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## SOCIAL STUDIES AS A TOOL FOR ATTAINMENT OF TRUE FEDERALISM IN NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*This study appraised Social Studies as tool for the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria: Implication for Social Studies Students, University of Jos. The researcher formulated 4 objectives for the study. To pursue the objectives, 4 research questions were formulated to guide the study with 1 null hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of significance. Survey research design was adopted for the study with a structured questionnaire titled "Social Studies for True Federalism in Nigeria Questionnaire (SSTFNQ) as an instrument for data collection. The population of this study consisted of all Undergraduates and Postgraduates Social Studies students of University of Jos. The population is made up of 511 students with 253 females and 258 males from which samples were randomly selected for data collection, analysis and inferences drawn on the entire population. The researcher used the entire 104 three hundred level students as sample for the study with 60 males and 44 females. Simple percentage was used to answer research questions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used for testing of hypothesis. The study found out that certain factors like*

*corruption, bad leadership, greediness, ethnicity, intolerance among others are militating against the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria. It also found that effective citizenship can help in attainment of true federalism in Nigeria and this can be done through effective curriculum implementation of Social Studies for citizenship by teachers. The study concluded that Nigeria is not practicing true federalism in the real sense. The study recommended among others that Social Studies should be considered the right avenue for the propagation of Citizenship Education hence be given special attention in the school curriculum.*

**Keywords:** Attainment, True federalism, Social Studies

### **Introduction**

Nigeria is a political entity which comprises of diverse ethnic and cultural diversities with some ethnic constituents been considered larger than others, this leads to the unavoidable fear of domination of the minority by the majority group. This statement is a clear reflection of reality in Nigeria as can be seen in the multi ethnic and multi cultural nature of the country. Nigeria, by all standards, is a large country geographically and ethnographically with a land mass of 123,768 km<sup>2</sup> and over 250 ethnic nationalities numbering over 180 million people as projected by the 2006 census (Ukoima (2015).

Federalism can simply be seen as a political process that involves the coming together of different autonomous geopolitical entities to form a more formidable national entity serving certain powers to a central authority to administer the entire federation. It is the system of national government in which power is shared between a central authority and a number of regions with delimited self-governing authority. Federalism as a system of government was adopted for Nigeria in 1954 by the Littleton constitution. After then, with the passing time, a number of problems became evident in the practice of federalism in Nigerian. Ukoima (2015) observed that, one thing is clear in a federal

system of government, the tiers of government ought to share political power as expressly spelt out in the constitution.

It is very unfortunate that, the current foundation and principles on which Nigerian constitution has operated over the years particularly since the advent of democracy has not in any way reflected a true federalism in its practical sense. Enu and Odey (2017) stated that presently, Nigeria has a strong centre and weak states and the states have become administrative units of the federal government. This means that the relationship between the centre and the states still reflects the military command structure, an unwelcome legacy of the military administration. The states are so weak that none of them enjoys fiscal independence from the centre. The federal government pays the piper and is happily dictating the tune to the states. The states are so weak and so generally impoverished that they have no capacity even to negotiate meaningfully with the centre. None or most of the states as it is now can generate enough internal revenue to prosecute any appreciable social and economic development. Instead of pillars, the states have become a burden on the federation. This present situation has affected and if not checked with research of this nature will continue to affect meaningful development of our dear country Nigeria. This problem has become so worrisome that the researcher asked pertinent question of how will Nigeria achieve true federalism?

It is a truism that this anomaly can be blamed on poor intellectual foundation of the ruling class. It is the opinion of the researcher that if the Nigerian children are given education that is socially relevant, they become well oriented towards national issues and they would grow to become altruistic, patriotic and selfless advocates of national well being. Such a politically socialized citizen would be armed with all the requisite skills for effective citizen. A well-educated and effective citizen would insist on the implementation of international best practices in the political affairs of his country in the areas of democratic principles and system of government like federalism. Enu and Odey (2017) lamented that events of the recent past have indicated that Nigeria

is facing the threat of losing its much cherished sense of nationhood and political culture.

