

African Research Review

An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia

Vol. 5 (2), Serial No. 19, April, 2011

ISSN 1994-9057 (Print)

ISSN 2070-0083 (Online)

Advancement of Tradomedical Education through Effective Teaching of Social Studies in South-South Region of Nigeria

(Pp 263-273)

Dania, Peter Ogbianigene - Department of Social Science Education
Delta State University, Abraka-Nigeria
E-mail: daniapore@yahoo.com
Phone: +2348033726878

Abstract

The study aims at examining the meaning of Social Studies, nature and its role towards advancement of tradomedical education in South-South region of Nigeria. This study sought to address the importance of tradomedical education and some of the strategies used in achieving effective teaching of Social Studies to the citizen for advancement of tradomedical education in South-South region of Nigeria and it also examined the various methods used and services rendered through traditional health care system. It was also realized that the effective teaching of social studies will expose the citizens to the environment and its benefits (herbal cure) to the citizens.

Introduction

Social Studies focuses on man and man's existence in the environment which he finds himself. Social Studies investigates human activities at home, at work, in the community, nation and indeed in every programme of his life. Social Studies is concerned mainly with the reciprocal relationship between man and his physical environment. This implies that it deals with how man is influenced by his physical environment, and how he in turn influences his physical environment. The focus of social studies is on man. It is not concerned with either the study of man per se or the study of the environment

exclusively. It is concerned rather with the study of man within the context of his environment. This implies that neither man nor his environments can be studied in isolation because both are inseparable.

Social Studies presents knowledge as a whole. It is a distinct integrated single subject that is concerned with the totality of man's interactions with his environment in order to encourage learners to acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to understand and cope with man's problems of survival (Osakwe and Itedjere, 1993).

Definitions of Social Studies

Social Studies authorities have been trying to define social studies based on their own perceptual understanding. For instance, Obede (1980), in Osakwe and Itedjere (1993) views Social Studies as a common learning of man's interaction with his social, physical and economics. This conceptual meaning of Social Studies deals with man's aspect of life, which requires special attributes such as skills, values and aspiration in order to managed it Dubey and Barth (1980), in Dania (2009) present Social Studies in analytical approach. According to Dubey and Barth, Social Studies is the study which aims at inculcating values, loyalty and spirits of service to the community and the learners. They also view the subject, Social Studies as a course of study, which enable an individual to identify problems, analyse the problems in his own environment and make the right decision when they are necessary. Barr. Barth and Shermis (1978), in Dania (2004) social Studies is a study in which students acquire knowledge of citizenship and reflective inquiry. Umoru-Sule (2009) defines Social Studies as a cup of tea 'using water, Lipton, sugar and milk together to make a cup of tea'. Thus, Social Studies sieve relevant and useful concepts, skills, knowledge, attitude, aspiration, values and atheistic from other discipline to form its own concept. According to Osakwe and Itedjere (1993) defined Social Studies as those whose subject matter relates directly to the organisation and development of human society and to man as a member of social groups. Also Adaralegbe (1980) in Osakwe and Itedjere (1993) asserts that social Studies is a study of how man influences and is in turn influenced by his physical, social, political, religious, economic, psychological, cultural, scientific and technological environments. This definition means that Social Studies is concerned with his different environment.

The Nature of Social Studies

The nature of Social Studies and the process of tradomedical education is concerned with human relationships. The world in which we live is constantly undergoing innovation, and these innovation sometimes amount to advancement of various ways of health care. The search for qualitative education in Nigeria could be better appreciated if we examine the extent of the nation's belief in education. Nigeria as a nation has a very strong desire for education. Thus, the federal government has adopted education in Nigeria as an instrument par excellence, for effecting national advancement (N.P.E 2004:4)

Any nation that has a belief in education and links that belief intimately with national advancement would tend to translate all her national problems, into Social Studies objectives, which is in accordance with the educational goals. These objectives are related to the nation's economic, spiritual, tolerance, values and harmony problems among others. As a result of the country's strong belief in education as a means of solving citizens problems, Social Studies aims at inculcating certain educational values in the life of the citizens including tradomedical advancement in the society. All these can be achieved through effective teaching of Social Studies.

Definition of Traditional African Medicine

Traditional medicine is sometimes referred to as alternate medicine. It is the indigenous healing system based on the culture, tradition of the people with their beliefs about the causes or ill-health.

The World Health organisation (WHO, 1947) has defined traditional medicine as "the sum total of all the knowledge and practice whether explicable or not used in diagnosing, preventing or eliminating a physical, mental or social imbalance and relying exclusively on practical experience and observation handed down from generation to generation whether verbally or in writing depending on the religious and socio-cultural beliefs.

Mume (1976) defined traditional medicine as "a recipe of herbal mixtures and some ritual formulae designed to generate some powers which are built in nature by God, which can be tapped and applied with the help of God and other spiritual beings to meet various human needs".

Iwu (1982) said that traditional African medicine refers to the total combination of knowledge and practice indigenously evolved by various African groups and used in diagnosing, preventing and curing individuals,

society and nature. The expression is an all embracing one. It comprehends different kinds of specialties, such as divination, bone setting, psychiatry and spirit mediumship.

