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**NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ITS CHALLENGES: SOCIAL STUDIES  
EDUCATION A WEAPON FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN NIGERIAN**

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**ABSTRACT:** *Development is said to be a predictor that determines whether a country is progressing or not. A vital evaluation of Nigeria's development regardless of her abundance in human, natural and material resources reveals that the country is yet to attain the desired prospects as clamored by her citizens. The purpose of this cram is to recognize the challenges to development in Nigeria. In order to obtain data for the research, the work adopted qualitative research method through textual analysis. The findings of this study revealed that despite the country's attempt to advance development, numerous challenges have posed a great threat to the nation sustainable growth. These setbacks range from insecurity of life on her citizens, imposition of policies on her citizens, capital to implement development plans/policies, corruption and lack of credible leadership among others. The paper concludes that once the identified setbacks are tackled then development will be realized in the country.*

**KEY WORDS:** national development, challenges, social studies education, sustainable growth, Nigerian

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## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the core motive for the introduction of Social studies is to preparing the learner for living effectively now and in the foreseeable future. It does this by drawing upon the long and varied experiences of the human race for illumination into complex societal problem. It was introduced into the Nigerian school system decades ago with the aim of breaking down regional and ethnic, loyalties, and promotion of national unity and development. Social studies education as a field of study has a lot of contributions towards the realization of the national objectives which embraced all human races. social studies is seen as a vehicle for passing on the knowledge developed by a society including the scholarly disciplines with the sole purpose of helping the young people understand and make use of it. Social Studies as: an organized, integrated study of man, his environment, both physical and social, emphasizes on cognition, functional skills and desirable attitudes and actions for the purpose of producing an effective citizenry. Ololobou (2004)

Adamolekun (2007) stressed that development has to do with improving the living condition of people. He highlighted some indicators of development, which includes; a higher quality of life, higher income, better education, higher standards of health and nutrition, security, less poverty in

society, a cleaner environment, more equal opportunities, greater individual freedom and richer cultural life amongst citizens of a given state. From the various meanings of development outlined, it can be deduced that development is not restricted to economic growth or per capita income alone but is a concept that is all encompassing that analyses the economic, administrative, political, social, cultural, religious, security of life and living standard of the people in a given society. Development implies increased talent and ability, free will, creativity, discipline, responsibility and material welfare. The word “development” has also been conical by some into a very restricted focus, along the lines of “what poor nations should do to become richer”, and so, again is automatically dismissed by many in the global dome as being a concern of specialists, of those involved in questions of “development assistance”.

However, the “society” is where we live; and “development” is what we all do in attempting to improve our lot within that dwelling. Both are indissoluble” There is a speck of axiom in this assertion, hence, explaining why those who feel and are concerned about the concept of sustainable development, tend to cord the rope of this concept around the stem of the protection and sustenance of our environment and ecological resources. This is because, really, the world is challenged by a changing climate, loss of biodiversity, abject poverty and environmental degradation, insecurity etc. While underlining the towering status acquired by the concept, it is naked that sustainable development as a concept, as a goal, and as a movement spreads speedily and currently forms the pivot of the mission of innumerable global organizations, national institutions, corporate enterprises, “sustainable cities” and locales. According to Nitin Desai (2019) to appropriately tackle the issue of sustainable development, there are matters we have to look at in the assessment because the emergence of the concept was an attempt to combine society, (education) and development.

Consequently, Molagun (1999) asserted that the hub of national development is the quality of instruction at all levels has to be oriented towards inculcating the following values; respect for the worth and dignity of the individual, faith in man’s ability to make rational decisions, moral and spiritual principle in inter-personal and human relations, shared responsibility for the common good of the society, promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children/ learners, and the acquisition of competencies necessary for self-reliance.