It is against this background that the researcher is of the opinion that true federalism in Nigeria can only be attained through education curricula impetus in Social Studies. Education has been described as a potent instrument for national development. It is an instrument for social reconstruction and national development. Education is the aggregate of all the processes by which an individual young or adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviours which are of positive values to the society in which he or she lives (Alberta, 2010). This statement implies that education should be socially relevant thus; an educated or an individual who went or is going through Education should possess distinct qualities of being responsible and responsive to social issues. It also means that education is a fundamental agent of change that gradually transforms, refines and civilizes people in the society. From the foregoing, one can aptly go with education as that which fits a man to perform justly and skillfully in all offices of life, public or private for the development of the society.

Every society uses education as a relevant instrument for effecting desirable social, economic, political as well as technological changes for societal development. In a bid to achieve the desired changes some subject curricula were infused into the educational system to be taught to learners, Social Studies inclusive which forms the crux of this discussion. The inclusion of Social Studies into the Nigerian school curriculum was part of the general culture and values response to the problem of neglect of social culture and values (Mezieobi, 2012). Okam (2010) and Azikiwe (2012) asserts that, the importance of Social Studies as a subject area has the potentials for inculcating the right attitude to study of man and deal with all aspects of man life in the totality of the environment. This statement means that, the development associated with the National Policy On Education for giving Social Studies a pride of place is a right step in the right direction with citizenship Education as the backbone of the subject. Mezieobi

(2013) sees it as the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote effective citizenry. This implies that Social Studies provides a coordinated, systematic study of man in his total environment drawing up its contents from disciplines like Economic, History, Geography, Anthropology, Archaeology, Law, Political Science, Religion Psychology and Sociology as well as the natural sciences. Ololobou (2004) conceptualized Social Studies as “an organized integrated study of man and his physical and social environment emphasizing the cognition, functional skills and desirable attitudes and actions for the purpose of producing an effective citizenry.” According to Famwang, Bozimo and Irmiya (2009), Social Studies by nature is a compendium of all aspects of knowledge. This means that, a person who passes through Social Studies will definitely acquire relevant values, skills, attitudes and knowledge (VASK) necessary for effective citizenship in a democratic society like Nigeria.

Kazi (2017) further sees Social Studies as an integrated discipline by nature that has a belief on the holistic nature of knowledge and work towards the interrelatedness of it to make man think systematically, creatively and analytically before making rational decisions. Kazi further stated that, Social Studies is a problem-oriented subject that has a belief on the anthropocentric study of man which can be seen as a broad and applied field of study that derives its *raison d'être* from the social sciences but with different orientations. Similarly, Odogbor (2010) views Social Studies as “an integrated field of study that attempts to study man in-depth within the ramifications of his dynamic environments as well as equipping him with positive knowledge, attitudes, values and adaptive interactive skills for the purpose of producing a socio-culturally competent, humane and effective citizenry who can contribute positively to the good of the society”.

To Nwaubani (2015), Social Studies as a course of study is essentially meant to produce society devoid of selfishness, bad leadership, corruption, callousness, greediness, violence, lopsidedness, cheating, embezzlement, resources

mismanagement and other social vices that are antithetic to the communal living and peaceful coexistence of human society. This also can only be achieved in Nigeria and world over when majority of the citizenry are patriotic. This implies that, the factors listed above are inimical to the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria and if not check or reverse through Social Studies, no meaningful economic and political development can be attained. One can therefore conceive Social Studies as a multi disciplinary and integrated course of study aimed at educating the youths on man in his total environment, in order to equip them with appropriate skills, values, attitudes and knowledge necessary for effective citizenship using the process of inquiry.

However, certain factors have continued to militate against Social Studies objectives achievement. This is manifested in the loss of cultural values, disregard or abuse of human rights, moral decadence, corruption, social uprisings among many other social evils in the world generally and Nigeria in particular. This paper therefore, is a researcher's attempt to appraise the contents of Social Studies, to determine the extent to which Social Studies can help in attaining true federalism and ex-ray the roles of university of Jos Social Studies Students in the process of building true federalism in Nigeria through Social Studies.

