

# **IMPACT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATORS AS AGENTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN EZZA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA.**

**By**

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## **Abstract**

This research, impact of Social Studies educators as agents of social change in Ezza South Local Government Area of Ebonyi State aimed of finding out the activities of Social Studies educators in effecting social change, identifying the problem encountered by Social Studies teachers in their roles of promoting social change and to find out the relevance of Social Studies teachers generally in nation building, adopted descriptive research method. The population of the study was 200 Social Studies teachers and the sample was 120 Social Studies teachers selected using stratified random sampling technique. Questionnaire containing five (5) clusters to answer each research question was the instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation and in Social Studies for content validation. A reliability coefficient of 0.71 was obtained for the study using test re-test method. The statistical instrument used in analyzing the data was the mean. The findings show that Social Studies teachers have roles in educating the society for positive social change. Insufficient periods allocated for the teaching of Social Studies can hinder the promotion of social change in the local government area. It was further revealed that Social Studies educators contribute in sowing the seed of positive and enduring social changes. Based on the finding of the research, it was recommended among other things that Social Studies educator should be adequately paid as an incentive to their role towards promoting social change in the society. That individuals, religious organizations, government and non-governmental organizations should join hands to fight corruption, cultism, drug abuse and prostitution in Nigeria school system.

**Keywords: Social Studies, Educators, Social Change and agents.**

## **Introduction**

Social Studies as a professional discipline came up as a child of necessity. By this, it simply implies that the study of Social Studies as a school subject was specifically carved out for the purpose of transformation of life. The subject has been an instrument of change especially in transforming individuals into resourceful persons in the society. Today, Social Studies as a

profession and a way of life have a come to stay with us. This is with a view of achieving the enormous objectives for which it was established. A Social Studies teacher as an agent to actualize the mission of the subject has much duties or roles to play in ensuring the success of this mission

Who is a teacher?. Nwanekwe (2003) defines a teacher as a person who has undergone certain series of training and has obtained such qualification as T.T.C, NTI, NCE and B.Ed , etc and acquire skills and methods of teaching. On his own part, Alaka (1980) observed that Social Studies teacher plays the role of organizing his teaching in a way that leads his learners into active participation in lesson and activities. Moreover, Social Studies teacher as a physician uses his course to transform the society, using individuals. At primary level, Social Studies teacher has two basic purposes to achieve viz.

- a. He must lay emphasis on encouraging the development of social responsibility towards their children, adult and the world around them.
- b. He should encourage children to develop values, skills, attitudes and understanding necessary to live in the society as integral member of the society.

The most ideal methods of learning and teaching of Social Studies is the method that involves active participation of both the teacher and the learners. Everything is subject to change except change itself as the adage goes. Therefore, all things, including society changes with a passage of time. Little wonder, Enem (2000) observes that change is a permanent and continuous feature of man's social life. The law of change is natural and inevitable.

Probably, that is the reason why Idah (2004) sees the society into two sociological perspectives as Social status and Social dynamic. Social status according to him involves those factors that militate against positives change in the society. While a social dynamic factor are those that accelerates and /or cushion the effect of change in the society.

The concept of social change means many and different things to people, professionals, academics and even environments. To some, it is devil's hand work, to others, God's punishment, yet to some academics, it is development or modernization. In the context of this research social change means changes in social structure or cultures of a society over time. Such changes may be autonomous or indigenous resulting from factors within the system and/or society.

According to Enem (2000) social change can be planned or unplanned. He stressed growth of cities and urban development or development of effective transportation and communication network. In his view, Ogburu (1960) sees social changes as the alteration or modification of social institution and societies over some period of time. On the other hand, Okafor (1981) observed that social change is the significant alteration of social structure including the consequences and manifestation embedded in norms, cultural products and symbols, social life etc. He maintained that change can be positive or negative. It is negative when it seeks to destroy completely the old order of things or traditions. It seems to harmonize the old forms of tradition with new one vogue.

