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**SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS' PERCEPTUAL  
ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL STUDIES' ADEQUACY  
FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LEARNERS**

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**Abstract**

*The study investigated Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> learners. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. A validated and reliably (0.79) tested research instrument (Checklist on Social Studies Curriculum Adequacy for 21<sup>st</sup> Learners) was used for data gathering. One research question and hypothesis guided the study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that the Social Studies curriculum was adequate for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners as assessed by Social Studies teachers (Weighted mean = 1.88). It was also reported that there was no significant difference in Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners based on gender ( $t = 914$ ;  $df = 125$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). It was concluded that Social Studies curriculum was adequate for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. It was recommended that teachers should adopt appropriate teaching strategies to help in the effective teaching of Social Studies.*

**Keywords:** *Curriculum, Social Studies, adequacy, 21<sup>st</sup> century learners*

### **Introduction**

The agitation of African scholars and elites for restructuring in the education system of the African countries led to the Mombassa Social Studies conference of 1968 which was attended by eleven African countries, including Nigeria. The conference emphasized the urgent necessity for education in Africa to relate specifically to the need and culture of Africans through Social Studies (Obadiora, 2019). In pursuance of the resolution, the conference came up with a Social Studies curriculum which was accepted by all for adoption to suit the individual needs of participating countries (Akinlaye, 1981).

The resolution of the conference also led to the Nigerian National Curriculum Conference of 1969, organized by Nigeria Educational Research Council (NERC) at Lagos. The conference came up with the adoption of the National Policy on Education (NPE) which was first published in 1977 (Federal Ministry of Education, 2003). The important feature of the policy was its outline of a philosophy for Nigerian education which included the development of the individual into sound and effective citizen. It also included full integration of the individual into the community, provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country and consideration of a number of subjects that can help to achieve the design (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). One of the subjects of prime importance considered was Social Studies. The term Social Studies denote an integrated and unified subject that attempts to examine and improve upon the political, socio-cultural, religious and economic life of the people (Obadiora, 2019).

The Nigerian educational policystates the guidelines, objectives and strategies for achieving the national education goals in Nigeria. Among the ways of achieving the above targeted goal is through Social Studies which is one of the core subjects in the curriculum for primary education and junior secondary which,

if taught properly, would help in reaching the stated goals (Gumbi& Bashar, 2021). In order to instill the proper values, critical thinking abilities, and life skills necessary to lead a successful life and advance the nation's sustainable growth, Social Studies was incorporated into the school curriculum (Jekayinfa, Mofoluwawo & Oladiran, 2011). The inclusion of Social Studies in the curriculum right from primary to secondary classes signifies the importance of the subject and the role it plays in a student's life (Obafemi, 2022).

Social Studies is a subject that must be offered by all learners both at the primary and junior secondary school levels (Basic education level). Social Studies is a unique and versatile subject in that, it comprises several subjects that are taught interactively. Its importance cannot be over-emphasized since it forms the basis of subjects like History, Geography, Political Science and Sociology (Abdullahi, 2012).

Many curricula have been developed by educators and curriculum planners with the goal of supplying students with the knowledge they will need to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. The learning environment at school should equip students to handle the growing problems brought on by a globalised world (Bello, 2021). In this sense, Social Studies is a good subject. Training Nigerian young to contribute to the nation is the main goal of Social Studies' entrance into the educational system in that country (Adesina, 2011; Opoh, Edinyang, & Ogbaji, 2014). As a result, periodic events at various levels such as national curriculum conferences, seminars, research, symposia, talks, and workshops are arranged. Social Studies has a social context. This necessitates that the curriculum reflect the issues, aspirations, and desires of a particular society.

It has been noted that societal issues and aspirations have always shaped the nature of Social Studies curricula and, of course, the goals that the curriculum is meant to achieve. Despite the usefulness of Social Studies and how fundamental it is to the educational process, many students lack the proper ideals, as well as a sense of national awareness and unity (Bello, 2021). According to Opoh, Edinyang, and Ogbaji (2014), Social Studies is

a good subject, but the curriculum needs to be reviewed in order to develop the proper understanding that students will need to succeed in the 21st century (Adesina, 2011). The development of a person's desirable skills, knowledge, values, and attitude to enable them to adapt effectively in their environment is the hallmark of Social Studies education (Egharevba & Olatunde, 2019). The whole world has become a global village, and with that comes issues. We now live in a globalised atmosphere. It then becomes a challenge for students to gain the knowledge and abilities needed to succeed in the globalised world. The Social Studies curriculum's suitability as a means of educating people for survival in the twenty-first century will speak volumes.