This study is motivated by the persistent failure of the Nigerian government to practice true federalism. This is manifested in the strongly centralized powers in the federal government leading to weak powers at the state and local government levels. The federal government pays the piper and is happily dictating the tune to the states. The states are so weak and so generally impoverished that they have no capacity even to negotiate meaningfully with the centre. None or most of the states as it is now can generate enough internal revenue to prosecute any appreciable social and economic development. Instead of pillars, the states have become a burden on the federation. This present situation has affected and if not check with research of this nature will continue to affect meaningful development of our dear country Nigeria. This problem has become so worrisome that the

researcher asked pertinent question of how will Nigeria achieve true federalism?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The aim of this study is to appraise the relevance or role of Social Studies in the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives are:

- I. to examine the factors militating against the attainment of True federalism in Nigeria
- ii. to determine the extent of the relationship between true federalism and effective citizenship.
- iii. to determine the role of Social Studies in attaining true federalism in Nigeria
- iv. to examine the role of University of Jos Students in handling Social Studies for True Federalism in Nigeria

### **Research Questions**

For easy data collection and analysis, the researcher postulated the following research questions to guide the study:

- i. What are the factors militating against the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria?
- ii. to what extent can effective citizenship helps in the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria?
- iii. what are the roles of Social Studies in the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria?
- iv. what are the roles of University of Jos students in handling Social Studies for true federalism in Nigeria?

### **Hypothesis**

The researcher postulated one Null hypothesis to be tested in the course of the study at 0.05 level of significance.

There is no significant relationship between attainment of true federalism and effective Citizenship.

## Methods

The descriptive survey was adopted for the study. This is because information obtained from the sampled population will be used to generalize on the entire population. The population of this study consisted of all Undergraduates and Postgraduates Social Studies students of University of Jos. The population was made up of 511 students with 253 females and 258 males from which samples were randomly selected for data collection, analysis and inferences drawn on the entire population. The researcher used the entire 104 three hundred level students as sample for the study with 60 males and 44 females. The instrument used for data collection was a self-developed structured Questionnaire titled "Social Studies for True Federalism in Nigeria Questionnaire (SSFNQ)". The questionnaire was designed in a 5point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D) and Undecided (UD). For the purpose of data coding and analysis, Strongly Agree (SA) and Agree (A) will be tagged positive Response (PR) while Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D) will be tagged Negative Response (NR). The questionnaire was made up of 14 items Content and face validity of the instrument was determined by experts in Social Studies and Test and Measurement units. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Kuder Richardson method of K-R 20 with a reliability coefficient of 0.88 obtained which was considered reliable enough. Simple percentage was used to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis.

## Results

**Table1: Population Distribution of the study**

S/N	Level	Male	Female	Total
1.	100	67	65	132
2.	200	65	60	125
3.	300	60	44	104
4.	400	56	57	113
5.	800	27	10	37
	<b>Total</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>511</b>

Source: Various level course representatives, 2021.



Table one above shows that the population of this study was made up of 258 males and 253 females from 100,200,300,400 and 800 levels of Social Studies students, University of Jos. This implies that, the population of males is more than females.

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents or Sample of the Study**

S/N	Respondents	Total	Percentage
1.	Males	60	57.7%
2.	Females	44	42.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table two above shows that, there were 104 respondents with 57.7% of respondents as males with 60 students while, 42.3% of respondents were females with 44 students. This implies that there are more males than females in the sample of the study.

**Research Question one:** What are the factors Militating against true federalism in Nigeria?

**Table 3: Responses on Factors Militating against True federalism in Nigeria**

S/N	Items	PR	% PR	NR	%NR	Total %
1.	Corruption and greediness impedes true federalism in Nigeria	78	75	26	25	100
2.	Intolerance and bad leadership can affect realization of true	85	81.7	19	18.3	100
3.	Violence and mismanagement of resources has bedeviled true federalism in Nigeria	90	86.5	14	13.5	100
4.	Ethnic and cultural diversities are affecting true sense of federalism in Nigeria	58	55.8	46	44.2	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table three above reveals that 75% of respondents attributed corruption and greed as factors that impedes true federalism with 25% responding negatively in that direction. It also reveals that 81.6% of them responded positively to bad leadership and intolerance as factors affecting the realization of true federalism while 18.3% responded negatively in that direction. Similarly, 86.5% attributed violence and mismanagement of resources as bedeviling true federalism in Nigeria while 13.5% responded contrary. Ethnicity and cultural diversities were also factors affecting true federalism as 55.8% of respondents responded in that direction while 44.2% responded negatively. This implies that, corruption, greediness, intolerance, bad leadership, violence, mismanagement of resources, ethnic and cultural diversities are major factors militating against practicing of true federalism in Nigeria.

