

## **THE CHALLENGES OF EVALUATING THE AFFECTIVE OUTCOME IN SOCIAL STUDIES WITHIN NIGERIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THE WAY FORWARD**

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### **Abstract**

*Evaluating the affective outcome in Social Studies is one of the criticisms against Nigerian education system. The major goal behind the teaching of Social Studies is that it is meant to foster affective concerns amongst learners. This paper described the place of evaluation in Social Studies instructions, the affective objectives of the Social Studies education, general principles guiding evaluation in Social Studies education. It also explained problems of evaluating the affective outcome in Social Studies education which include the expression of specific objective in lesson notes, teachers knowledge and application of the methods, influence of societal factors, the issues of subjectivity in the evaluation and the use of affective objectives evaluation result of Social Studies Education in the affective area should be utilized for many purposes in the Nigerian society such as decision making, job placement, promotion, certification or admission into institution of learning. No evaluation devices should be selected of evaluation until the purpose of evaluation has been carefully defined.*

*Keywords: Outcome, Social Studies, Nigerian Education System*

### **Introduction**

Bloom seemed to place the definition of affective opposite cognitive by associating the cognitive domain with thinking skills and the affective domain with emotions and feelings. One definition of the affective domain is that it is the internal part of a student that reflects the student's behaviour, conditions, principles and standards, more commonly known as his or her attitude, creativity, self-development and motivation. When instructors purposefully target the affective domain, students' value systems are being challenged and one's hopes modified.

Affective domain deals with the development of values, attitudes, habits, understanding, appreciation, interests, sentiments, taste, prejudices and various forms of psychological or emotional traits, Ringness (1997).

Social Studies possess very strong affective overtones, indeed, its curricular structures are meant to incorporate a substantial degree of programmes, which are indispensable for affective education. Although, Social Studies represents an entirely different curriculum philosophy when compared to the central issues involved in affective domain, it advocates a gospel, which is meant to cater for an individual's nature and interest.

### **The Place of Evaluation in Social Studies Instruction**

Instruction in Social Studies is essentially meant to enable the learner achieve objectives which are commonly categorized under four broad-heads, namely: knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (Okam, 2002).

The knowledge component is expected to enable the learner to acquire and understand specific pieces of information and ideas. The skills category is geared to assist the learner develop certain abilities in order to use the knowledge that has been acquired. The attitudes objective is meant to help the learner in an acquisition, development and acceptance of vital beliefs, interests, outlooks and dispositions. The values classification is oriented towards enabling the learner acquire deeply held commitments, supported when necessary, by appropriate action.

Evaluation in Social Studies is, therefore, necessary if instructions in the subject area are expected to enable the learner achieve the fore-going objectives. Indeed, evaluation is inevitable in teaching-learning situations in Social Studies because judgments need to be made, however simple or complex the considerations involved, about the learner exposed to the study area.

### **The Affective Objectives of the Social Studies Education**

Social Studies like many other school subjects has been introduced into the secondary school system to achieve some objectives in the affective area. For the primary schools, the subject was introduced among other things, to help the child inculcate national consciousness and national unity, become a good citizen capable of and willing to contribute to the development of the society and to inculcate (in him/her) the right types of values and attitudes (Core Curriculum for Primary Social Studies, 1984) in Okam (2002).

The objectives of Social Studies for the entire secondary school is to inculcate in the child positive attitude and appropriate values of honesty, integrity, hard work, fairness, justice and togetherness for the development of the nation.

In a similar tone, the objectives of the Social Studies curriculum for the N.C.E Programme state among others that the programme seek to:

"Prepare teachers who will inculcate in their pupils, rational adjustment to their physical and sound environment through the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, values, appreciation and skills necessary for developing social and civic responsibility" minimum standards for N.C.E Teachers (1990). In amplifying these objectives, Mezieobi (2005) rightly explains that the affective objectives as it relates to Social Studies, deals with the development in the learners, of those attitudes and values which promote harmonies, co-existence and effective social living.