Wembebe (1991) in Njoku (1994) has stated that traditional medicine is wide spread throughout the world in various forms and its practice is based on beliefs which have been accepted in some cases for thousands of years prior to the development and use of orthodox medicine, and, in fact, traditional medicine is an integral component of the culture of the people.

Iwu (1982) has also defined “traditional African medicine” as the knowledge of the mode of treatment of ailment based on traditional beliefs which are common to a group of rural people.

Importance of Tradomedical Education in Nigeria

For long, it has been recognized that the health of any nation is its wealth. It is for this reason that government developed programmes, whether economic, social or cultural are geared towards promoting and improving the health of its citizen. It is for this reason, too that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has charged all nations of the world to strive to achieve Health for All.

Tradomedical education is a way of life for the nation. It is an education which offers an ideal opportunity to examine, clarify and isolate the needs, the assets and problems of the society healthwise. Tradomedical education will play a vital role in the health development of both young and old persons. Right from childhood, children learn from older people drugs for curing or preventing diseases as well as objects or recipes with magical effects. With tradomedical education, these will help to enlighten them more.

Experts, confirm that, tradomedical education would enable citizens to create ideas on how medicine can be acquired and effectively administered to return the body to normal health conditions and to know the cultural norms and social values which their society cherishes, upholds and which would lead them to see the differences between them and those of other people. Ezegbe (1988); Meziedie (1992: 93) and Ikwumelu (1993: 9) cited in Dime (1995). This implies that a well informed citizen would learn to appreciate an interdependent relationship within and outside their community. Tradomedical education promotes good health, restoring or preserving health or due physical condition a by means of herbalism. Apart from the

restoration and preservation of health in the lives of our citizens, tradomedical education would help citizens to work hand in hand with western medicine.

Many people in Africa today patronize the practitioners of traditional medicines. Traditional medicine remains a major source of health care delivery, especially in the rural areas. There are also some reports of patients who abandon their beds in modern hospitals to seek cure from traditional healers as well as reports of practitioners of western medicine who counsel patients to consult traditional healers for certain types of illness (Awolalu, 1979: 42). These and similar development are clear indications of the continuing significance of African medicine that shows that traditional medicine has tremendously helped to improve the quality of life in various African societies.

The adoption of modern techniques of packaging and dispensing of medicine is another attribute of tradomedical education. It is an education programme which combines both traditional and orthodox methods of administering drugs.

Strategies for Achieving Effective Teaching of Social Studies

We believe that the quality of education our children receive in schools should endow them with the means to live more satisfying lives and enjoy the “humanistic” aspect of education as an end itself. All this would be regarded as comprising the “consumption” dimension of education. Again, we also expect the school to endow the children with the means to be better citizens, to get good jobs and to contribute more to the welfare of the immediate, the national and the international communities (Crow, 1969).

The above expectations can only come to reality through the application of certain modalities in training our learners or citizens. These modalities include:

The goal and aims of tradomedical education should be well stated and documented in the school curriculum. This is quite obvious, because it is the curriculum that would specify the concepts to be taught so as to achieve the national objectives. Adequate Social Studies teachers who would transmit the desirable objectives into learners must be trained and the necessary instructional materials procured.

Within a stipulated period of time, beneficiaries of the noble programme should be exposed to practical training. This is done in order to evaluate the desirable behaviour and changes that have influenced them. This may be in the form of auxiliary training or something similar to this in which case, the learners be placed under close observation or supervision.

Regular evaluation programme within and outside the school environment should be conducted. The result obtained from these assessments would generate opportunities for suggestions of possible improvements. Learners who have shown a remarkable change in the study with desired objectives should be adequately rewarded to encourage others to do the same.

Tradomedical education should be made a compulsory course of study in all levels of education in the country.

Social studies emphasizes that learners are made to identify herbs in the environment, their uses, the after effects of such herbs and methods of improving on the use of such herbs.

Textbooks and school curriculum should be written to emphasize in accordance the contents of tradomedical education. Having already employed all the strategies in the education of our citizens, quality and equality in the educational sector would be ensured for national advancement (Eboh, 1195).

Methods Used and Services Rendered through Traditional Health Care System

The practice in Nigeria varies between ethnic groups as a result of differences in cultural prescriptions, practices and ecological diversities.

The methods used include:

- i. Herbalism
- ii. Faith healing
- iii. Massage
- iv. Heat therapy
- v. Hydro (water) therapy
- vi. divination

Herbalism

This is the process of a person who specialised in the uses of plant who uses leaves, seeds and roots for medical purposes. The most commonly services rendered include preventive and control of illness and curative (treatment of illness) through the use of herb.

Faith Healing

Many communities have faith in traditional medicine as they believe that it is the wisdom of their fore father which also recognizes their socio-cultural and religious background which orthodox medicine seems to neglect.

