

INTEGRATING SECURITY EDUCATION IN SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM: IMPACTS ON AWARENESS AND UTILISATION

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Abstract

This paper aim to examine the integrating of security education in social studies curriculum: implications on security awareness and utilisation. It has been observed in the recent times that school have been bedeviled with several issues on security challenges and also become a place of attack for criminal and terrorist in Nigeria. There are some evidences ranging from porous school environment, lack of technological devices like circuit camera television (CCTV), lack of knowledge about crime and attack, curriculum not well implemented, school leadership and support, lack of physical security measures, poor community collaboration and just to mention a few. It has also be observed in the recent time that issues on school attack and security issues ranging from bully, killing, raping, terrorism, hostage taking, ritual killings etc. These above reasons led to the inclusion of security education in the teaching and learning of social studies to enhanced ability to handle security challenges for better understanding of security alertness in other for the learners to utilise them effectively. Therefore, this paper seeks to explain concepts of security education, awareness, utilisation, and importance of teaching security education and it was recommended that schools should make sure that security education teaching and learning become practical activity also, parents should be actively involved in their wards or children daily activities on ways to avert security threats. There should be in-service training and development for teachers teaching security education for better awareness and utilisation of security education.

KEYWORDS: Integration, Curriculum, Social Studies, Security Education, Awareness, Utilisation

Introduction

In today's interconnected and rapidly changing world, security education has emerged as a critical component of a well-rounded education. It equips learners with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to understand, analyse, and respond effectively to various security challenges. The significance of security education becomes even more pronounced when integrated into the social studies curriculum, which provides

a holistic understanding of societal structures, relationships, and global issues.

Falk (2000) opined that integration of security education into social studies recognises the interconnectedness of security with broader social, political, economic, and environmental factors. He acknowledged that security is not solely about military or physical protection but encompasses a wide range of dimensions, including human security, environmental security, and societal

resilience. The important of incorporating security education into social studies, empowered learners to become active, informed citizens who can critically evaluate and contribute to addressing security concerns in their local communities and beyond.

The rationale for exploring integrating security education in social studies curriculum and its impact on awareness and utilisation on learners stems from several key considerations. Firstly, security challenges are increasingly complex and multifaceted, spanning national, regional, and global levels. Issues such as terrorism, cyber threats, climate change, migration, and social inequalities require a deep understanding and analysis to foster effective solutions and informed decision-making. Through the integration security education into social studies, learners gain the necessary tools to comprehend these challenges and develop critical thinking skills to propose viable solutions (Hansen 2020).

Oluwole (2020) asserted the integration of security education into social studies aligns with the goal of education to foster active citizenship and democratic participation. Social studies provide a platform for exploring issues of justice, human rights, and social responsibility, which are intrinsically connected to security concerns. Makinde (2021) opined that it is important in engaging students in discussions and activities related to security education so as to cultivate in them a sense of civic engagement, empathy, and a commitment to creating a safer and more inclusive society.

Moreover, there is a growing recognition among educators and policymakers of the need to move beyond traditional rote learning approaches and embrace experiential, inquiry-based, and student-centered pedagogies. Integrating security education into social studies provides an opportunity to adopt innovative teaching methods that promote active learning, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. These skills are not only valuable in

addressing security challenges but also in preparing students for the complexities of the modern workforce and civic engagement. Furthermore, integrating security education in social studies curriculum contributes to the existing body of knowledge on effective pedagogical practices and curriculum development. It seeks to identify the factors that enhance or hinder the integration of security education into social studies, such as teacher preparation, curriculum design, instructional strategies, and available resources. Understanding these factors can inform the development of evidence-based policies and guidelines for educators and curriculum developers, ultimately improving the quality and effectiveness of security education in social studies.

Finally, the integration of security education into social studies is an essential endeavour for equipping learners with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to navigate the complex security challenges of the 21st century. This paper aims to explore the integrating security education in social studies curriculum in other for the learners to be more conscious and contributing to the advancement of educational practices, curriculum development, and student learning experiences in the realm of security education.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Constructivism