Social Studies education focuses its interest on the improvement of learner's attitudes; knowledge, skills and values that will enable him live peacefully with one another and to impact on the society positively for stable development. It is against this background that National Curriculum Standard for Social Studies (1991) opines that the need for establishing Social Studies programme arises when a society determines that it requires formal institution to develop understanding, skills, attitude and action concerning human relationship among all members of the society. Sebiomo (2012) asserts that Social Studies work towards the promotion of attitudinal change in the lives of the citizens which usually results in creating citizenship education. Citizenship education is all about harmonious living, peaceful co-existence and unity in diversity.

Nigeria as a developing country with a population of over 200 million persons has not been able to provide necessary infrastructure for development. Adah & Abasilim( 2015), Electrical energy is not accessible to about 60% of the population as about 40% of Nigerians have access to grid electricity. Oseni ( 2012). The non-significant effect of income on life expectancy in Nigeria corroborates the finding in Adah and Abasilim (2015) that economic growth in Nigeria has not led to development in specific sectors of the economy.

Various administrations in Nigeria had during the past presented and attempted comprehensive plans which were geared towards achieving development in the state. These plans encapsulated programmes that were to improve the general welfare of the citizens and the nation at large. In fact, development and growth has been government's top priorities since the attainment of independence. This is because development planning can be seen as the only avenue where the allocation and utilization of resources can be adequately handled (Ibietan & Ekhosuehi, 2013).

According to Ogunmike (1995), the first practical plan for development in Nigeria was in 1946, having as its specific objective, fostering economic growth and improving the general welfare of its citizens. The development plan which however reflected the independent status of Nigeria was introduced in 1962 and was operational for a period of six years.

The plan aimed at maintaining and improving the growth of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by depending heavily on multi-lateral aids, 50 percent of its total investment was to come from abroad. The first development plan abruptly came to an end as a result of the collapse of the first republic and the subsequent eruption of the civil war. In addition, out of the 50 percent of foreign aid which were expected, only about 14 percent were received, thus leading to the inability to achieve the identified objectives (Ogunmike, 1995). After the civil war, the second development plan was launched spanning from 1970 to 1974. The second plan for national development came at a period when Nigeria's sale of crude oil and other products were at an increase. The plan had its priorities anchored on agriculture, industry, transportation, man power, defence, electricity, communication, water supply and provision of social services. The plan also designed at reforming the nation that had suffered from post war violence. The third plans for development which spanned from 1975 to 1980 was considered more ambiguous as emphasis was on rural development and agriculture.

Hoverer, Suffice to note these policies all aimed at creating government's revenue, reducing the need for importing foreign products, bringing income inequality to a minimum level, as well as controlling inflation. The plan succeeded in indigenizing the economy, established free education and other industrial projects. There was an increase in the GDP rate, while the manufacturing, building and construction sectors were also not left out in the transformation process (Ogunmike, 1995). The fourth development plan was also established, followed by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), all with the aim of restructuring and diversifying the economy, achieving a stable fiscal and balance of payments over a stipulated period, laying foundation for non-inflationary growth and enhancing the possible growth of the private sector. Other national development plans such as National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), Seven Point Agenda and the Transformation Agenda have also been launched in recent times, as a

response to the development challenges of Nigeria and a national plan for prosperity (National Planning Commission, 2004).

The setback of economic and social progress has been a major concern of many nations in both the developed and developing countries of the world. Hence, different nations employ diverse strategies in achieving economic and social progress Raheem, Isah, and Adedeji (2018). Development planning was the main tactic used by many governments and organizations to set their visions, missions, goals, and effective means of realizing development. Development planning has been a consistent phenomenon in Nigeria since 1946. The Nigerian government has aspired to achieve development through the use of various types of plans, namely short term (Annual Budget), medium, and long term plans. The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) which is the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) one of the recent in the history of medium-term plans for the country and promises to surmount some of the problems that marred the success of previous plans (Marcellus, 2009).