The major goal behind the teaching of Social Studies is that it is meant to foster affective concerns amongst learners. This function of the subject area is expected to assist those individuals demonstrate affection in practical ways in terms of the

members of their society, country or even the world so long the said affection is psychological and intellectual defensible, Obilo (2004). These individuals will help to solve societal problems and create forum for human relationship.

Affective teaching is concerned with the development of needed values, attitudes, feelings, emotion or sentiments, appreciation, aspiration etc. Through affective teaching, we seek, in Social Studies to produce individual who prefer to do good rather than evil; who would prefer honesty, love, uprightness or probity, hardworking, punctuality, dedication, fairness, justice, beauty, truthfulness, etc to their opposites, Krathwohl in Anderson (1972).

### **General Principles Guiding Evaluation in Social Studies Education**

Affective domain has to do very largely with emotions and feelings Okam (2003). Affective domain in Social Studies is expected to alert and actually remind the individual human personality about his relationship to vast group of people from different tribes, race, religion and classes.

According to Ololobu (2004), it is extremely necessary for the professional Social Studies educator to be aware that measurement and evaluation in the area ought to be:

- Comprehensive
- Continuous and
- Cooperative

The behaviours which clients exhibit as a result of exposure to planned (sometimes unplanned) experiences constitute "learning outcomes." In Social Studies education, the measurement and evaluation of learning outcomes has to take cognizance or reflect the philosophy of the programme, covering fully its content which encompasses environmental cognition, skills for productive, functional behaviour and attitudes for effective citizenship. This is comprehensive measurement and evaluation.

Measurement and evaluation in Social Studies education must also be continuous that is, frequently and perhaps regularly too. According to Yolo (op cit) continuous evaluation (they actually used the term continuous assessment equating it with formative evaluation) ought to be:

- Diagnostic and guidance oriented
- Comprehensive and cumulative done using different techniques to enhance coverage of the domains of learning.

Finally, to measure and evaluate satisfactorily in Social Studies education it has to be done cooperatively. This requires the participation and input of the many stakeholders in the education and healthy development of learner co-teacher, parents, peers, supervisors and inspectors of schools etc. since learners are found in different settings (classrooms, playgrounds, laboratories, homes etc), while they progress through the education and evaluation of their learning outcomes, particularly in Social Studies, should be done cooperatively.

Measurement and evaluation in Social Studies should also be valid and reliable. According to Okam (1998) authorities endorse that the following general principles can provide a meaningful framework within which any ongoing evaluation process in Social Studies education may be viewed.

Firstly, the need to clarify and determine what is to be achieved in Social Studies always has priority in the evaluation process. The statement implies that no evaluation devices should be selected of evaluation until the purposes of evaluation has been carefully defined.

Secondly, there is a great need to elect evaluation techniques in the Social Studies in terms of the purposes to be served. This principle implies that when an aspect of a pupil's behaviour to be evaluated has been precisely defined, the evaluation techniques which is most suitable or appropriate for evaluating the aspect of that pupils behavior should be selected for use.

Thirdly, there is a need for an evaluation exercise in Social Studies education to be as comprehensive as possible. This need calls for an application of a variety of evaluation techniques. It does follow that no single evaluation techniques is adequate for appraising pupils' progress towards all of the important outcomes of instruction in Social Studies.

Fourthly, there is need to acknowledge, that a proper use of evaluation techniques in Social Studies education requires an awareness of their strengths as well as their limitations. Evaluation techniques vary from the fairly well developed measuring instruments to crude observational methods. All educational measuring instruments are not error-proof. Each is subject to one or more type of error.

