well as a patriotic and productive followership to drive the Nigerian economy to prosperity. However, the greatest predicaments driving Nigeria's failure as recorded by the International Fund for Peace such as uneven economic and social development, a failure to address group grievances as manifested through active insurgency and armed banditry, hate speech, farmers/ herders clash, growing call for secession, intractable corruption, oil pipeline vandalization and oil theft, calls for referendum and a perceived lack of government legitimacy are coincidentally within the academic

constituency of Social Studies Education. Hence, scholars: Mezieobi (2013), Osakwe (2012), Ediyang and Ipuole (2014) agree that Social Studies Education in Nigeria has failed in its objectives of nation building for which it was institutionalized. The authors in their call for intervention proposed that Nigerian Social Studies should begin to focus on restructuring and reconceptualising to make the subject more relevant to current challenges, events and developments. This in addition to avert the failure of Nigeria as a nation will also sustain its pride of place as a core curriculum. Therefore, the need for innovation in content, methodology and evaluation techniques towards averting national failure can never be over emphasized.

In terms of content, Social Studies was institutionalized to bridge the gap created by earlier social sciences in terms of the relationship between knowledge acquisition and social progress (Shuaibu, 2018). However, studies, Okam and Onuoha (2011), Mezieobi (2013) Nnamani and Oyibe (2016) argue that the teaching of Social Studies as compartmentalized areas of study rather than integrated and holistic discipline still holds way at all levels of Social Studies instruction. Although Social Studies derived its contents from traditional social science subjects, the integrative nature of social studies calls for a paradigm shift to synthesize all content areas in a coherent manner towards aligning theories with practice in classroom situations. Okam and Onuoha (2011) opine that it is possible to bring practical educational activity into focus so that curriculum contents be devoted to solving practical problems of individual and social dimension. Through this, the new content of Social Studies will be oriented towards helping the learners to learn and anticipate challenges of human survival both in the present and future in different geographical, economic, cultural and political contexts. Obama (2009) asserts that insights, and critical thinking from integrated skills gained can be used to fight poverty and homelessness, crime and discrimination, and to make our nation fairer and freer.

In terms of methodology, studies have also revealed that Social Studies is mostly taught like other social science subjects for knowledge acquisition focusing on the cognitive domain to

the detriment of the affective and psychomotor domains Bozimo and Ikwumelu (2009) Mezieobi (2013). This pedagogical stance no doubt is a misconception of the ontology and epistemology of Social Studies Education in Nigeria and world over. The rational use of methods of enquiry, problem solving, brainstorming, project, group discussions, dramatization, lecture, simulation, etc. have the potentials of providing the cognitive, affective and psychomotor outcomes necessary to move learners from the challenges of ethnic and religious sentiments to unity, joblessness to creativity, indifference to loyalty and patriotism, corruption to sainthood. This is in line with Bozimo and Ikwumelu (2009) who posit that through Social Studies, national objectives such as loyalty to the nation, patriotism, respect and sympathy for others, demonstration of empathy for the less privilege can be achieved.

Effective choice and use of instructional materials such as audio-visual devices, tape recorders, projectors, books, journals, magazines, maps, internet, etc should serve as tools towards gaining not only insight but adopting such in solving practical problems. Social studies learners and practitioners will through these cultivate the habits of using audio and video devices, internet devices to reach out to a large pool of audience on behavior change in terms of unity and patriotism, discipline, honesty and sincerity, hard work and creativity among specific and large group of audience.

The limitation of Social Studies instruction to classroom should also be deemphasized to emphasize a school- community based curriculum that will enable the interface between the learners and their community in identifying real community problems and applying cognitive based solutions in conjunction with community members. It also calls for effective use of resource persons and places in identifying and addressing problems of social dimensions.