**Research Question two:** To what extent can effective citizenship helps in attainment of true federalism in Nigeria?

**Table 4: Responses on how effective citizenship can help in attainment of true federalism in Nigeria**

S/N	Items	PR	% PR	NR	%NR	Total %
5.	Social Studies can help in the production of effective citizens	70	67.3	34	32.7	100
6.	Effective citizen education can result to good leadership in Nigeria	60	57.7	44	42.3	100
7.	A good citizen is devoid of selfishness, greediness and corruption	58	55.8	46	44.2	100
8.	Hardwork, dedication and selflessness are qualities of good citizens	65	62.5	39	37.5	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4 above shows that 67.3% responded positively that Social Studies can help in producing effective citizens with high potential of practicing true federalism while 32.7% responded negatively in that direction. Similarly, 57.7% were of the opinion that effective citizenship education can result to good leadership while 42.3% responded contrary. 55.8% of respondents claim that a good citizen is devoid of selfishness, greed and corruption while 44.2% responded in another direction. 62.5% agreed that hardwork, dedication and selflessness are qualities of good citizens necessary for true federalism while 37.5% responded negatively. This implies that effective citizenship can help in attainment of true federalism in Nigeria as good leadership, hardwork dedication, selflessness among others is qualities of an effective citizen.

**Research Question three:** What are the roles of Social Studies in the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria?

**Table 5: Responses on the role of Social Studies in the attainment of True Federalism in Nigeria**

S/N	Items	PR	% PR	NR	%NR	Total %
9.	The integrated nature of Social Studies can help in achieving true federalism in Nigeria	54	51.9	50	48.1	100
10.	Social Studies equip learners with skills necessary for living in a democratic society like Nigeria	69	66.4	35	33.6	100
11.	True federalism in Nigeria can only be attained through effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum	95	91.3	9	8.7	100

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Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 5 above shows that, when the integrated course of study like Social Studies is properly taught with 51.9% of respondents agreed while 48.1% disagreed. In the same manner 66.4% of respondents agreed that Social Studies when properly taught, has the potentials of equipping citizens with skills necessary for effective living in a democratic society like Nigeria, while 33.6% responded in a negative direction. Similarly, 91.3% responded that true federalism in Nigeria can only be attained through effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum while 8.7% of the respondents responded negatively to that effect.

**Research Question four:** What are the roles of University of Jos students in handling Social Studies for true federalism in Nigeria?

**Table 6: Responses on the roles of University of Jos Students in handling Social Studies for True federalism in Nigeria**

S/N	Items	PR	% PR	NR	%NR	Total %
12	Effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum lies in the hands of Social Studies Teachers	100	96.2	4	3.8	100
13	Employing new and practical methods of teaching Social Studies will enhance understanding of its content	98	94.2	6	5.8	100
14	Effective choice and usage of instructional materials could help greatly in the achievement of Social Studies objective	72	69.2	32	30.8	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table six above shows that effective implementation of Social Studies lies solely in the hands of teachers as 96.2% of them responded positively while 3.8% responded negatively. Moreover, respondents also emphasis employment of new teaching methods,

enhancing contents, choice and effective utilization of instructional materials among others as effective ways of achieving Social Studies objectives.

### **Hypothesis Testing**

**Table 7: HO1: There is no significant relationship between attainment of true federalism and effective Citizenship**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>L.O.S</b>	<b>T-calculated</b>	<b>T-tabulated</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>300 level stds Test</b>	2	0.05 Two -tailed	3.971	2.920	Rejected

Source: SPSS, 2021

The table 7 above shows that the calculated value (3.971) is greater than the table value (2.920), the researcher rejects the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between attainment of true federalism and effective Citizenship and uphold the alternative hypothesis. This means that there is a significant relationship between attainment of true federalism and effective Citizenship. This implies that true federalism can only be attained in Nigeria when effective citizens are produced through Social Studies.