Numerous studies on Social Studies have been conducted (Sofadekan, 2012; Yewarun, Keene, Baamphatlha & Moffat, 2013; Jekayinfa, 2014; Samwimbila, 2017; Bello, 2021; Gumbi & Bashar, 2021; Alhajri, 2022), but none of these studies specifically looked at the suitability of the Social Studies curriculum for students in the 21st century, particularly in Ilorin Metropolis. This is the knowledge gap that the study aimed to close.

The gender of the Social Studies teachers is another factor that this study is interested in. One significant factor that could affect teachers' evaluations is the teachers' gender (Yusuf, Bello & Obafemi, 2020). The characteristics that set femininity and masculinity apart and identify them are referred to as gender. Among these characteristics could be biological sex, being male or female (Kevin, 2017). Numerous studies have been done on gender (Nnamani & Oyibe, 2016; Pirmohamed, Debowska & Boduszek, 2017; Lori, Michelle, Glenda & Brian, 2019), but none of the ones mentioned here looked at how gender affected teachers' evaluations of the Social Studies curriculum for 21st-century learners.

Students of today are deprived of their tomorrow if they are exposed to the knowledge of yesterday. For students to succeed in the 21st century, what they were taught in earlier centuries could no longer be applicable or sufficient. The information and abilities that are relevant now are evolving quickly in the century we currently live in. It is important to consider whether the Social

Studies curriculum is still suitable for students in the twenty-first century because Social Studies as a subject was created to address the issues, desires, and aspirations of the learners. Hence, this study examined Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21st learners. It also examined the significant difference in their assessment based on gender.

### **Research Question**

What is Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> learners?

### **Hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> learners based on gender.

### **Methods**

The study used a descriptive survey research design. The teachers of Social Studies in Ilorin Metropolis made up the study's population. 127 Social Studies teachers were chosen using a simple random sampling technique. Data were gathered through an instrument titled Checklist on Social Studies Curriculum Adequacy for 21st Century Learners (CSSCA) adapted from Bello (2021). CSSCA consists of two sections. The respondents' demographic information, such as gender, is gathered in Section A. 34 Social Studies curricular components are found in Section B. There are two categories on the checklist: Adequate (A) and Not Adequate (NA). Social Studies lecturers (experts) from the University of Ilorin's Department of Social Sciences Education validated the research tool. To test CSSCA for reliability, it was administered twice to 25 Social Studies teachers who were not part of the sample. The two administrations were done in an interval of two weeks. Data from the two administrations were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The reliability coefficient of 0.79 was

obtained. The data gathering lasted for four weeks. Inferential statistics of the independent sample t-test was employed to test the hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance, while descriptive statistics (frequency count, percentage, and mean score) were utilized to respond to the research question that was suggested.

## Results

**Research Question:** What is Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners?

**Table 1: Table showing Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners**

S/N	Social Studies curriculum content	Adequate	Not adequate	Mean
1	Social Studies Curriculum Contents Adequate	102(80.3)	25(19.7)	1.80
2	Meaning, scope, and nature of Social Studies	96(75.6)	31(24.4)	1.76
3	Objective and importance of Social Studies	100(78.7)	27(21.3)	1.79
4	Physical Environment	105(82.7)	22(17.3)	1.83
5	Social Environment	108(85.0)	19(15.0)	1.85
6	Accident in the home and the school	104(81.9)	23(18.1)	1.82
7	Socialization: Agents and processes	115(90.6)	12(9.4)	1.91
8	Meaning, Components, and Features of Culture	113(89.0)	14(11.0)	1.89
9	Meaning, Need, and Importance of National Unity and Integration	108(85.0)	19(15.0)	1.85
10	Social Groups	113(89.0)	14(11.0)	1.89
11	Group Behaviour	111(87.4)	16(12.6)	1.87
12	Marriage	119(93.7)	8(6.3)	1.94
13	Drugs/Drug Abuse/Drug Trafficking	112(88.2)	15(11.8)	1.88
14	Poverty	116(91.3)	11(8.7)	1.91
15	Corruption	113(89.0)	14(11.0)	1.89
16	Cultism	111(87.4)	16(12.6)	1.87
17	Modern Science and Technology and societal Development	112(88.2)	15(11.8)	1.88
18	Communication	115(90.6)	12(9.4)	1.91
19	Information and Communication Technology	111(87.4)	16(12.6)	1.87

