

Teacher Factor in the Teaching of Social Studies in the 21st Century

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Abstract

The paper examines the pivotal role of teachers in effectively imparting social studies education in the modern era. The paper underscores the importance of well-trained teachers in facilitating the teaching of social studies, a subject that prepares learners for active participation in society. It discusses the multidisciplinary nature of social studies, encompassing history, geography, economics, anthropology, and political science, and highlights the values and concepts it seeks to instill in learners. The paper elaborates on the attributes of effective social studies teachers and their role in creating engaging and meaningful learning experiences. It also delves into the current national curriculum, emphasizing the need for well-structured schemes of work to ensure comprehensive coverage and learning continuity. The paper further explores the interpretation and implementation of the revised basic education curriculum and the incorporation of social studies within the new subject of Religion and National Values. Finally, the paper presents various teaching methods and techniques suitable for primary school social studies instruction.

Keywords: *Social studies education, teacher factor, teaching methods, effective teaching, curriculum implementation.*

Introduction

With the exposition of knowledge and increasing sophistication of technology, higher education programs, therefore, need to be frequently reviewed and developed to keep pace with the needs of society and the learners. Social studies as a subject deals with the scientific studies of man and his society, and it is only the quality and well-trained teachers that can facilitate the teaching of the 21st century and future world of work.

Social Studies and its Tenets

Social studies by its description is a value education because it's a subject that prepares learners for effective participation in the society. Some of the values referred to in social studies intend to develop in learners the following concept:

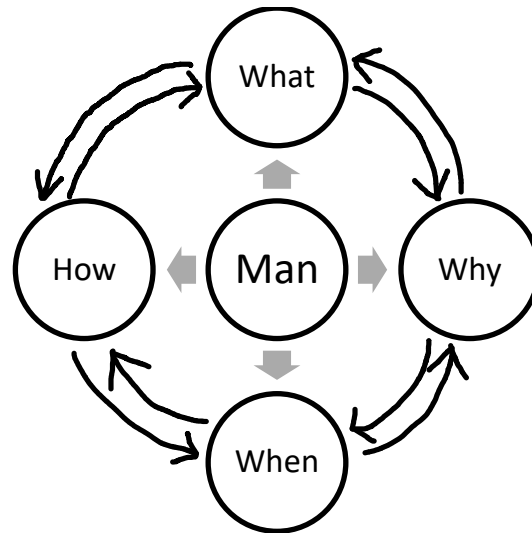
- Obedient
- Hard work etc.
- Togetherness, Comradeship, and cooperation
- Love of our physical environment
- Appreciation of our interdependence
- Honesty
- Loyalty
- Respect for other people's opinion and their property and many others.

According to Omosehin (1990), social studies is to prepare the learner for social responsibilities, by this, learners are helped to participate effectively in the dynamic life of the society.

Generally speaking, social studies deal with problems of man in his attempts to survive in his environment. Thus, as a discipline, it tries to emphasize objectively those personal and societal values which are often ignored, by many other subjects on the school timetable. For instance, teaching and learning of such concepts as patriotism, honesty and loyalty are never known to be built deliberately into subjects like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Economics. Social Studies is not concerned with the study of man per se, rather, it is concerned with the study of man within the context of its environments be it social, natural, political, cultural, and technological. Social Studies may as well be viewed as a synthesis of relevant materials of the various component subjects like; Economics, Political science; Sociology, pure and applied Sciences, Religion, Geography, Anthropology and Education. This synthesis is regarded as bond of unity that makes the subject practical to life. In Nigeria, social studies is learnt as a distinct integrated single subject and not as amalgamated subject. It cannot, therefore, be taught as any of the subject like Geography, Civics, History or Economics.

According to obebe (2004) "Man as the center of study gives opportunity for us to study mainly answering the why, what, when and how of his activities. He concluded that "in answering these questions we will have to go to the disciplines of history, geography, economics, political science was to be a broad-based study of man".

Diagram I show man's interactive circle:



Adapted from Obebe 2005

Figure 1: shows man's interactive circle.

The following subjects shares some features with social studies:

History in Social Studies

The affairs of human societies have historical antecedents and consequences; the affairs of the past influence those of the present. As Jide Osuntokun noted in his series in *The Comet* in 2002 time past is part of time present and time present is part of time future. In other words, humans' society is one long continuum and to appreciate the present, one must know what happen in the past. Human societies have undergone and are undergoing continual, gradual changes in response to various forces. What historical understanding does for any society is to place its present predicament within rational and time perspectives of human evolution.

Geography in Social Studies

Geographic factors influence where and how people live and what they do; people adapt, shape, utilize and exploit the earth to their own needs. Resources and resources are related to the level of cultural and technological development. Industrial societies place heavy demands on the earth's resources.

Economics in Social Studies

The economy of a country is related to available resources, investment capital, and the educational development of its people. The wants of people are unlimited. whereas resources that people require to fulfill their wants are scare: hence, societies and individuals have to make choices, as to which needs are to be met and which are to be sacrificed.