Constructivism theory was propounded by Jerome Bruner in 1966 . The theory states that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things and by reflecting on those experiences. This theory is based upon the principles of cognitive theory, hence sometimes referred to as cognitive. When we encounter something new, we have to reconcile it with our previous ideas and experience, perhaps by changing what we believe, or by discarding the new information as irrelevant. In any case, we are active creators of our own knowledge. To do this, we

must ask questions, explore, and assess what we know. This explains that learning is an active process which is based on the assumption that knowledge is constructed by learners as they attempt to make sense out of their experiences. This point of view maintains that people actively construct new knowledge as they interact with their environment. In the classroom, the constructivist view of learning can be used to encourage students to use practical approaches to create more knowledge, reflect on and talk about what they are doing. The theory deemphasises memorising the conceptions and definitions of others but insists that learners create their own definition, meaning and understanding based on discovery. For instance, instead of asking students to memorise the age long definition of a phrase, students can construct their own simple definition after exploring the position of a phrase in a sentence. Sometimes they achieve this when they work together with their colleagues. This leads us to the social aspect of constructivism.

Social Constructivism

Social constructivism is a learning theory propounded by Lev Vygotsky in 1968. The theory states that language and culture are the frameworks through which humans experience, communicate, and understand reality. According to Vygotsky, language and culture play essential roles both in human intellectual development and in how humans perceive the world. This is to say that learning concepts are transmitted by means of language, interpreted and understood by experience and interactions within a cultural setting. Since it takes a group of people to have language and culture to construct cognitive structures, knowledge therefore is not only socially constructed. The link here is that while the constructivist sees knowledge as what students construct by them based on the experiences they gather from their environment, the social constructivist sees knowledge as what students do in collaboration with other students, teachers

and peers. Social constructivism is a variety of cognitive constructivism that emphasizes the collaborative nature of learning under the guidance of a facilitator or in collaboration with other students.

In social constructivism children's understanding is shaped not only through adaptive encounters with the physical world but through interactions between people in relation to the world that is not merely physical and apprehended by the senses, but cultural, meaningful and significant, and made so primarily by language. The level of potential development (academic achievement) is the level of development that the learner is capable of reaching under the guidance of teachers or in collaboration with peers. He sees learning as a social activity associated with other human beings like the peers, family members as well as casual acquaintances. Social Constructivism recognises the social aspect of learning and the use of conversation, interaction with others, and the application of knowledge as an essential aspect of learning and a means to achieving learning objectives. Vygotsky believed that life long process of development is dependent on social interaction and that social learning actually leads to cognitive development. In other words, all learning tasks (irrespective of the level of difficulty), can be performed by learners under adult guidance or with peer collaboration. This theory helps to give a backup to the establishment of opportunities for students to collaborate with the teacher and peers in constructing knowledge and understanding. Social construction of knowledge takes place in various ways and at different locations. It could be achieved through group discussion, teamwork or any instructional interaction in an educational or training institution, social media forum, religious and market places. As students interact with people, the material and immaterial environment, they gain understanding and gather experience which is needed to live successful and functional lives. Social constructivism is also called collaborative learning because it is based on

interaction, discussion and sharing among students. This teaching strategy allows for a range of groupings and interactive methods. These may include total class discussions, small group discussions or students working in pairs on given projects or assignments. The underlying factor to the theory is that learners work in groups sharing ideas, brainstorming trying to discover cause and effect, answers to problems or just creating something new to add to existing knowledge.

Implications of Social Constructivism on Roles of Teachers

Social constructivism lends credence to instructional pedagogy by defining the teacher's role in the teaching/learning process. This implies that teachers should adopt teaching methods that are:

Learner Centered: Here the focus is on the students rather than the teacher. This means the students are urged to be actively involved in their own process of learning of security awareness and utilisation especially in the area of threats and emergencies. They are allowed to come up with their own ideas, questions, definitions and make-ups to be self-sufficient.

Collaborative in Nature: Here emphasis is placed on learning through social interaction. This is done by making students to work in groups to solve problems, investigate and explore topics/situations in order to arrive at conclusions. By so doing they discover or construct knowledge by themselves in other to think outside the box and forming a team work within the community and school to curb and avert security issues in there various society.

Teacher Guided: In social constructivist classrooms collaborative learning is a process of peer interaction that is mediated and structured by the teacher. Discussion can be prompted by the presentation of specific concepts, problems or scenarios, and is guided by means of effectively directed questions, the introduction and clarification

of concepts and information, and references to previously learned material. This means that the past experience of the learning on security awareness and how the utilises it should be consider in other to make a student center.