The spotlight of social studies therefore is fundamentally man, the society and the environment and its vital target is to endow individuals with knowledge and understanding for successful relationships and living. The social studies programme is the totality of experience and understanding a child gets having been exposed to a course of studies based on man's problems in his environment. This type of programme enables pupils solves various multifaceted challenges, which face them on a daily basis as persons and as members of social group or the society. Consequently, offers the child a richer preparation for life. This paper examines how social studies education can be used as a tool for sustainable national development.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION**

Social Studies as an interdisciplinary area under discussion cannot be easily distinct. This is because it is cultural bound; definitions are base on the culture of the societies. Dubey and Barth, (1980) term Social Studies as a set of goals that make up citizenship education content which should be selected, organized and taught to learners. They stated that it is study a way of life of how man influences and is influenced by his physical, political, economic, psychological and cultural environment. Thus, it is to examine whether Social Studies have the capability of bringing sustainable development. Social Studies derive its content from the aspects of social science subject contents that are meant for the reformation of human character for peace, unity and stable development. Ezoba (2012) agrees with this view as he maintains that Social Studies as interdisciplinary Subject deals with concept generalization meant for national integration, socioeconomic development as well as the development of right attitude and values which are needed for national unity. From the definition of Social Studies it clearly points to the fact that the subject is realistic in nature. It a way of life since it deals with everyday activities of mankind. It is imperative to mentioning that the troubles that bring hostility among human beings cannot be said to be only political, social, economic, religious or psychological.

It is against this background that Social Studies uses the content of social science subject to present learning experiences to learners in a holistic manner instead of compartmentalization as presented by those disciplines. Fageyinbo. (2004) agrees with this view as he asserts that Social Studies does not restrict its content as its relevant bodies of knowledge and skills have cut across all the social science subjects in order to achieve its defined objectives and goals. Torpev, (2007) opines that Social Studies is a subject that orientates learners on how to live harmoniously and take advantage of the environment around them. He therefore asserts that it is a subject which places man as a central point in its studies, how he influences his and his environment and the environment in turn influences him and his ability to cope with environmental influences. The definition talks about the first and second strike capabilities. Whatever may be the case, whether man is first to strike the environment or vice versa is not important. The important thing is the ability of man to withstand the shock of environmental influence and use it to his advantage.

In the opinion of Kissock (1981), Social Studies is a subject should be constantly used by the society to instill in the learners knowledge attitudes and actions which are considered important concerning the relationship human beings have with each other, their world and themselves; especially as it affords people to take advantage of the social environment for unity and peace. Fagbeyinbo (2000) notes that Social Studies as a subject has the capability of making learners to understand, interpret manipulate and adjust to a particular environment. Ezeuzo (2011) corroborates this view as she asserts that Social Studies education no doubts is a veritable tool for promotion of peace and harmony in Nigeria. It should be equally noted that Social Studies as a subject has its objectives which originated from the Nigeria national objective (Okonkwo 2004). These five national objectives are: A free and democratic society, A just and egalitarian society, A united, strong and self-reliance nation, A great and dynamic economy, A land full of bright opportunities for all citizens (FRN, 2004).

## **NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The expression national refers to a event that embraces a entire nation. National development includes all aspects of the life of an individual and the nation. It is very comprehensive in nature. It is a method of reformation and development of various scope of a nation and the development of individuals. It consists of full-growth and expansion of our industries, agriculture, and education, social, religious, and cultural institutions. Moreover, national development implies the development of a nation as a whole. It can be best defined as the all-round and balanced development of different aspects and facets of the nation viz. political, economic, social, cultural, scientific, and material (Bhawna, 2016)

United Nations (2018) has defined “National development as growth plus change. Change in turn is social and cultural, economic, qualitative and quantitative” Broadly, development of the nation encapsulates such parameters as: Development through a planned national economy, Increase in agricultural production through application of modern technical know-how, harnessing industrial production, Development of human resource, Application of science and technology in the production sector, Provision of mass education and Provision of various facilities to meet the needs

and aspirations of disadvantaged, deprived and poorest of the poor segments of the population Lawal and Abe (2011).