20	Living together in the family	111(87.4)	16(12.6)	1.87
21	Adornments	114(89.8)	13(10.2)	1.90
22	Religion	105(82.7)	22(17.3)	1.83
23	Our school: Members of the School Community	101(79.5)	26(20.5)	1.80
24	Home appliances: Dangers in the wrong use of appliances	104(81.9)	23(18.1)	1.82
25	Accident in the School	108(85.0)	19(15.0)	1.85
26	Savings and ways of Saving	111(87.4)	16(12.6)	1.87
27	Meaning and Agents of Transportation	112(88.2)	15(11.8)	1.88
28	Harmful Traditional Practices	117(92.1)	10(7.9)	1.92
29	Population	119(93.7)	8(6.3)	1.94
30	Family life Education	117(92.1)	10(7.9)	1.92
31	Peace	118(92.9)	9(7.1)	1.93
32	Conflicts	121(95.3)	6(4.7)	1.95
33	National Economy and their sectors	122(96.1)	5(3.9)	1.96
34	Economic Reform Measures in Nigeria	124(97.6)	3(2.4)	1.98
<b>Weighted Mean</b>				<b>1.88</b>

Adequate: 1.00 – 1.49      1.50 – 2.00

Table 1 shows Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. The weighted mean is 1.88 which is a numeric indicator that the Social Studies curriculum was adequate for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners as assessed by Social Studies teachers.

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference in Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> learners based on gender.

**Table 2: Difference in Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> learners based on gender**

Gender	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig	Remark
Male	58	64.64	7.73	.914	125	.362	Not significant
Female	69	63.14	10.21				
Total	127						

Table 2 shows the difference in Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners based on gender. There was no significant

difference in Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners based on gender ( $t = 914$ ;  $df = 125$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). The hypothesis is therefore not rejected in the light of the result since the significant value is greater than 0.05. This implies that gender had no significant influence on Social Studies teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners.

### **Discussions**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the opinions of Social Studies educators regarding the appropriateness of the Social Studies curriculum for students in the 21st century. According to the opinions of those that are teaching Social Studies, the outcomes of the study showed that the curriculum for Social Studies was suitable for students learning in the 21st century. This suggests that the curriculum for Social Studies, as it currently stands, is sufficient enough for students in the 21st century. This finding is consistent with the findings of Bello (2021), who demonstrated that the entirety of the upper basic school Social Studies curriculum was very adequate in the efficient teaching of moral acts. The results of this study provided support for the findings of Alhajri (2022), which indicated a level of satisfaction with Social Studies education that was somewhere in the middle.

According to another finding of the study, there was not a significant difference between the ways in which male and female Social Studies teachers evaluated the suitability of Social Studies curriculum for students learning in the 21st century. This finding provided support for the conclusion reached by Alhajri (2022), which revealed that there was no significant effect of teachers' gender on the degree to which they were satisfied with the Social Studies curriculum.

### **Conclusion**

According to the opinions of Social Studies instructors, the outcomes of the survey indicated that the Social Studies curriculum was suitable for students learning in the 21st century.



In addition, it was found that the gender of the Social Studies teachers had no bearing on their evaluation of whether or not the Social Studies curriculum adequately prepares students for the 21st century.

### **Recommendations**

In order to facilitate the efficient instruction of Social Studies, there is an urgent requirement for the implementation of suitable instructional methodologies. It is important that educators receive financial support to attend professional development opportunities like seminars and workshops when it comes to effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum. Social Studies teachers should also be trained on how to facilitate teaching instruction using technology as that is the order of the day in this 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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