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Social studies education and guidance counselling as panacea to multifarious problems of the Nigerian youths

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Abstract

This paper focuses on Social Studies Education (SSE) and Guidance and counseling (G&C) as mitigating the multifarious problems of the Nigerian youths. It sees guidance counseling and Social Studies as having a meeting point in the areas of behavior modification for productivity and citizenship development. In view of this expositions, the paper discusses headings such as concept of Social Studies Education and Guidance and Counselling viz: their meeting points, Nigeria's multifarious problems, the psycho-social needs of the Nigerian youths, Towards Meeting the Psycho-social needs and support for the Nigerian youths, G & C and SSE: Mitigating the multifarious problems of the Nigerian youths and factors militating against effective SSE and G&C in Nigerian schools. Among the suggestions are made that government at all levels of governance should provide adequate funding to deal with the inadequate infrastructure in the education sector so that education can be used as instrument of positive change among the Nigerian youths, Population explosion that rocks the Nigerian institutions should be adequately addressed by both the federal and state government through provision of infrastructural development to cater for the ever increasing enrolment so that the behaviour modification mission of Social Studies and Counselling can be achieved.

Keywords: Social studies, education, Guidance, Counselling, Panacea, Problems, Youths,

1 Introduction

It is no longer strange that Nigeria as a democratic country is bedevilled by multifarious problems which do not only affect the citizens but the entire network of growth and development of the socio-cultural, economic and political activities of the nation at large. Thus, the ungodly activities of Boko-Haram, bandits, kidnappers and armed robbery have brought the nation to a confuse state of affairs as government concerted efforts show little or no desired results. The most painful and sad situation is that the youth constitutes not less than 80% of the perpetrators of those antisocial behaviours. The National Youth Development Policy in Yaro and Tijani (2019) maintains that young people are the foundation of a society. This is because their energies, inventiveness, character and orientation shape and define the rate of development and security of a nation.

Supporting the above declaration, Kari in Yaro and Tijani (2019) held that through young people's creativity, talents and labour power, a society achieve giant strides socio-economically and politically. However, the reverse is the case in Nigeria where substantive energy of the youths is deployed to destruction of national resources and un-lawful killing of the innocent citizens the above assertions and reality about Nigerian youth underscores the need for course of action to guide the youths to right direction. Hence, Social Studies curriculum and Guidance counselling are designed to address the knowledge gap in terms of skill, desirable attitudes, physical, emotional, social, vocational and academic

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difficulties of young people for common good of the nation. In addition, Social Studies and Guidance and Counselling become imperative in the rehabilitation of maladjusted and social deviance people. It is pertinent at this juncture to bring out the focal points of these two disciplines for thorough understanding of the discourse.

Table 1 The Meeting Point between Guidance Counselling and Social Studies Education (SSE) for Youths' Development

Social Studies Education	Guidance and Counselling
Focused on education for nation building and national transformation	The focus is on educational development of the clients
Meant for all people of school age irrespective of social background	Useful for everybody irrespective of age and status
Hinged on citizenship development development/ orientation	Focused on social and personality/ orientation
Focused on human adaptation to changed environment	Focused on useful information for carrier and vocational development
Bothers on cultural integration devoid of ethnic loyalty	Giving professional advice for positive Socio-emotional disposition
Focused on value orientation of the learners / youths	Focused on behavioural modification of the maladjusted learners/ youths
Focused on acquisition of social, economic and political skills	Deals with adjustment of personal and psychological makeup of the youths

Judging from the above, the relationship between the two disciplines is obvious as the focal point being the attempt to make the youths socially responsible to themselves as requisite to make vital contributions to a united and strong Nigeria where peace and justice reign supreme. In view of the forgoing, this article discusses Guidance Counselling and Social Studies as panacea to multifarious problem of the Nigerian youths with a view to proffer ways of reducing the problems.