However, Todaro, and Smith, (2006) opined that the transformation model that development is a multidimensional process that involves the continual elevation of the whole society and social system towards a better or humane life. Three basic components were identified for understanding development namely; sustenance, self-esteem, and freedom. Under this framework, national development can be expressed as the collective socio-economic, political as well as religious development of a nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be depicted as the country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government through a design identified as a national development plan. Nigeria like any sovereign state has had several development plans whose objective is national development.

### **Social Studies and National Development**

Social Studies were not just introduced for the aim of adding subject to the existing ones in the Nigerian school curriculum. It was fundamentally brought to bear with the intention of solving pressing Nigerian crisis. Nigeria went through colonial trauma and needed a subject that would alienate them from colonial mentality Fageyinbo (2004). The civil war fashioned a lot of differences among Nigerians. The issue was compounded due to many ethnic groups with diverse historical backgrounds and cultural differences that have made up Nigeria. There was therefore a need to introduce the subject that could heal the wounds of the civil war and equally achieve unity in diversity. Regina (2012) is of the view that Social Studies is a subject that could be used to achieve much needed unity, integration and stability. This explains the reason why Social Studies and national unity can be termed as birds of the same feathers, always flying toward one direction. To achieve this intention, the aim of introducing Social Studies in school curriculum as itemized by Aina, Adeyoyin, Obilo and Ahmadu (1982) is mainly to achieve national unity. These aims are:-

- a. To develop in learners an understanding of their immediate surroundings.
- b. To develop skills in learners that will enable them to deal with and manage the forces of the world in which they live.
- c. To educate the learners on how to live harmoniously and in understanding of the different people who make up the Nigerian society.

The above aims as identified by Aina et al (1982) have been corroborated with that of Social Studies Association of Nigeria whose first aims as contained in Article three of SOSAN constitution is promotion of unity between all citizens in Nigeria and entire world (SOASN 2012). Social Studies education therefore focuses its attention on the development of learner's attitudes; knowledge, skills and values that will enable him live peacefully with one another and equally contribute positively to the development of the society. It is against this background that National Curriculum Standard for Social Studies (1991) opines that the need for establishing Social Studies programme arises when a society determines that it requires formal institution to develop understanding, skills, attitude and action concerning human relationship among all members of the society. Sebiomo (2012) asserts that Social Studies work towards the promotion of attitudinal

change in the lives of the citizens which usually results in creating citizenship education. Citizenship education is all about harmonious living, peaceful co-existence and unity in diversity.

However, The inclusion of peace education in Social Studies curriculum is a major effort towards achieving national unity. Wikipedia (2009) describes peace education as the process of acquiring the values, knowledge and developing attitudes, with oneself, other and environment, Falade, Adeyomi and Olowo (2011) describes the inclusion of peace education in Social Studies as a core aspect of the subject curriculum and a great effort to achieving national unity SOSAN (2012) corroborate this view as it maintains in its objective that the association is out to continually generate enthusiasm in the indebt study of social and cultural institutions for enhancement of knowledge and the stability of Nigerian society as a whole. It is therefore important to note that in order to achieve stability in Nigeria Society, Social Studies education has a lot to do both in the classroom situation and in co-curricular activities. First, the curriculum has to be structured towards imparting in the learners the society's values that unite the populace. Learners should be taught the importance of unity to the development of the country.

Moreover, Practical examples of nationalists and other Nigerians who are currently contributing to the unity and progress of Nigeria should always be given in the class to develop the spirit of patriotism in the learners. Emphasis should be laid down on the concept of unity in diversity which clearly point's to the fact that there is a need to unite together irrespective of our differences in many ways. Teachers could initiate dialogue on issues of national unity after the learners are being exposed to the concept. On this note learners would be able to see the rationale behind unity in diversity. They can equally stress the issue of harmonious relation among people in parent teacher association meeting. This could help in eliminating the issue of communal crisis which affects the progress of not only the host communities but also the entire nation. Above all, a teacher's commitment to his duty could earn them respect in the community, especially because they could be called upon to mediate when there are issues that would cause disunity among a group of people.