Social change may, however, be seen from the perspective of building, improving integrating, synthesizing or expressing culture and tradition of a particular society. It should be noted that the various social changes that have taken place in Nigeria and Ezza South in particular never succeeded without opposition not even in the most dynamic societies.

For Okafor (1981) social change is the significant attraction of social structure embodies in cultural products and symbols, social life etc. These changes may be planned or accidental. However, they normally introduce new pattern of life in the society. Sometimes, change occurs because a new way appears better and more rewarding so people abandon or abolish the old ways. Sometimes, there is a conflict between the two ways of doing things but the most useful way may succeed because of its apparent great benefits.

More often than not, a change occurs because powerful forces are supporting it. For example many of the changes that occurred during the colonial period were due largely to the fact that the government had the forces insisting on them. This is why Okafor (1981) opines that there are many ways of experiencing change. They may occur many times by a gradual process or by an accelerated process such as the use of force or violence. On the contrary, deliberate systematic planned attempt made by the school can change the behaviours of members of the society. Through the course of study, teachers help members in skill acquisition and generate knowledge as it is their role to promote positive social change (Tanner and Tanner: 1975).

Against this background, the researchers intend to divulge the various social impediments that raised their ugly heads against the effective teaching and learning of Social Studies as a subject with a view of promoting positive social change in Ezza South Local Government Area.

### **Statement of the Problem**

For some decades now, Ezza South Local Government Area had been not much informed of change that occur around the area her due to lack of sensitization predicated by poor or inadequate introduction of Social Studies in Nigeria schools. It should be noted that since the inception of Social Studies as a teaching subject in Nigeria in the early 60s, the Social Studies has continued to grow.

However, Ezza South gradually joined others in picking up the subject to ensure proper change. Nevertheless there are noticeable problems that tend to hinder Social Studies teachers. In the area from discharging their duties effectively such problems include:

- a. inadequate teaching aids
- b. insufficient trained teaching staff
- c. inadequate fund

in view of the aforementioned problems the researchers wish to investigate into the problems with a view to proffering solution to them so as to pave the way for the Social Studies teachers as vanguards of change in Ezza South L.G.A

### **Purpose of the Study**

Like every other research, the purpose of this work is to unravel the impact of Social Studies Educators agents of social change in Ezza South LGA of Ebonyi state.

Primarily, this research intends to serve the following objectives:.

1. To find out the activities of Social Studies teachers in effecting social change to Ezza South local government area.
2. To identify the problem encountered by Social Studies teachers in their roles of promoting social change.
3. To find out the effectiveness of fund in the actualization of positive social change in the area.
4. To find out the relevance of Social Studies teachers generally in nation building and the Ezza South Local Government Area particularly.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significance in that it would help to facilitate a proper understanding of the responsibility of the social studies teachers in promoting positive social change in Ezza South Local Government Area. The study would also help in transforming the pattern of individual lives in the society. The findings and recommendations would also help others to contribute one way or other in improving the standard of teaching social studies in schools within the area.

## Research Questions

In order to carry out this research systematically the researchers raised the following research questions to elicit the response from the perspective respondents.

1. What is the role of Social Studies education towards promoting positive social change?
2. To what extent would the activities of Social Studies teachers promote the desired social change in Ezza south local government area?
3. To what extent has insufficient teaching periods for Social Studies discipline bedeviled the promotion of positive social change in Ezza South local government area
4. How social studies education would contribute in sensitizing and concientizing individuals in Ezza South Local Government Area?

## Methodology

The research design adopted descriptive research method. A descriptive survey research is chiefly concerned with finding, describing and interpreting what is, that is with the proactive that prevail, beliefs, points of view or attitudes that are held, conditions or relations that are held, conditions or relations that exist, processes that are developing. It is a design strives to be objective and logical, applying every possible test to validate the procedure employed. The population of the study was mainly 200 Social Studies teachers from 17 schools in the local government area. A total of one hundred and twenty (120) Social Studies teachers were selected using stratified random sampling technique. Questionnaire containing five (5) clusters to answer each research question was the instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation and in Social Studies for content validation. The test-retest method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.71 was obtained for the study. The statistical instrument used in analyzing the data was the mean. A mean score of 2.5 and above was chosen as the acceptance level. Any item below 2.5 indicates rejection of that item.