In terms of human resources, the success of the Social Studies Curriculum design is contingent on the quality of teachers. Orakwe (2000) describes Social Studies as an all comers affair where would- be teachers of Social Studies choose Social Studies as a last resort and where admission candidates who

have lost eligibility for other courses are enrolled for Social Studies education in Nigeria's Universities and colleges of education. Social Studies is therefore erroneously perceived as the simplest discipline thereby serving as dumping ground for second hand, and ill-prepared students. In this situation, the emerging teachers are at best ill- prepared to handle the challenges inherent in the ontology and epistemology of Social Studies Education. In terms of evaluation, the entire Nigeria's education system is bedeviled by paper certificate syndrome (Ikwumelu, 2009). Learners are in search for certificate in order to achieve employability. Hence, instruction is mostly developed to impact the cognitive domain to the detriment of others. Social Studies instruction cannot be absolved from this anomaly as in-class behaviour of Social Studies teachers and students seem to be a reflection of the Nigerian society in relation to failure on the ideals of patriotism, unity, creativity, corruption, etc. As a corrective academic endeavour, the use of checklist, anecdotes, sociometric techniques, nomination methods, peer appraisal method etc on aspects of behaviour should form larger consideration for certification in Social Studies more favorably given that Social Studies is a core curriculum and therefore compulsory for all learners in primary and secondary institutions in Nigeria. Such methods of evaluation will ensure that all learners are tested on cognitive, effective and psychomotor domains and certified on the basis of their performances. On this strength, learners must not have imbibed the spirits of unity, discipline, leadership, honesty, transparency, accountability; hard work, patriotism, loyalty, empathy, individuality etc must have pragmatically demonstrated such in community programmes and projects, simulations, discussions, games, etc thereby serving as positive role models for the society. There will therefore be no need for this situation in Nigeria today where there is serious search for a glimpse of disciplined and patriotic behavior to magnify and display at both local and international exhibitions to redeem her globally inglorious and corrupt image.

### **The Concept of State and state Failure**

Max Weber defines a state as 'a human community that successfully claims for itself the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory with determined boundaries. Leaning on Max Weber, Joel Migdal defined the state ideally as 'an organization, composed of numerous agencies led and coordinated by the state's leadership (executive authority) that has the ability or authority to make and implement the binding rules for all the people as well as the parameters of rule making for other social organizations in a given territory, using force if necessary to have its way'. Critical to this idea is the monopoly over instruments of violence and coercion by the state within a given territory and the acceptance of this monopoly by the society. Equally critical is the claim of the modern state to the capability of administering these assignments in three classical areas of normative order: norm setting by means of legislation, sanctioning in cases of deviation from the norm and the execution of sanctions. Weber further makes the point that the distinguishing feature of the modern state from its predecessor is its impersonality: the detachment of the office from the occupant and a rational-legal basis of exercising authority (Taylor, 2013)

According to Rotberg (2011) nation-states exist to provide a decentralized method of delivering political (public) goods to persons living within designated borders. Having replaced the monarchs of old, modern states focus and answer the concerns and demands of citizenries. They organize and channel the interests of their people, often but not exclusively in furtherance of national goals and values. They buffer or manipulate external forces and influences, champion the local or particular concerns of their adherents, and mediate between the constraints and challenges of the international arena and the dynamism of their own internal economic, political, and social realities. All for the purpose of ensuring better life for the entire population under the political jurisdiction (Sussan, 2017).

State failure is a deteriorating process mediated by institutional and leadership weaknesses which erodes the confidence in the people thereby leading to self defense in terms of security, economy and other spheres of human life. Rotberg (2010) captures this notion by arguing that nation-states fail because they are convulsed by internal violence and can no longer deliver positive political goods to their inhabitants. Their governments lose legitimacy, and the very nature of the particular nation-state itself becomes illegitimate in the eyes and in the hearts of a growing plurality of its citizens (Rotberg, 2010). Weak states are therefore viewed to be lacking in capacity and audacity to support basic economic functions, raise substantial revenues, deliver basic services; and keep law and order. State failure is largely man made, neither artificial and to large extent not accidental. They are products of Institutional fragilities and structural flaws that are bitter fruits of irrational actions or irresponsible inactions of state actors.

Erikson (2011) argues that weak states include a broad continuum of states that are: inherently weak because of geographical, physical, or fundamental economic constraints; basically strong, but temporarily or situational weak because of internal antagonisms, management flaws, greed, despotism, or external attacks; and a mixture of the two. Weak states typically harbor ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other inter-communal tensions that have not yet, or not yet thoroughly, become overtly violent. Urban crime rates tend to be higher and increasing. In weak states, the ability to provide adequate measures of other political goods is diminished or diminishing. Physical infrastructural networks deteriorate. Schools and hospitals show signs of neglect, particularly outside the main cities. GDP per capita and other critical economic indicators have fallen or are falling, some- times dramatically; levels of venal corruption are embarrassingly high and escalating.