United Nations (2018) has defined "National development as growth plus change. Change in turn is social and cultural, economic, qualitative and quantitative "Broadly, development of the nation encapsulates such parameters as: Development through a planned national economy, Increase in agricultural production through application of modern technical know-how, Harnessing industrial production, Development of human resource, Application of science and technology in the production sector, Provision of mass education and Provision of various facilities to meet the needs and aspirations of disadvantaged, deprived and poorest of the poor segments of the population (Lawal, T. and Abe, O. 2011).

The above assertions on the concept of national development are buttressed by Todaro, and Smith, (2006) who opined from the modernization paradigm that development is a multidimensional process that involves the sustained elevation of the entire society and social system towards a better or humane life. They identified three basic components for understanding development namely; sustenance, self-esteem, and freedom. In the context of the paper, national development can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious

advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be described as the country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government through a blueprint known as a national development plan. Nigeria like any sovereign state has had several development plans whose objective is national development.

The core aim of the study is to understand the contribution of social study education to national development particularly in Nigeria. One of which is the need for manpower for national development through education. Afolabi and Loto (2012) support this argument by stating that a developed or educated polity is the one that has enough manpower and each person occupies his or her rightful position to enhance the growth of the society. To support this, Ajayi and Afolabi (2009) have also remarked that education is largely perceived in Nigeria as an indispensable tool which will not only assist in meeting the nation's social, political, moral, cultural and economical aspirations but will also inculcate in the individual knowledge, skills, dexterity, character and desirable values that will foster national development and self-actualization. From the definitions of social study education and its importance enumerated earlier in this study, it is clear that education trains an individual to be useful in society and to meet up the need of the society for national development.

Therefore, without social study education, a nation cannot acquire the needed manpower for national development. The trained engineers, teachers, medical doctors are products of education and this explains why the quality of a nation's education determines the level of its national development. Also, the 21st century is characterized by information explosion based on science and technology. Without education, information, and knowledge needed for national development cannot be shared via information and communication technology facilities like the world wide web through the internet. In this regard, Obansanjo (2012) states that education trains individuals to relate to and interact meaningfully with others in society and to appreciate the importance of effective organization for human progress. Here, the school system within the educational system fosters this development. The schools have a way of bringing people from diverse places and different cultural backgrounds, together for a common purpose. This encourages and increases mutual co-existence among the different students and this has a way of developing the nations globally in the 21st century where the building of relationships can help promote unity.

Again, in the school system, there are official clubs and organizations in existence. Learners who participate in these organizations and clubs gain experience in working and relating with others outside the individual organizations and to some extent in working competing with outside groups with minimum friction which goes a long way to promote national unity and peaceful co-existence that would lead to national development. Social study education also inculcates much to learners beyond the prescribed academic curriculum and also encourages the development of social behaviour that will be useful to them in adulthood; by this, the nation will develop in individual those values which make for good citizenship, such as honesty, selflessness, tolerance, dedication, hard work, and personal integrity, all of which provides the rich soil from which good leadership potentials is groomed. Education also promotes the culture of productivity by enabling individuals

to discover the creative potentials in them and applying the same to the improvement of the existing skill and technique of performing specific tasks, thereby increasing the efficiency of their societal effort in national development (Obansanjo, 2012).

Unfortunately, despite the features of education and opportunities it presents for national development, education has not imparted in an appreciable measure on Nigeria's national development as is the case with other developed nations. This is because Nigeria as a developing nation is faced with several challenges in the implementation of the various national development plans promulgated since independence till date and the inherent problems in the Nigerian educational system (Okoroma, 2006).