2 Social Studies Education (SES)

Social Studies Education is society bound because it is the study of mankind in their relationship with both socio-physical environments. Social Studies is a branch of education curriculum that according to Yaro and Tijjani (2019) is most suitable for transmitting the core societal values and attitudes to the young generation. Hence, Gabriel (2008) and Gbenga (2001), are of the opinion that Social Studies was integrated into school curriculum to save Nigeria from all sort of social vices and encourage Nigerians toward becoming good citizens with a view to help the country realize her national goals and objectives. Adeyoyin in Tijjani and Yaro (2019) perceives Social Studies as a dynamic discipline that reflects changes. The change keeps it alive as a field of study that is flexible and responsive to changes in the society

Social Studies as a popular school subject is viewed as the study of man in relationship with those variables that makes up both physical and social environment. It is a course of study and applied field of education which deals with the influence of man on his social environment and how environmental factors influence to a greater extent, his decision making process. (Tijjani & Yaro, 2019) The main thrust of Social Studies curriculum centres on human behaviour and self-esteem for national development. In this thought pattern, it inculcates right type of knowledge, skills and virtues into the up-growing generation through a unified, integrated and multi-disciplinary approach for production of effective citizens. Perhaps, it is the above critical function that makes the subject occupies a place of pride in the Nigerian educational structure. Social Studies education remains a holistic field of study which has its own curriculum contents, methodologies, instructional resources and evaluative procedure, in its bid to inculcate desirable attitudes and worthwhile values of the society into the younger generation for effective citizenship development of a given nation.

2.1 Concept of Guidance and Counselling (G & C)

Guidance and Counselling are two inseparable terms in the education industry. The terms imply kind of help or assistance rendered majorly in schools and other organized institutions such as hospital and manufacturing industries. Guidance is both concept and process oriented. As a concept, it deals sufficiently and effectively with the growth and

development of the individual in terms of educational, vocational, occupational, physical and socio-emotional. As a process, guidance is primarily involved in rendering assistance to an individual or group of individuals to understand themselves-self-concept, weaknesses and strength to be able to adjust to changing situations. According to National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE,1999) Guidance refers to a wide range of interventions and activities designed to assist people to make choices about their lives- personal and social, educational and career; and to learn behaviours that contribute to personal, social, educational and career competencies.

Counselling on the other hand could be perceived as a face to face interaction between a professional counsellor and the counsellee (an individual) in a bid to assist him or her solve personal and social problems. Gali (2014) perceived counselling as an applied field in which the counsellors use both behavioural and cognitive experience to help young people. Shertzer, in UNESCO (2000) sees counselling service as “a social service based on the recognition of an individual’s uniqueness, dignity, value and respect, and of the fact that every individual has right to personal assistance when needed.

Edet (2008) opines that the term guidance and counselling have been loosely and interchangeably used. He sees guidance as been broader than counselling which includes counselling as one of its services. This scholar makes a logical separation of the counselling process to include “Adjustive and Distributive” phases. In the adjustive phase, the emphasis is on social, personal and emotional problems of the individual. While at the distributive phase, the focus is on educational vocational and occupational problems. Therefore, the adjustive phase refers to counselling while the distribute phase is concerned with guidance. Considering the foregoing classification, Tinja and Tijani (2010) posit that guidance is the heart of counselling simply because of its broad nature as it concerned with overall development of the younger generation.

2.2 Nigeria’s Multifarious Problems

The multifarious problem of Nigeria is noticeable in her slow spade of social and economic development characterized by abject poverty. These problems range from the activities of Boko-Haram, to banditry, kidnapping, armed robbery, prostitution, corruption, spiritual killing, thurggry, political violence, illiteracy, school dropout, unemployment, drug abuse, drug addition, human trafficking, absolute lack of moral value, Fulani herdsmen attacks, tribal or ethnic conflict, communal clashes among other social vices in Nigeria. These problems have become formidable forces against unity in diversity and socio-economic growth and development of the country. According to Mbah (2017) those problems have created fear in the minds of citizens and have also threatened the economic life of the nation as many foreign investors have been forced to run away from Nigeria while some others are threatening to withdraw.