### **Discussions**

This study found out empirically that certain factors like corruption, bad leadership, greediness, ethnicity, intolerance among others are militating against the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria. This corroborate with the findings of Nwaubani (2015) who listed these factors as inimical to practice of true federalism. This is evident in Table three that 75% of respondents attributed corruption and greed as factors that impedes true federalism with 25% responding negatively in that direction. It also reveals that 81.6% of them responded positively to bad leadership and intolerance as factors affecting the

realization of true federalism while 18.3% responded negatively in that direction. Similarly, 86.5% attributed violence and mismanagement of resources as bedeviling true federalism in Nigeria while 13.5% responded contrary. Ethnicity and cultural diversities were also factors affecting true federalism as 55.8% of respondents responded in that direction while 44.2% responded negatively.

The study also revealed that, true federalism can be attained through the production of effective citizens. This is in agreement with the findings of Udoh in Mezeiobi (2012) Citizenship Education can be define as a body of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, which must be inculcated into the citizens for the wellbeing of the polity and nation. This definition implies that Citizenship Education is an education required for effective and orderly living in a democratic society like Nigeria. Table 4 shows that 67.3% responded positively that Social Studies can help in producing effective citizens with high potential of practicing true federalism while 32.7% responded negatively in that direction. Similarly, 57.7% were of the opinion that effective citizenship education can result to good leadership while 42.3% responded contrary. 55.8% of respondents claim that a good citizen is devoid of selfishness, greed and corruption while 44.2% responded in another direction. 62.5% agreed that hardwork, dedication and selflessness are qualities of good citizens necessary for true federalism while 37.5% responded negatively.

The study also revealed that true federalism in Nigeria can be attained through effective implementation of the integrated nature of Social Studies in Nigeria. It also found out the onus is on the teachers to properly explore new methods of teaching, make appropriate choice of instructional materials and properly refine contents for effective pedagogy of the course content of the subject. This is evident in Table 5 shows that, when the integrated course of study like Social Studies is properly taught with 51.9% of respondents agreed while 48.1% disagreed. In the same manner 66.4% of respondents agreed that Social Studies when properly taught, has the potentials of equipping citizens with skills necessary for effective living in a democratic society like Nigeria,

while 33.6% responded in a negative direction. Similarly, 91.3% responded that true federalism in Nigeria can only be attained through effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum while 8.7% of the respondents responded negatively to that effect.

### **Conclusion**

Nigeria as a democratic nation is claiming to be practicing federalism but the type of Federalism it is practicing is not Federalism in the real sense of its meaning. Federalism is one form of government that supports the sharing of power between the central and state governments with no interference of either of them in their affairs. True Federalism is not about the central government being more powerful than the state government even down to the distribution of wealth; this is because the powers of both the central and state governments stem from the constitution, where their autonomies are clearly spelt out. This study concludes that, this anomaly can be attributed to factors like corruption, bad leadership, greediness, ethnicity, intolerance among others are militating against the attainment of true federalism in Nigeria. However, true federalism can be attained in Nigeria when effective citizens are produced through effective and proper implementation of the integrated curriculum nature of Social Studies. As Social Studies teachers in training or practice therefore, the onus is on us to properly harness ways of practically teaching the subject in a worthwhile direction for the propagation of effective citizens with requisite skills necessary for realization of true federalism in Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

Nigerian government should practice true federalism as enshrined in the constitution as proposed by President Mohammadu Buhari for Local Government financial autonomy is the right step in the right direction. Similarly, Social Studies should be considered the right avenue for the propagation of Citizenship

Education hence be given special attention in the school curriculum. In addition, Social Studies Teachers should take into consideration all the domains of learning into consideration when planning a lesson for Social Studies class. There is need for content refinement of Social Studies with emphasis on those contents that will help in the production of effective citizenry. Moreover, only professionals in Social Studies with contents mastery and pedagogical competencies should be employed to teach Social Studies from primary to tertiary level. Lastly, there is need for organization of periodic seminars where Social Studies experts can have avenue for continues review of Social Studies aims, instructional materials, methods among others to avoid overflocking of old methods and materials.

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