### **THE GOALS / OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL STUDIES**

According to Akinlaye (2003), the following are the goals and objectives of social studies:

- i. To ensure the acquisition of that relevant body of knowledge and information which is an essential pre-requisite to personal development as well as positive personal contribution to the improvement of mankind.
- ii. To create an awareness and an understanding of our social and physical environment as a whole in its natural, man –made cultural and spiritual resources for national development.
- iii. To develop a sympathetic appreciation of the diversity and inter-dependency of all members of the local community and the wider national and international community.
- iv. To develop in students positive attitudes of togetherness, comradeship and co-operation towards a healthy nation. The inculcation of appropriate values of honesty, integrity, hard-work, fairness and justice at work and play, as well as ones contribution to the development of the nation.
- v. To encourage learners to appreciate that all the things they have learnt are inter-related.

### **THE ROLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES**

The introduction of Social studies education into the Nigeria schools system cannot be overemphasized. This is because it help to preparing the learner for living effectively now and in the foreseeable future. Again it infuses in the young a love of the country thereby fostering national unity which is essential to our development as a nation. It does this by drawing upon the long and varied experiences of the human race for illumination into complex societal problem. Taylor in Enem (2000) noted that social studies prepare our youths to understand the rapid changes and the development that are taking place in our country. The roles of social studies in Nigerian development according to National Teachers Institute (2000) are as follows;

• **Political orientation and Democratic value:** the subject will exposed political norms, values of the society, democratic awareness and training that will assist the youth to imbibe the desired political civilization needed for the survival of democratic system. It will address electoral

misconduct and shun corrupt malpractice in the country. It will lead to patriotic attitude and national consciousness of the society.

• **Respect for the value and dignity of others.** The need to regard our responsibilities to others should be fundamental to preserve the unique feature of our cultural heritage. We should inculcate sense of responsibility to fellowmen and show concern such as sympathy, consoling during grief, aiding during need, directing confusion especially in the case of strangers, and protections in the case of threat, etc. The subject will assist the child to rediscover these attributes that are fast dying among the youths and for this to permeate the youth is dangerous. Therefore, the child sees peace and security of others as his concern. Presently, the country is faced with crises in which some ethnic or religious groups try to dominate other because of self- assumed superiority. This led to animosity and injustice, which cause disunity. The child should learn from the foundation that all Nigerians are one and the same in spite social and cultured differences between them. The subject will help to inculcate in the child the spirit of acceptance of the respect for the worth of every Nigerian.

• **Development of Tolerance:** Irrespective of our cultural background, Nigerians should tolerate each other in their religious, political and ideological vision. For a Peaceful and United Nigeria, citizens must be made to understand that each social, political and religious group has a right to exist and co-exist.

• **Creation of Awareness:** the need to create awareness among Nigerians to upholding their civic responsibilities should be the objective, since some acts out of ignorance and it will unveil the laws of the society and its application which will assist the child. Therefore, it is necessary for the child to be exposed progressively to his rights and civic duties as a citizen. The creation of this awareness is one of the objectives of subject and it will help to shun negative vices.

• **National Consciousness and National Unity:** It is essential to accentuate the need for to be proud of the country Nigeria. Citizens should place high priorities of consciousness for the national issues than the ethnic group's religious denominations and even clubs and societies. We should be proud of the nation and do everything possible to protect and preserve it. So, every Nigerian needs to develop a sense of attachments, consciousness and identity for the country and feel committed to the pride and preservation of the country. The subject helps the child to become acquainted with the National Symbols such as the Flag, the Anthem, the Pledge, and the pictures of the national heroes etc.

• **Desirable Values and Social Attitude:** The subject is a means of inculcating the desirable values and social attitude as a means of social transformation. This will help the child to adjust and fit in to the society proper. It is one of the core objectives of the subject as it is largely based on socio - cultural context of the society. Such of the norms and value expected to be inculcate are hard work, honesty, obedience, discipline, respect, self-confidence, patriotism etc.