Implications of Social Constructivism on Students' Learning

- i. Students no longer sit down to be informed or loaded by the teacher but discover lesson contents by themselves as they respond to the teacher's promptings in the form of questions, assignments, project works and such like. Students should not the spoon feed on security awareness and how to utilise but students should be fully involve.
- ii. Students now learn to work in groups as organized by the teacher for effective collaboration or cooperative learning. Students learning security education should learn from the peculiarity of other friend's society to form an informed decision.
- iii. They become co-custodian of knowledge as they share and build on their previous experiences to create new knowledge. The students in this context should learn from individual practical experiences.
- iv. They take responsibility to learn by actively participating and collaborating in the process.
Students would learn to consider the opinion of others by appreciating and investigating new ideas and lessons learnt from their colleagues. This will also help students in other to be conscious and alerted at any time.
- v. They would value every experience, learn from them and be ready to share with their groups in order to improve their cognitive ability continuously.

Concepts of Security Education

Security education is a broad range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that empower individuals to understand, analyse, and respond effectively to various security challenges Meziobi et.al (2015). It goes

beyond traditional notions of security focused solely on military defense and physical protection, encompassing multidimensional aspects of security such as human security, environmental security, cyber security, and societal resilience (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 2017). Security education aims to equip learners with the ability to identify and evaluate potential risks, understand the causes and consequences of security threats, and develop strategies for prevention, mitigation, and response. It fosters critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and responsible citizenship (Bajrektarevic & Stankovic, 2021; Booth, 2007). By engaging learners in security education, individuals become active contributors to their own safety and that of their communities, fostering a culture of resilience and preparedness (De Franco et al., 2018).

Within the context of social studies, security education finds its place as an integral component of the curriculum. Social studies encompass various disciplines such as history, geography, civics, and economics, providing a comprehensive understanding of societal structures, relationships, and global issues (National Council for Social Studies 2013). Integrating security education into social studies enables learners to connect security concerns to broader social, economic, and political contexts, facilitating a nuanced understanding of security challenges and their impact on individuals and communities (Bowman & Ambrose, 2019; Hossein & Anwar, 2019).

Concept of Security Education Awareness

Security is the whole domain of human life including food security, business security, life security, cyber security and social security. Thus, sources of insecurity are multi variant ranging from external, psychological and cultural dimension. It is a measure of absence of threat of life, liberty, and core values of the citizen in the society. It is the protection from danger and the assurance of safety and freedom.

Awareness and consciousness probably go together Falk, (2002) defined the term consciousness as the state of being able to use ones sense and mental power to know what is going on with the view to determine or predict the consequences of risk involve with such events. Oluwole (2020) opined that security awareness is the knowledge and attitude that students or learners engaged in order to protects themselves, their peers and their educational institutions from various threats. From the foregoing it is essential for the students to be alerted to their various environments at any point and understanding how to identify and address them effectively. Also, security education awareness gives an insight and in-depth understanding of there are potential threats and vulnerability, individual can make informed decision and take appropriate actions to safe guard sensitive information systems and resources.

Concept of Security Education Utilisation

Concept of security education utilisation refers to the skills used by students or learners in an organised and strategic security measures, technologies and resources to ensure the safety and protection of their people, property, infrastructure and lives. It involves conscious effort for learners for the effective utilisation of security personnel, equipment and intelligence to prevent and respond to security threats such as crime, terrorism and civil unrest. Winkler (2012) asserted that security education is particularly important given its dynamic and diverse social, economic assessments, adaptation and improvements to address emerging threats and maintain a secure environment. Therefore, a holistic and integrated approach that encompasses various stakeholders, including schools, government, security agencies, business and local community should be fully involved to make security education utilisation more effective and efficient in school and in the society. In the word of Alimba (2018) he asserted security utilisation education as the process of teaching students how to effectively use

security measures, technologies and best practices to protect themselves and understanding fundamentals security concepts, risks, and counter measures, security skills developments by acquiring practical skills to implements security measures such as configuring firewall or encrypting. From the assertions above, it is imperative from students to adhere to the skill acquired in the teaching and learning of social studies in order to empower themselves with the knowledge, skills and attitude necessary to effectively utilise security measures and protect themselves and their schools from various threats.

Importance of Teaching Security Education in Modern World

In the modern world, security education plays a crucial role in equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand, respond to, and mitigate security challenges. This importance is particularly evident in Nigeria, which face diverse security concerns and require informed and proactive approaches to ensure the safety and well-being of its residents which shall be discussed below:

Addressing Local Security Challenges: Nigeria is facing various security challenges, including communal conflicts, land disputes, criminal activities, and the threat of insurgency. Security education provides individuals with a comprehensive understanding of these challenges, enabling them to identify potential risks, take appropriate precautions, and actively contribute to maintaining peace and security within their communities (Olowoyo, 2019).