## Results

### Research Question 1

What is the role of Social Studies education towards promoting positive social change in Ezza South L.G.A

**Table 1:** Responses of the role of Social Studies education towards promoting positive social change.

		X	Remarks
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1	Training the minds of the youth (students) towards social development.	3.5	Accepted
2	Inculcating in the youths the social values and the norms of the society	3.4	Accepted
3	Helping the youths(as above) to understand more about themselves and their immediate surrounding	3.4	Accepted
4	Helping to educate the students and pupils on how to have balanced judgment and thinking.	3.30	Accepted

## Research Question 2

How would the activities of Social Studies teacher promote the desire social change in Ezza South L.G.A

**Table 2**

Response on the activities of the social studies teacher to promote the desired social change

		X	Remarks
5	The Social Studies teacher insisting on the students and pupils demonstrating what they have learnt from school e.g. respecting their teachers in the schools e.t.c	3.5	Accepted
6	Insisting that the children produce handicraft materials in the schools as can reflect their cultured	2.4	Rejected
7	Helping to preach and consolidate the preaching they hear in their churches	3.35	Accepted

## Research Question 3

To what extent has insufficient teaching periods for Social Studies bedeviled the promotion of positive social changes in Ezza South L.G.A?

**Table 3**

Response on the insufficiency of social studies periods bedeviling the promotion of positive social studies changes in Ezza South L.G.A

		X	Remarks
8	Social Studies should be allocated up to 5 periods in a week like English or Mathematics.	3.45	Accepted
9	The low regard for Social Studies has been the cause of insufficient periods given to it.	3.40	Accepted

7	People want Social Studies to be scraped off and therefore decided to allocated short periods to it	2.20	Rejected
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#### **Research Question 4**

How would Social Studies education contribute in sensitizing and concientizing individuals in Ezza South L.G.A

**Table 4**

Response on social studies contribution no small measure in sensitizing and concientizing individuals in Ezza South L.G.A

		X	Remarks
11	Individuals gain better knowledge by what the social studies teacher teach in school	2.10	Rejected
12	School children, through what they learn in the school in social studies improve their day today attitudes	3.35	Accepted
13	The attitudes of social studies teacher is the best way to spread the gospel of good education in the society	2.00	Rejected

#### **4.1.5 Research Question 5**

How would the activities of Social Studies teacher contribute in sowing the seed of positive and ending social change in Ezza South L.G.A?

**Table 5**

The activities of Social Studies teachers to contribute in sowing the seed of positive and ending social changes in Ezza South L.G.A

		X	Remarks
14	What do the social studies teachers do to create solution to the people social problem	3.45	Accepted
15	The behavioural activities of the social studies teachers help to sow good attitudinal seed in the society.	3.35	Accepted
16	The social studies teachers sows the good seed that helps to change the society	2.10	Rejected

## **Data Analysis**

In table, 1 it can be seen that Social Studies teachers have roles in educating the society from the positive responses in Nos 1-4.

From table, 2 it can be seen that only item 6 is not an activity of the Social Studies teacher for promoting social change in Ezza South by the response below the mean score of 2.5

In table, 3 items 8 and 9 show that insufficient period for Social Studies can bedevil the promotion of social change in these communities in which the schools are. Item 10 says that the scraping cannot come from insufficient period and that is why the response is below the accepted 3-30

Table 4 responses show that in item 11 and 13, individuals cannot be sensitized through this means and that is why the scores are below 2.5. In item 12, response is positive as children's good behaviour can help to sensitize and concientizing individuals in the society.

Table 5 responses show that in items 14 and 15, the Social Studies teacher contributes in sowing the seed of positive and enduring social changes in Ezza south L.G.A but the respondents in item 16 could not accept this.