The youths who supposed to be the vanguard of peace and unity have resulted into perpetration of evils and instrument of destruction to themselves and the nation at large. Only God knows what hope the future has for the Nigerian youths who have been adjudged as the “Heart Beat” up on which the continuous existence of a society squarely lies. (Kari, in Yaro and Tijani, 2019). The fundamental question relevant in this context is what would have been the motivating factors to the youth been engaged in those ugly situations? In the light of this, Mordi (2015) attributed the problems to insecurity, lack of commitment, corruption, poor governance and poor implementation of good national economic and social policies. Furthermore, Alabi and Alanana (2012) observe that poverty, unemployment, frustration, hopelessness and complete lack of commitment of the leaders to the predicament of the Nigerian youths are prominent among the causes of the Nigerian problems.

The journey of a thousand mile begins with a step. In this line of through, Guidance Counselling and Social Studies as institutional based discipline is of inestimable value to assist the learners (youths) to mold their sense of reasoning and desist from being agents of destruction but major contributors to national peace, unity and progress of the country which they belong.

3 The psycho-social needs of the Nigerian youths

The youth are very significant citizens of any country as they constitute $\frac{3}{4}$ of the global population. As human beings, they have psycho-social needs which should be identified and met so as to engender harmonious lining. Some of these needs in the opinion of the authors are highlighted below: The Nigerian youths:-

- Want to have sense of belonging to the environment where their potentials stand being converted to productivity,
- need redirection of their physical, intellectual and emotional endowment to nation building and development via functional education,

- desired government attention and recognition of their population for social, political and economic transformation of Nigeria,
- need adequate information to various occupation and job opportunities as parameter for personality development, and
- They need to be given sense of hope for future development of their generation yet unborn. (Tijani, 2021)

4 Towards Meeting the Psycho-social Needs and support for the Nigerian Youths

The term psycho-social is a combination of two key words vital in human development and learning. Psycho-social is the analysis of the three basic development indices viz- cognitive, emotion and social relationship. While psychology deals with the study of human behavior, social involves positive human interaction with his/her fellow beings. Social support bothers on the orientation about political culture, socialization; and integration of youths from different family and social economic background for effective and purposeful governance. Therefore, the social support in this context involves: -

- Developing youths' personality traits.
- Modifying the behavior of maladjusted youths through frequent counselling.
- Exposing the youths to various degree of issues involved in national integration and development classroom wise
- Developing their self-esteem as preparation to face life challenges. (Tijani, 2021)

Having said that, psycho-social support refers to a kind of assistance given to the youths to make them actively involved in governmental affairs within a realm of recognize ability, interest and behavioral disposition to contribute their efforts to national transformation. The psycho-social support for the youths in Guidance Counselling and Social Studies envisaged:-

- Recognition of the youths in political processes through the school and classroom the leadership.
- Creation of enabling environment for the youths to contribute to national transformation in their varying degree of unique abilities.
- Arousing the interest of the youths through creation of enabling political environment devoid of money politics

Contributing in this discourse, this paper opines that the needs of the youths can be met through a standard school and classroom practice such as:-

- Provide adequate and appropriate teaching strategies for better understanding of the pupils in your area of specialization.
- Mastery of subject matter. Know what to teach. Have adequate knowledge about the subject you engaged in with the students.
- Application of instructional materials – real or improvised
- Provide enabling environment by creating good sense of humour with the learners. A play like will eliminate worries and fears or shame but teaching will create conducive atmosphere required for active learning.
- Show sympathy/empathy to the learners and encourage them to do the same. This will enable learners cope with all sort of psychological trauma.
- Accept pupils' ability to learn and boost their morale through motivation.
- Make the classroom as comfortable as possible through classroom arrangement and control (Maintenance of low and order)
- Identify truancy and deal with it professionally.

5 SSE and G & C: Mitigating the Multifarious Problems of the Nigerian youths

The growing concern to address social and educational problem of the Nigerian child/ youths has increased the aspiration for Guidance counselling and Social Studies education in Nigerian school system and beyond. The fact that education is expected to play active role in promoting socio-economic, political and cultural integration needed for corporate existence of the nation underscores the importance of SES and G & C in the society. Social Studies education and Counselling service are essential part of the school programmes designed to render assistance to the students to

develop their intellectual abilities, emotional disposition; and socio- psychological needs to enable them cope with the challenges of a modern world.