## **THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA.**

The most recent and worrisome state of nation is the issue of insecurity which affect typical Nigerian good fate and defy to national development. Presently every citizen lives in fear of insecurity of live and property. The fear of the known make life miserable and incapacitated for civic life in the country such as bombing of car park, churches, kidnapping, killings, etc. Development whether social, economic, political or cultural is impeded in Nigeria by the following factors:

❖ Colonial Heritage: The colonizers through their diverse activities accidentally sowed the germ of disunity in Nigeria. An example of such activities is the capricious creation of the Nigeria State and the division of Nigeria to regions (North, West and East). Such has promoted ethnic regions than the country after sixty years of independence. Again, excessive loyalty to former colonial masters hamper national development

❖ Absent of nationalism and values of good citizenship: One of the symptom of colonial heritage is manifested of tribalism, nepotism, corruption and divide and rule" which the leaders use to ensure perpetually remain in office after expiration of their tenure. Hence, promoting ethnicity and sectional loyalties instead of nationalism and the values of good citizenship. Patrimonialism is very pervasive in Nigeria, and prebendal politics has almost become the norm. Politics and undue emphasis on acquisition of power primarily for access to resources and wealth plays a role in the emergence of the Boko Haram as a jihadi group.

❖ Religious Prejudice: Virtually all the religious crises that have occurred in Nigeria ended in some form of violence, either to persons or property. In Nigeria Religious fanatics habitually use Christianity and Islam religious in creating disunity and obstruct national development than uniting the citizens. The snag of religious violence has become deep-rooted over the decades and government lackadaisical manner of handling such issues leaves a huge backlog of grievances unaddressed. Religious violence poses a grave danger to national development and regional security. The issue needs to be approached holistically as the recurrent nature of intra and inter-ethnic and religious crises will likely end in chaos or the breakup of the nation.

❖ Language problem: Language has become another force to reckon with in fields of human endeavour throughout Nigeria. Whenever you cannot speak the language of the people you work or interact with, things become difficult to achieve. Inability of some candidates to speak the local language of the people makes it impossible for them to secure jobs or gains employment in a place outside theirs. In commercial enterprises, understanding the language of the people you are dealing with makes you half through in all problems of trade transaction. It becomes fairly difficult to get contracts in areas that are alien to the contractor. Thus, instead of virtues, language now becomes a factor to mull over in facilities.

❖ Skewed development and Ignorance: Uneven developments among the state create fear and

suspicion of domination. This breed will feel and resentment amongst the marginalized group and the low level of literacy brings about low-level consciousness. This makes Nigerians to be highly suspicious of each other and to be looked upon as a group that is manipulated for inordinate reasons.

❖ Poverty: in spite of the huge natural resources recorded in the country, the nations per capital income remain poor and the country is ranked among low income nation. Nigeria as a nation remains poor in the midst of abundant natural and human resources, which suppose to boost the economy and bring national development. Stanley (1987), defines poverty as "a state of being poor, despised, looked down upon and most significantly, lacking things that translate into good physical and mental health. Poverty, cleanly means economic and social disparity. It might imply scarcity, want, and inferiority. Poverty means denial of choices and basic opportunities, which enable one to live a tolerable life materially, psychologically and culturally. When people live in a healthy, peaceful and loving environment without hunger, democratic virtues can be acquired, and the country may witness national development

## **SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION A WEAPON FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN NIGERIAN**

The introduction of social studies education into Nigeria school's curriculum cannot be overestimated. The core reason of the birth of social studies education is to instill love and discipline into the young generation, thus, fostering national unity which is essential to national development. It donate in achieving objective by relying on its peculiar methodology using inquiry, topical, problematic, project activities and other approaches to expose the children to the pros and cons of various situation, so that they can arrive at their own independent, conclusions based on reasoned judgment.