In Nigeria, the signs are unambiguously here with us as the threat for failure is more conspicuous than ever. It is in credence to this that the tripartite objectives of the present administration led by President Muhammadu Buhari are to rejuvenate the economy, fight

corruption and insurgency. The threat posed by corruption in the last two decades has brought the economy of the second largest exporter of oil in the world on its knees thereby aggravating security and secessionist tendencies in most parts of the nation. Although, the administration is striving to contend with these evils through policy and pragmatic disposition, they seem to be unyielding.

### **The beginning of Nigeria's failure**

Available literature- Jidefor (2012), Okukpe (2013) reveal that Nigeria began her journey into the league of failed states in 2007 when the country was ranked 17<sup>th</sup> among the failed states in the world. In 2008, the country's ranking improved marginally to 19<sup>th</sup> position before deteriorating in 2009 to 15<sup>th</sup>. Since 2010, Nigeria has consistently maintained its 14<sup>th</sup> spot on the index (Human Development Index, 2017). The reports on Nigeria's failed status since 2010 especially in 2012 indicates that Nigeria is only ahead of such countries as Pakistan, Guinea, Ivory coast, Iraq, Yemen, Haiti, Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Chad, Sudan, Congo, Democratic Republic and Somalia (Punch, 2012 July 25).

Corollary to these are revelations by the Transparency International (2018) that Nigeria is the 148<sup>th</sup> most corrupt country out of the 180 countries investigated. Similarly, Nigeria ranks 152<sup>th</sup> position on the 2016 human development index (HDI). The human development index calculates in depth inequalities in life expectancy, education, security and per capita incomes and makes a comparison between countries. Life expectancy increases with availability of health services. Measurability of health outcomes covers immunization, infant breast feeding, child malnutrition, mortality rates, HIV prevalence in Adults, physicians available per 10,000 people and public health expenditure.

In specific terms, data about Nigeria reveals that, the country is not enjoying near fair socio-economic and political weather as wide spread poverty, mindless insurgency, farmers-herders clashes, jail breaks, kidnapping, pipeline vandalization, armed robbery, light arms proliferation, hate speech, secessionist tendencies, calls for restructuring and other

primordial and chauvinist tendencies have become the common features of the Nigerian nation state. (Eweetan and Urhie,2014). These ugly developments are not only signs of extant weakness but further slipping the nation towards unimpeded failure. In more specific terms, this bulk can never be passed on the political class alone but it is one that is mediated by a host of social, biological, geographical, economic, historical and political factors that are multi faceted and multi-dimensional in nature. There is therefore a growing and urgent need for a multi-sectoral and collaborative approach to overcoming these systemic evils. Fortunately, by coincidence, there is no better way to go than the way of Social Studies Education. There is no dispute that Social studies education is multi-sectoral and collaborative given its ontological and epistemological stance as a multi-level academic discipline in Nigeria's curriculum. It is in credence to this that Okam and Onuoha (2011) argue that major "functionality principle" which is expected to influence greatly classroom pedagogy in Social Studies Education capitalizes on the view that this subject area represents an interdisciplinary approach to the study of human beings in groups of interrelationships within both their social and physical environments.

### **Achieving Nigeria National Goals through the Instrumentality of Social Studies Education in Nigeria**

Every academic enterprise is a product of social situation. Social Studies education is not an aberration. In Britain for instance, Social Studies was introduced into the School Curriculum after the first and second world wars as panacea for addressing social problems (Edinyang and Ubi, 2013). In Nigeria the domestic irrelevance of the pre-colonial educational system in Nigeria motivated the incursion of Social Studies Education in order to link knowledge with local needs.

According to Ikwumelu and Oyibo (2011), Social Studies refers to the subject matter possessing skills, attitudes and activities that focus on society and on the individual members

of the society. A major development established by Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) in the National Policy on Education is the pride of place it has given to the Social Studies Curriculum. The Policy regards Social Studies as a compulsory core subject area which all students in the primary and secondary schools cannot despise within the purview academic endeavour. The Philosophy which introduced Social Studies Education as a functional and qualitative curriculum design in all primary, secondary schools and Teacher Training Colleges in Nigeria stressed that an acquisition of its ideals, virtues and values by the young school learner must not be a chance affair. These virtues of human development, according to the FRN (2004), have to be learnt and cultivated by way of classroom instructions and interactions which derive from the Social Studies Curriculum.