Similarly, Social Studies Education as a school programme is to nurture the potentials in the students for national productivity by developing in them desirable knowledge, social attitudes, skills and other citizenship virtues for both academic growth and future living. In view of this, Social Studies Education inculcates in the learners the spirits of:-

- Harmonious living into the Nigerian child within the frame of unity in diversity.
- Positive attitude and appropriate values of co-operation, honesty, integrity, hard work, fairness, justice, obedience to constituted authority and togetherness for the development of the nation
- Appreciating the cultural heritage of Nigeria as a political entity.
- Inter-dependency of the entire human race as well as the dignity and values of human labour. (National Curriculum in Tijani,2006)

In view of the importance Guidance and Counselling service, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) declared thus:

- In view of the apparent ignorant of many young people about the career, and in view of personality maladjustment among school children, career officers and counsellors shall be appointed in post primary institutions. And that Proprietors of schools shall provide guidance-counsellors in adequate number in each primary and post-primary school. (Pg53-54).

Guidance and counselling is purposefully designed to develop the individual students and achieve national aspirations. There is need for effective guidance counselling service for the youths to enable them manage stress and guide them appropriately on their future ambitions. In line with this, NCGE (1999) asserted that “counselling will help pupils (the future youths) make choices and decisions, solve problems and change behaviours. Based on the above, Tinja (2010) opined that Guidance and Counselling constitutes a vital service in the scheme of educational process and output in Nigeria. The concern in guidance and counselling as an academic field of study is to create enabling avenue for youths to discover their potentials and develop it to enable them live a self-fulfilled life and contribute substantially to the development of their respective communities.

Talking about the benefits of Guidance and counselling programme to students, UNESCO (2000) stipulates thus:-

- It increases self-knowledge and how to relate effectively to others.
- Broadens knowledge about the changing environment.
- Helps them reach their fullest academic potential.
- Provide opportunities for career exploration, planning and decision making.
- Provides an opportunity for networking with services and thus establishes an effective support system.

In this context, effective guidance and counselling is of great benefits to the pupils in the following areas:-

- It creates conducive atmosphere for mutual relationship among the pupils, the future leaders
- It assists them to gain from the academic activities and develop their potentials for future undertakings.
- develop desirable social attitudes and other citizenship virtues required for academic growth;
- it serves as a last resort to the emotionally imbalanced pupils for the required support; a
- it provides the pupils with the opportunity of having someone they can confide in as regard their relationship between academic activities and socio-economic background; and any other areas of their needs (Tinja and Tijani, 2010)

The effective mechanism through which the above objectives are realizable is the provision of certain services such as information, orientation, consultation or referral, placement and follow up, academic, behavioural and socio-personal among others by guidance counselling programme.

Tinja and Tijani (2010) are convinced that counselors and Social Studies educators contribute in a greater extent to the socialization process of the students (the youths) through classroom instruction and counselling them on the acceptable social values such as self-understanding and determination, patient and ability to accept social responsibility, social change, leadership and followership management as basis to make positive contributions to the unity and overall development of Nigeria. However, to achieve the above and ensure effective Guidance counseling and Social Studies

Education for the youths, there should be a departure from some of the present challenges that hinder progress in the education industry.

6 Factors Militating against Effective SSE and G & C in Nigerian Schools

6.1 Poor Funding

Money is not everything but is something. Education cannot survive without adequate financial support to provide required aids to enhance teaching and learning process. In recognition of the above, the National Policy on Education (2013) stated unequivocally that “Education is an expensive social services and required adequate financial provision from all tiers of government for successful implementation of the programme”. The level of infrastructural decay at all levels Nigeria’s educational system leaves much to be desired as the government fails to allocate 20% of its annual budget to education as prescribed by UNESCO

6.2 Population Explosion in Schools

The enrolment rate of primary school pupils is fast increasing, so the population in the classroom. This has led to situation where more than two hundred pupils being accommodated in a class. This is responsible for poor teaching and learning.