Social studies educations in Nigeria have a special task to perform in transforming Nigeria into a modern state. They include healing the social and political wounds of the decades, nurturing the most recent hopes in good ethnic group relationship and nationalism, and the engendering constructive reforms to make the nation a just and progressive society. It also helps to foster the desire for self-reliance, national efficiency and national pride.

Moreover, social studies education contributes in the attainment of national goals through citizenship education. Citizenship education refers to the culture of certain behaviours, knowledge outlooks and values which are found in the culture which the individual participates. A citizen is one who conforms to certain accepted practices, hold a particular belief that is loyal to certain values, participate in certain activities and conforms to norms which are often local in character.

It contributes in making citizens understand the diversity among the people of Nigeria, and further leads them to see the cooperation and inter- dependence among them which are among the major elements of nation-building. It further plays the role of marking the people appreciate and respect the cultural diversity of Nigeria and to realize the need for cooperation, unity and peace in the

country (Sheshi, 2002). Among others are: the development of national consciousness and commitment as necessary ingredients for national building, the inculcation of social values and skills for active social life, the development of intellectual skills, knowledge and abilities for better understanding of the immediate and remote environment, developing rational thinking ability for practical social life, identifying and solving problems using problem solving techniques and promoting value awareness and utilization of some values in tackling dynamic problems in the society (Mezieobi,1994)

## **CONCLUSION**

Despondently, Nigeria is laden with myriads of challenges in the educational system which has harmfully affected sustainable national development. These challenges include insufficient funding in the educational system, low value in our educational programs, poor reward of the teachers, poor credibility of educational credentials obtained in Nigerian Universities today, and the rickety political atmosphere which compels educational policy planners to abandon a plan still on the drawing board and take up new policies which must be geared towards meeting the present political demands among others. Also, the challenges perennial to the implementation of sustainable national development plans over the years to date which are the sluggish attitude of people to the core value of work and disinclination to take responsibility and the disparity between moral and scientific values. Also the rises of the phenomenon of brain-drain as well as futile and substandard products of institutions of advanced learning have been the pest of progress in Nigeria's sustainable national development in the 21st century. Consequently, the solution to genuine sustainable national development in Nigeria is reshuffle and an overhauling of the system; the faithful execution of the Sustainable Development Goals by dedicated politicians and the insertion of the youth in key political sectors as well as sufficient funding of the educational sector. This would facilitate social studies education to assume its position as the weapon to sustainable national development in Nigeria.

Social studies education plays a very vital role in development of the critical and rational thinking ability of the citizens, for practical social life, promoting of political literacy and encouraging democratic values and principles in tackling dynamic problems in the society. It also enables citizens to develop positive attitudes towards other people and toward citizenship and also to contribute their best towards the welfare of the society and nation building. It should also be noted that the development of the intellectual skills, knowledge and ability of citizens, through social studies, help to enhance the individuals proper understanding of their immediate and remote environment. Thus, it will give room for sustainable national development.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations could serve as a solution to the persistent crises that have bedeviled the educational system and sustainable national development in Nigeria:

- i. The Federal Government should endeavour to allot 26% of the total budget for educational development as suggested in the United Nations Organization.

- ii. Education should be a concern and task of three tiers governments in terms of funding.
- iii. The private sector should also be made to contribute in funding by providing research grants, awarding of scholarships, and endowment of professorial chairs in universities.
- iv. An enabling law should also be enacted making it mandatory for multinational companies operating in Nigeria to set aside a minimum of 5% of their gross profit to fund education and joined projects which must be tax free.
- v. The government should also have strong political will among the leaders to ensure continuity of educational policies and doggedness in the fight against corruption in the country.
- vi. Severe punishment should be meted on financial crimes and other corrupt practices in the educational sector.
- vii. There should be a stable political atmosphere to ensure permanence and maturity of educational policies.

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