## **Summary of Data**

The findings, from the data collected revealed that the answers to the research questions raised in chapter one were true about the role of social studies teachers towards promoting positive social changes in Ezza South Local Government Area.

At least 85% of the respondents in each table supported them to be factual.

## **Discussion of findings**

Based on the findings made on question one, it is now clear that Social Studies education has contributed immensely and is still contributing towards the promotion of positive social change in Ezza South Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. Hence, Social Studies exposes youths to the rapid change and exemplary life of a Social Studies teacher in the society where he lives that social change orientation is carried out.

The findings also reveals that activities of Social Studies teachers have done much in the aspect of promoting positive social change in Ezza South in particular and Nigeria in general. And this can happen through the inculcation into the minds of the students the need for independent existence among the people or group of people in the society through him (Social Studies teachers) living intermediately with them in the society. This is also achieved through classroom arrangement made by the Social Studies teacher.



In the course of the research, it was also discovered that disunity among individuals or groups in Ezza South Local Government Area, wages a great opposition to positive social change. This is because, majority of the people in the area are illiterate. Poverty among the people also militates against positive social change as they do consider the economic cost of what they learn in school more than the derivative principle. It is also agreed that cultural conservatism adopted by the people hinders the promotion of positive social change. Social Studies teacher teach and preach unity, tolerance and integration; he uses accumulation techniques for the students to know, tolerate and respect people both within an outside the school premises.

Finally, since in the above findings it is discovered that there are many problems kicking against smooth assimilation of positive social change in Ezza South Local Government Area, but the research proved that Social Studies teachers have never relented in proffering solutions to combat those problems.

### **Conclusion**

Conclusively, findings got from the research have confirmed through responses got from the respondents on the items in questionnaire the research's assumption were confirmed as hereby stated.

Social Studies education has done a lot in promoting positive social change in Ezza South Local Government Area and Nigeria at large. It is not out of place to state that Social Studies teacher plays a significant role in the promotion of positive social change in area.

However, it is identified that there are problems hindering the occurrence of positive social change in Ezza South Local Government Area but so many solutions have been suggested as to how such problems should be confronted.

Therefore, the role of Social Studies Educator in Ezza South Local Government Area is sequel to the role of Social Studies teacher according to Nnamani (1999) which is geared towards the achievement of national objectives of Social Studies.

### **Recommendations**

In this section of the research, the researchers put forward these suggestions which they think would ameliorate the problems based on the findings made in the course of the study.

The following recommendations are made:

1. The Social Studies educator should be adequately paid by government as an incentive to his role towards promoting social change in the society.
2. Government should motivate educational organizations such as comparative education study and adoption center (CESAC), African Social Studies Programme (ASSP), Northern Nigeria Educational Project (NNTEP), Nigeria Educational Research Development Centre (NERDC) and organize conferences which will keep on improving the standard of Social Studies education in Nigeria.
3. Individuals, religious organizations, government and non-governmental organizations should join hands together to fight corruption, cultism, drug abuse and prostitution in Nigeria school system which are mostly found among secondary and university students.
4. Government should equip libraries in schools with audio and audio-visual materials, test-books, maps, periodicals etc to improve the teaching of Social Studies.
5. Social Studies teachers should not be looked down upon rather they should be seen as role models in the society.
6. Corps members should not be posted to secondary schools only but also to primary schools for it will try to encourage cultural integration from the grassroots in the children's infant age.

## **Summary**

Summarily, this research aimed at finding out the role of Social Studies educators in promotion of positive social change in Ezza south local government area. Five research questions were designed. And all the item questions were ticked, collected and used for the study. The populations of the study constitute the entire people living in Ezza south local government area with a sample that represented the entire population. The questionnaire was served to the respondents for data and data collected were analyzed using simple mean as tool.

After the study, the major findings were the fact that Social Studies teachers had performed creditably, in spite of obstacles towards promoting positive social change in Ezza local government area through their activities.

Recommendations were made and if followed religiously could help to improve on the efforts of the Social Studies teachers towards actualizing the objectives of Social Studies in the society.

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