6.3 Workload

Under normal circumstance, Guidance Counselors or career teachers are not supposed to combine counselling work with teaching activities. However, the situation in the various primary schools is that career teachers are also either form masters or subject teachers. This therefore, militates against effective counselling programme. In support of this, Khadijah in Tinja and Tijani (2010) opined that “if counsellors are involved in this act, they will obviously become identified as authority figures which will later lead to threatening their non-judgemental roles as Counsellors”.

6.4 Inadequate of qualified Guidance Counsellors

Despite the significance of this field of human endeavour within the school settings, many primary, secondary and tertiary institutions schools are lagging behind in the provision of guidance and counselling because of non-availability of professional Guidance Counsellors. Therefore, there is need for training support for teachers to enable them carryout counselling service at the micro level to assist the youths reshape their thought patterns for productivity.

6.5 Non recognition of the functions of Guidance and Counsellors

According to Khadijah in Tinja and Tijani (2010) in the 21st century, guidance services will succeed only if the community and its agencies understand what is going on in the service and also how they can become involved in the programme”.

6.6 Unqualified Social Studies Personnel

The practice of assigning Social Studies subject to any teacher in Nigerian institutions constitutes a challenge to the effective teaching of the subject. This is premised on the fact that social Studies as a curriculum package has its own pedagogical approaches to its instructional objectives. Therefore, non-expert in the field may do more harm than justice to the teaching process.

7 Conclusion

The significance of Social Studies and Guidance and counselling to deal with the school environment that is full of academic complexities ranging from learning attitudes and behaviour which go beyond the capacities of an individual to manage. Thus, adequate guidance counselling and effective Social Studies instruction remains the basic tool to assist the youths cope with the phenomenon. The 21st century Nigerian youths deserve qualitative education to cope with the challenges of a modern world so that they can use their God given talents and energies to transform Nigeria’s social, economic, political and cultural network. Therefore, drastic measures have to be taken to ameliorate the challenges identified in this text for the benefits of all and sundry.

Suggestions

In view of the above discussion, the following suggestions are made:-

- Teaching and learning demand conducive atmosphere. Therefore, government at all levels of governance should provide adequate fund to deal with the inadequate infrastructure in the education sector so that education can be used as instrument of positive change among the Nigerian youths. Thus, the UNESCO prescription of 26% of the annual budget to education sector should be complied with in Nigeria
- Population explosion that rocks the Nigerian institutions should be adequately addressed by the state and federal government through provision of infrastructural development to cater for the ever increasing enrolment so that the behaviour modification mission of Counselling and Social Studies can be achieved
- Since the qualified Guidance-Counsellors are not easy to come by, government at all levels should organized training programme for some selected number of staff in each learning institution to tackle the challenges of inadequate man power in the field of counselling.
- Government at all levels through the relevant organs in Nigeria should embark on public awareness campaign through the mass media and traditional rulers on the significance of Guidance and Counselling in the society.
- .Government should employ qualified Social Studies teachers to manage the affairs of the discipline across the Nigerian institutions of learning. This will not only enhance instructional quality in the subject but facilitate the inculcation of the desirable virtues into the learners to appreciate the problems and prospects of other citizens and realize the independence of man irrespective of tribal and religious differences.
- Social Studies teachers should not limit themselves to one pedagogy rather; they should explore the potentials of many methods of instruction in the subject area for the benefits of improving the academic standard and inculcate desirable virtues of piety and harmonious relationship into the students in the subject area.
- Government should also provide employment opportunities for the graduates of the various institutions in Nigeria.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest throughout the project, however, there is constructive argument at some point in the research but valid agreement was cemented before publishing the result.

Statement of informed consent

The consent of the participant was adequately seek, all participants were fully aware of the importance of the research and participates with ease. The researchers also seek the consent of the school authorities where there search was conducted. Approval was granted adequately.

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