#### **Some of the Shortcomings Associated with Evaluation Techniques**

1. Evaluation techniques are usually associated with sampling error
2. A source of errors is found in the evaluation instrument itself or in the process of using the instrument
3. A major source of error arises from improper interpretation of evaluation result
4. Another principle behind the issue of the evaluation process is that it represents a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

#### **Problems of Evaluating the Affective Outcome in Social Studies Education**

##### **❖ The expression of specific objective in lesson notes**

With regard to the expression of specific objectives by teachers and students' teachers in lesson notes, Tones and Anderson (1972) as cited in Ezegbe (2003) advocates that for the case of an adequacy of evaluation, specific objectives in the three domains shall be stated or expressed in terms of action verb that depict observable behaviour which the learner should exhibit at the end of the lesson, to show that learning and change in behaviour have occurred. According to him, they further recommend the verbs which indicate convert action like understand, learn, appreciate,

know, realize and verbs which do not denote actions that can be easily observed or measured, should be avoided.

Ezegbe (2003) as cited in Nwarime (2009) said that the reality of the situation, which constitute a big critical issue at that, is that both teachers and students' teachers find it difficult to get appropriate action verb for the expression of affective domain, particularly when testing of appreciation is involved. When certain verbs like tell, say, propose, explain are even judiciously used to express objectives in the affective domain, he said that some teachers have argued that since it is not easy to achieve affective objectives within a lesson period of forty-five minutes or even one hour, the issue of affective domain might as well be abounded.

#### ❖ **Teachers' Knowledge and Application of the Methods**

Many writers on methods of teaching and evaluation of Social Studies education according to Ezegbe as cited in Nwarime (2009) have stressed the necessity for the use of adequate methods and devices such as checklists, anecdotal records, rating scales, self-report inventories, interest inventories, observation, conferences, devices and logs, social distance scales and projective devices, in the evaluation of the affective traits acquired by the learner. He said that crucial question is "how many teachers know and actually employ these methods?" It is very unfortunate that teachers at the various levels of our educational system do not know these methods and cannot therefore employ them in their evaluation.

Uche (1980) reports that the supervision of the Teaching Practice of Associateship Standard of the University of Lagos in 1975 revealed that the teachers had difficulty in evaluating student outcome, particularly at the affective and psychomotor levels of achievement. Ezegbe (2003), in his paper titled: The Evaluation of the Affective Outcome of Social Studies Education; the realities of the case has had similar observations from the supervision of the teaching practice of degree and NCE students-teachers both regular and sandwich, at the Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri, with regard to evaluation in the affective area, the past ten years, said that if students'-teachers in institutions of higher learning do not know these methods and cannot apply them in training, one wonders how they can apply them in their teaching either in the primary or secondary school. He went further to say that this situation is very disturbing. Could it be said that teachers in the institution of higher learning do not sufficiently train the students to practice how to employ the methods or devices.

From a study carried out by Okoye (1998), it was found out that some of the reasons why teachers do not employ adequate evaluative methods for the affective domain include the following:

1. Their lack of competence in the development and employment of the test instruments
2. Heavy teaching load
3. High pupils/teacher ratio

4. Non utilization of the results of affective assessment in decision-making such as promotion and certification
5. Lack of enthusiasm on the part of the teachers about assessing the class for all affective purpose, and
6. Subjectivity in the ratings of affective behavioural traits.

He went further to say, in a situation where a teacher handles a class of between forty to fifty pupils in the primary school or between twenty-seven and thirty social studies lesson period in a week in the secondary school, it becomes very difficult for him to evaluate all the students in various aspects of affective behaviour, and maintain the record consistently. There is also the fact that in the school system in many states, the subject is allocated at most three periods a week, whereas the number of work to be covered in the year is very voluminous. In the struggle to cover what is indicated in the syllabus for the year, the teacher hardly considers it judicious to dabble into time-consuming teaching or evaluation methods since affective evaluation methods take much time to execute.