The national policy on education endorses the need for Social Studies Education to be geared towards equipping the individual with the necessary wherewithal not only for cultivating civil responsibility but also for creating avenues and opportunities germane and compatible with human and social development. Thus, according to Okobiah (1985), the success of the philosophy behind the teaching and learning of the Social Studies Curriculum in schools and colleges must be measured in terms of its positive contributions at mobilizing and enabling learners cultivate an awareness and understanding of norms and values which are relevant to the fundamental principles of democracy. The teaching of these subjects is to inculcate in every learner of other subjects that the national aim of education is to ensure that knowledge gained in their cherished careers is to promote self efficiency for personal and national development. Very importantly, the Policy stipulates that the teaching of Social Studies Curriculum in our secondary schools must be seen as one of those avenues of establishing strong bases for the production of effective citizens and forming a cohesive society that will support a notion of nation-building. (Bozimo & Ikwumelu, 2009). On the whole, the Primary purpose of Social Studies is

to help young people develop the ability to take informed and reasoned decisions for the benefit of the public as good citizens of a culturally diverse and democratic society in an interdependent world.

As a course of study, Social Studies aim at producing students who are creative, patriotic, responsible and useful members of the society. Put differently, Social Studies aims at producing people who are able to handle some social issues relating to man's relationship with his physical and social environments (Onuoha, 2009). Lending credence, Bozimo and Ikwumelu (2011) argue that Social Studies provides opportunities for important social and moral issues such as attitudes to the destitute, poverty, corruption, racialism and different types of governments, cruelty to animals, children, brutality and injustice to be analyzed, internalized and applied. The question that comes to mind is, has this objective been achieved? A guide to answering the question is found in the interrogative statements of Okam in Meziobi (2013) as follows:

- a) What has been happening to poverty?
- b) What has been happening to unemployment?
- c) What has been happening to inequality?
- d) What gave rise to high profile corruption in the society?
- e) Why the high rate of insecurity?
- f) Why such intimidating injustice in the society?
- g) Why corrupt public officials are not properly prosecuted?

The dynamics of the society and the demands it has placed on individuals and the entire society requires the search for solutions to arrest certain prevailing circumstances and challenges that these demands have placed on existing conditions. New realities and pressing social needs have compelled very many nations across the world to adopt educational system that is functional (Shuaibu, 2011). The success of a nation is dependent upon how successful curriculum delivery in schools is. Social Studies was introduced into Nigerian schools system as a remedy to existing social problems prevalent in the society. It aims at studying social actions, relationship, addressing social needs and

problems. By and large, the opinions of Social Studies scholars are not different from the objectives of Social Studies in Nigeria. Thus; Dubey 1980, Aina, Adedoyin, Obilo, Ahmadu (1982), Corbin NERDC (1983), Ikwumelu (2001) are of the same view that is based on the rationale for the introduction of Social Studies in Nigeria. The objectives of the Social Studies programme may be broadly outlined as follows.

1. To create an increasing awareness and understanding of our evolving physical and social environment.
2. To develop a capacity to learn and to acquire certain skills including not only those of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and of calculation but also those of hands and head.
3. Ensure the acquisitions of the body of relevant knowledge and information, which is an essential prerequisite to personal development as well as to a positive contribution to the betterment of mankind.
4. To develop a sympathetic appreciation of the diversity and interdependence of all members of the local community, and the wider national and international communities.
5. Develop in the students, positive spirit of togetherness, comradeship and cooperation towards healthy nation
6. Promotion of understanding of social problems of their locality
7. Promotion of the ability to think reflectively
8. Creation of awareness that discipline is essential for an orderly society.
9. Demonstration of flexibility and willingness to accept necessary changes within a system.
10. The promotion of effective and active citizenship.

Attitudes and values are also directed, less at rational knowledge and more at the affective domain - realm of emotions and feelings that

will aid the development of reasoned commitment to public values of the society. Shuaibu (2015) put that attitudes and values are among the most vital outcomes of learning in Social Studies, because they are important in determining how the student reacts to situations, and also what he seeks in life. They are also the mediators of responses and act as motivational forces. He explained that Attitude has three interrelated components, cognitive (information), affective (feelings), and an action- tendency (behavior predisposition). Thus when the attitudes that children and youth should learn in school have been identified, and agreed on, a programme of instruction can be organized that will result in the efficient learning of attitudes.