Massage

The practice of massaging is common among the Ijaws of the Niger-Delta. It is softening of the body, especially the muscle and joints usually with hands in order to lessen pains, stiffness and also determine the cause and nature of some illness like internal convulsion, nervous disorder, stomach upset, acute headache, measles, malaria fever and problems associated with pregnancy, bone fracture, etc. The masseur applies lubricants such as palm kernel oil and water freshly fetched from the rivers, stream or lake in his physiotherapy.

Heat Therapy

In the case of fractured legs, patients are usually subjected to radiant heat treatment or hot applications of peppers to reduce inflammation and swelling.

Hydro (water) Therapy

This is the use of hot water to treat wounds and herbs that are combined together and boiled for bathing and drinking.

Divination

This involves the skills of predicting future occurrence or discovering hidden knowledge about a particular disease causation. This is the area that has brought wide acceptance of the society into traditional medicine which is not due to its proven efficacy in the treatment of certain health problems, but because, it offers social and mystical explanation of the causes of illness which the orthodox system ignored and fails to provide. This whole acceptance among the societies is as a result of their cultural and traditional believe which was inherited from their fore fathers. All these should be emphasized in values education which is a core curriculum in SSE.

Advancement of Tradomedical Education through Effective Teaching of Social Studies

Attempt of examining the advancement of tradomedical education through effective teaching of Social Studies is largely to examine the extent to which each of the two disciplines are utilised to solve human problems and also the extent to which they are related.

1. **Environment:** Generally tradomedical education seeks to study human problems as it relate to the environment. It regards man as being a combination of the physical environment that is the aspect of man's health, body, mind and spirit. There are topics taught in Social Studies that expose students to the understanding of the physical and social environment. Traditional medicines are often concocted from fresh or dry leaves, barks, tics, seeds, flowers, trees, and mineral obtainable from the immediate environment of man. The different traditional medicines like the fresh or dry leaves, barks of trees etc in Nigeria, where they are located and the rational use are taught to the students in Social Studies.
2. **Culture:** Traditional medicine is an integrated component of the culture background of the people that are prevalent in the community regarding physical and causation of disease and disabilities. Social Studies encourage the teaching of our traditional culture to promote our cultural heritage. This is because the culture is our identity and any nation without an identity is not fit to be called a nation.
3. **Religion:** Religion varies from one place to another. In the practice of African traditional medicine, no medicine person sees his/her preparation in isolation for many African medicines is in the realm of religion perhaps with some elements of magic. In many cases, collection of leaves or barks of roots of trees for medicinal preparation are done by the performance of some sort of religious rituals. This is carried out to appease the gods, spirits or the ancestors. This is one of the major objectives of Social Studies in Nigeria. Nigeria is made up of different tribes and different religion. Therefore to foster unity in a country like Nigeria, people should respect ad accept other people's religion. Students should be made to respect other people's religion to exist in the society inspite of these differences.

4. **Belief:** Africans believe in the existence of gods and invisible spirits. Beliefs according to Ezewu (1983) in Eboh (1995) are propositions that are accepted as true. Such acceptances may not be based on any logical or empirical considerations. To accept a proposition as true, means valuing that proposition. For instance traditional medicine regards man as being a combination of body, mind and spirit. Thus, any disease condition in man is viewed from a triple (triune) perspective. Hence, it is believed that witchcraft, evil spirit and sin can cause disease. Disease with such spiritual backgrounds according to Mume (1976) hardly yields under orthodox medicinal treatment. Therefore, to be able to cure a disease permanently, its root cause or cause must be found and tackled. These are topics taught in Social Studies that exposes students to the understanding of the physical environment. The teaching of these elements of man's physical environment in Social Studies provides simple scientific explanation which eliminates such beliefs borne out of stack ignorance.
5. **Sexuality Education:** Sexuality education is designed to inculcate in student sexual consciousness, and also to inculcate the right type of value and attitude to make them survive morally, socially and in all ramifications in our environment. Effective teaching of these Social Studies topic on sexuality education will lead to the advancement of tradomedical education because there are some traditional African medicine that are used for curing different sexually diseases will now help the students to become more familiar with the medicinal plant around their environment.

Conclusion

From our discussion, it is clear that Traditional African medicine refers to the total combination of knowledge and practice indigenously evolved by various African groups and used in diagnosing, preventing, curing and restoring health and harmony to individuals, society and nature.

If Nigeria expects to advance in tradomedical education through effective teaching of Social Studies the following should be adopted:

- i. Only teachers who are specialists in Social Studies should be employed to teach the subject so as to transmit the desirable objectives of Social Studies to the learners by effectively teaching

values education and events (physical) in space which are fundamental themes in social studies.

- ii. Government and school management should permit and assist Social Studies teachers to develop themselves through in-service training programmes.
- iii. Social studies teachers must use resource materials that would enhance the teaching learning process.
- iv. Themes such as events in space (physical and social) in social studies should be well taught by teachers and imbibed by students to help them appreciate the physical and social environments. This will culminate in the proper use of these environments to advance the health of Nigerians.

With this, there would be advancement of tradomedical education through the effective teaching of Social Studies in South-South region of Nigeria.

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