#### ❖ **Influence of Social Factors**

One major factor that does not make assessment in the affective area meaningful and worthwhile is the fact that such evaluation would not just reveal the effect of Social Studies education only. Since the learner is a member of a larger society, he is continuously being influenced by conditions, situation or vents in the society such as those in his family or immediate local community, the larger society, the mass media, as well as ethnic and religious considerations Ezegbe (2003). All these phenomena, impinge upon the learners character and behavioural patterns and it will not be easy to isolate and assess what actually impact or influence the teaching of Social Studies alone has on the learner.

#### ❖ **The Issues of Subjectivity in the Evaluation**

Evaluation in the affective area is highly subjective particularly if such methods or devices as observation, checklist, anecdotal records, diaries and logs, are involved, Ezegbe (2003). The teacher may not record very objectively all that he observes. There is the tendency for him to input motives to the actions of students or bring in personal feelings into the recording of his observation of students behaviour.

Furthermore, there are the questions of faking, where such devices or method like social distance scale, sociogram, questionnaire, interest inventory, self report inventor and projective techniques are employed Osakwe (2001). In these cases, there is a great degree of possibility that the learner who is involved in indicating his values, attitudes, feeling or disposition on paper may not sincerely fill or indicate what he actually feels. In some cases, there may be the tendency for the respondent to deceive or please the teacher by filling what he feels will please the teacher. In this case, the evaluation will not yield and true or reliable result.

There is also the fact that the values, attitudes, sentiments, prejudices, emotions and many other affective traits changes very rapidly. What a teacher discovers from his evaluation in the affective area today may become useless, untrue or misleading the following day.

### **The Use of Affective Objectives Evaluation Result in Nigerian Situation**

According to Ezegebe (2003), one important consideration that deters teachers from seriously addressing their minds to the issue of realistic or meaningful evaluation of the outcome of Social Studies education in the affective area is the painful reality that the result of such evaluation is never utilized for any purpose in the Nigerian society. He said, it is not used for purpose of decision-making, job placement, promotion, certification or admission into institutions of learning. Some teachers feel that since merit and honesty are not cherished or rewarded in Nigerian public life, but rather have been driven into the limbo of the archives of societally discolite traits, then it is no use bothering oneself in evaluating and recording the affective traits acquired by students.

In the same way, Uchegebu (2005) who outlined some techniques to be used in the non-cognitive objective (affective and psychomotor) said that to evaluate these areas some problems come into play:

1. Skills in these broad and abstract areas never developed in a single lesson or a single day, they develop overtime. Skills in these areas are broad and abstract and so it is not uncommon for two different evaluators to hold varying concepts or traits exhibited. Therefore, evaluations here are subjective.
2. It is difficult to pin down attitudinal objectives and specify them
3. An effective evaluation on these skills depends on the amount of observation which the evaluators can carry out on the students concerned.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The result of Social Studies education in the affective area should be utilized for many purposes in the Nigerian society such as decision-making, job placement, promotion, certification or admission into institutions of learning
2. Evaluators should not input motives to the actions of students or bring in personal behaviour
3. Teachers should carryout consistent observation on the students concerned
4. More lesson period should be allocated to Social Studies, also pupils/teachers ratio should be considered
5. Workshops, seminars and conference should be organized for Social Studies teachers at all levels to improve and update their knowledge
6. Teachers should use adequate methods and devices in the evaluation of the affective traits acquired by the learners in order to achieve the affective objectives of Social Studies.

7. Teachers should acknowledge that a proper use of evaluation techniques in Social Studies education requires an awareness of their strengths as well as their limitations.
8. No evaluative devices should be selected of evaluation until the purpose of evaluation has been carefully defined.

### Conclusion

One of the main reasons for providing an evaluation dimension in Social Studies programme in schools relates to the use of evidence in identifying the needs of students. In order for the school to effectively meet the individual and societal needs of her students, there must be careful diagnosis of their interests, abilities, attitudes, feelings and values. Classroom dispensation in Social Studies cannot afford to shy away from these areas of social skills and social growth. Without diagnosis, teachers cannot behave rationally in making instructional decisions.

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