Promoting Personal Safety and Well-being: Security education helps individuals develop a heightened sense of personal safety and well-being. It equips them with knowledge on personal security measures, emergency preparedness, and risk assessment, empowering them to make informed decisions to protect themselves and their families (Alimba, 2018).

Enhancing Civic Engagement and Responsible Citizenship: The understanding of security education by the learners and individual would foster interconnectedness between security and social issues. Also, individuals in Nigeria can actively participate in community safety initiatives, advocate for peace, and contribute to conflict resolution efforts (Bello, 2017). Basically; Security education nurtures a sense of collective responsibility, promoting a culture of cooperation, trust, and resilience within communities.

Strengthening Community Resilience: Security education enhances community resilience by equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge to respond effectively to security challenges. By promoting awareness of security threats, teaching problem-solving strategies, and encouraging community collaboration, security education empowers communities to.

Supporting Socioeconomic Development: Through integrating security education into the educational system in Nigeria, individuals and develop the skills and knowledge necessary for creating and maintaining a secure environment conducive to investment, economic growth, and social progress (Alao, 2018). Security education can help individuals understand the importance of security in attracting businesses, promoting tourism, and ensuring stability, thereby supporting the overall development of Nigeria socio economic atmosphere.

Interdisciplinary Exploration of Security: Security challenges often transcend disciplinary boundaries. Linking security education with social studies in Nigeria enables learners to explore the interdisciplinary nature of security issues and their interconnections with social, economic, and political factors. By integrating security education into social studies, learners can examine the interplay between security, human rights, governance, globalization, and sustainable development, fostering a

comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted dimensions of security (Bowman & Ambrose, 2019; Hossein & Anwar, 2019).

Contextualisation of Security Issues:

Integrating security education into social studies facilitates the contextualisation of security issues within the context of Nigeria. Social studies provide a platform to examine security challenges specific to the region, such as communal conflicts, land disputes, or environmental concerns, through the lens of historical, cultural, and geographical factors (Bello, 2017). This contextualization helps learners understand the unique security dynamics of their communities, fostering a sense of ownership and enabling them to develop targeted solutions and preventive measures (Oluwole, 2020).

Critical Analysis of Security Policies: The linkage between security education and social studies enables learners to critically analyse security policies and decisions. Social studies emphasise critical thinking, citizenship, and civic engagement (NCSS, 2013). By integrating security education, learners in Nigeria can engage in critical discussions on the effectiveness, ethics, and implications of security policies. They can evaluate the impact of policies on human rights, social justice, and democratic principles, fostering an informed and engaged citizenry that actively participates in shaping security governance (Bello, 2017; Olowoyo, 2019).

Active Citizenship and Conflict Resolution: The integration of security education into social studies nurtures active citizenship and conflict resolution skills among learners. Social studies promote the development of skills such as effective communication, negotiation, and problem-solving (NCSS, 2013). By incorporating security education, learners in Nigeria can apply these skills to analyse and resolve security-related conflicts, promoting peaceful coexistence, social cohesion, and community resilience (Alao, 2018; Ogundele, 2018).

Conclusion

This study examines the integrating security education in social studies curriculum on the awareness and utilisation of the learners. The study concluded that teaching and learning security education can have a positive impact on learners' outcomes in Social Studies. Specifically, the study found that integrating security education into the curriculum will positively influence learners' outcome in social studies. Security education enhances learners' awareness of safety measures and emergency protocols in educational settings. Security education contributes to a safer and more secure learning environment for students. Also, security education positively impacts learners' ability to respond effectively to potential security threats. Furthermore, security education fosters a sense of responsibility and vigilance among learners towards their own safety and the safety of others. Moreover, security education should be an integral part of the Social Studies curriculum. Lastly, teachers should be trained on how to teach security education effectively, and schools should create a safe and secure learning environment for all students.

Recommendations

1. Ministry of Education should provide professional development opportunities for teachers on how to teach security education effectively.
2. Schools should develop and implement comprehensive security plans that include security education for students and staff.
3. Parents and guardians should be involved in their children's security education and should encourage them to practice what they learn.
4. There should be in-service training for the advancement of knowledge and practicability of what have learnt in the curriculum.

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