The role of Social Studies in addressing a failed nation like Nigeria could be better appreciated when one considers its objective, content and methodology vis-a vis the goals and objectives as derived from the National Educational as contained in the Social Studies Curriculum framework.

The aims and objectives of Social Studies in Nigeria as derived from the National Education Philosophy is:

- The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity
- The inculcation of the right type of values and attitude, for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society
- The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around and
- The acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competences both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society (FRN, 2004).

Based on this, it is clear that these aims and objectives of Social Studies constitute essential conditions for turning around the fortune of the society and for the development and building of any nation. Indeed, as stated in the educational philosophy of Nigeria, all instruction in Social

Studies is geared towards inculcating in the students the following values:

- Faith in man's ability to make rational decisions
- Moral and spiritual values inter-personal and human relations
- Shared responsibility for the common good of society and the;
- Promotion of the emotional, physical and psychological health of all children (FRN, 2004).

Acquisition of these values and codes of conduct are necessary for the reduction of social vices in the society. The formidable task for combating social problems in Nigeria certainly requires an informed and effective citizen. Conscious efforts are needed to produce such because citizens are made, not born. As a citizenship transmitter, Social Studies curriculum plays a significant role of educating the students in harmonious living and can inculcate democratic ideas and rational decision making as an effective student.

It is based on these goals that the objectives of Social Studies were designed. According to Ololobou (2004) a typical Social Studies programme must encompass four cardinal objectives, Viz: the environment, the various skills, values and skills and emerging issues. Equally in his work, Ololobou (1999) in Shuaibu (2015) observed that Social Studies in Nigeria seeks to re-establish the pre-colonial African educational values, which includes honesty, hard-work, cooperation, hard work, open-mindedness, honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, participation, justice, fairness, tolerance, transparency, courage, mutual cooperation and conformity to traditional social order. Definitely, these laudable goals and objectives of teaching Social Studies in our institutions are hinged on the National philosophy of Nigeria and National Goals of Education as stated in (FRN, 2004)

- i) A free and democratic society'
- ii) A just and egalitarian society
- iii) A great and dynamic economy
- iv) A united, strong and self-reliant, nation



v) A land of full opportunities for all its citizenry.

In addition to these, its introduction was designed to develop basic skills that are essential to the healthy development of the ideals of democracy such as thinking and creative thinking among others. (Aina, Adedoyin, Obilo and Ahmadu (1982), assert that these skills are accomplished through learning experiences which involve problem-solving, critical thinking. Social Studies provide these opportunities. Above all, the National Policy on Education (2004) stipulates that the quality of instruction at all levels of Nigerian education system must be geared towards inculcating the following values in learners.

1. Respect for the worth and dignity of the individuals.
2. Faith in man's ability to make rational decisions.
3. Moral and spiritual values in inter-personal and human relations
4. Shared responsibility for common good of society.
5. Promotion of the emotional, physical and psychological health of all children.

Social Studies objectives are derived from the National Educational objectives and are aimed at the realization of the aspirations of the national education objectives. It was introduced to achieve such goals as national consciousness, national unity, development of positive attitudes towards democratic values and effective citizenship among others. Thus, Social Studies Education, based on its objective was introduced as the most adequate subject for the realization of the national educational objective at all levels of our education system.

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### **Concluding Remarks**

Teach a child the way he should go, whenever he is old, he will not depart from it. Also in academic parlance, learning is a change in behavior resulting from experience. The ontology and epistemology of Social Studies Education position the discipline as most favorable for this enterprise. However, Social Studies must be weaned from some of its infantile disposition that has affected the realization of its noble objectives over the years. The onus of social engineering and re-engineering lying on social studies is a challenging task. Social Studies by its mandate is the most complex discipline among its contemporaries. In fact, the pragmatic realization of the objectives of other subjects in the curricular of schools is contingent on the efficiency of Social Studies Education. It is in this context that the national goal of Social Studies Education is synonymous with the national goals of education. Hence, greater priority needs to be given to Social Studies Education in terms of funding and remuneration to make it more attractive. Teachers training and retraining in relation to the methodology and goals of Social Studies Education must be given priority.

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