Anthropology in Social Studies

Every society, at whatever level of development, has formed its own system of belief, knowledge, value, traditions, and skills that can be called its culture. Culture is socially learned and serves as a potential guide for human behavior in any society.

Political Science in Social Studies

Every known society has some kind of authority structure that can be called its government is granted coercive power. A stable government facilitates the social and economic development of a nation.

Sociology in social Studies

The family is the basic social unit in most fundamental and necessary learning in a culture. Social classes have always existed in every society, although the bases of class distinction and the degree of rigidity of the class structure have varied.

The Importance of Teaching Quality in the Teaching of Social studies

No Nation can rise above the quality of its teachers (NERDC, 2014)

Highly-quality teachers produce high- achieving learners.

According to Hanushek (2002),

- A good teacher will get a gain of one and half grade level equivalents (one and a half years of learning achievement). Whereas a bad teacher will get a gain of only half a year for a single academic year..... High quality teachers can make up for the typical deficits that we see in the preparation of kids from disadvantaged backgrounds.

A quality teacher is like a caring parent in school (a loco parentis). He knows his subject very well and knows how to teach it for children to fully understand. He is warm, motivating, and anxious to help children learn. He is sympathetic and quick to acknowledge pupils' efforts. Below are the key attributes of a quality teacher.

Concept Map of Quality Teachers

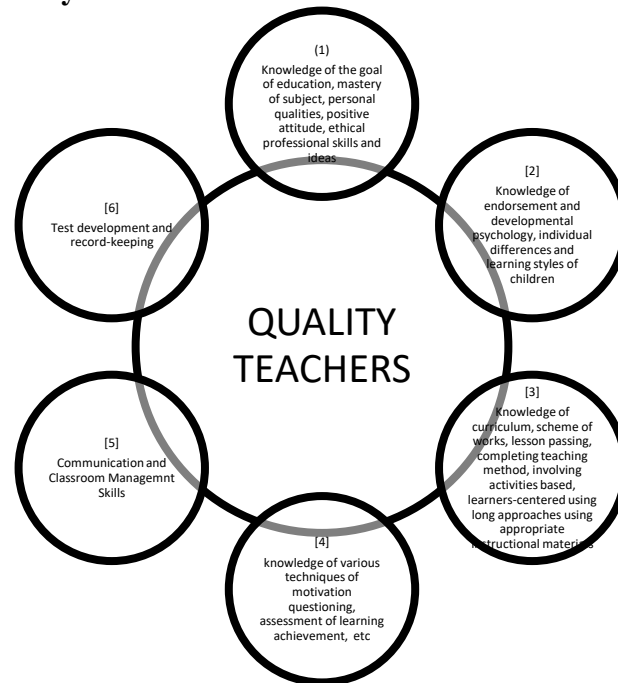


Figure 2: concept map of quality teachers

All well-trained teachers should be very conversant with all the above. They continue to grow along that line even after graduating, because they attend workshops as well as seminars and conferences.

The revised National Policy on Education (6th ed., 2014) expects the following competencies from all teachers:

- Teaching should be learner-centered for maximum self-development and self- fulfillment to all children
- Inculcate values and rise morally upright children.
- provide the child with basic knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship advancement.
- inspire national consciousness and harmonious co- existence.

Attributes of Effective Social Studies Teachers

The following attributes can make classroom of the Social Studies teacher easy for him/her:

Excellent Lesson Preparation

This enables him to face his class very confidently and to teach smoothly as well as keep his pupils focused through appropriate activities which keep them busy and away from acts of indiscipline.

The Teacher's own personality

The way the teacher dresses, speaks, and conducts himself in front of the class tells volumes about his personality. It determines how much respect he can get, he controls his temperament and emotions and also acts thoughtfully. A teacher who is too authoritarian is also killing the spirit of

his pupils as teaching and learning are a living, moving experience. By being friendly, he/she wins the confidence of his pupils while being firm also.

Co-operation

Co-operation between the teacher and pupils can be introduced in the classroom without endangering control. Some routine tasks to enhance co-operation are as follows:

1. Allow pupils to distribute books and other items meant for the class.
2. Allow pupils to volunteer to clean the chalkboard.
3. Make a list of late comer and absentees.
4. Allow them to clean the cupboard and keep other pieces of furniture tidy.

Class rules should be discussed and arrived at, and class officials chosen through election. By doing this, the teacher is helping the pupil to assume responsibilities.

Simple and clear instruction

All instructions should be unambiguous to avoid confusion and misinterpretation.

Order before teaching or making announcements.

The effective teacher makes sure that relative order is been maintained in the class before he commences teaching or making any announcement. This can be achieved if he;

- a) Stands still in front of the class and stare sharply at the pupils until they recognize his presence and calm down.
- b) Calls the names of one or two of those who are making the most noise.

Learning the pupils' names

Learning the names of pupils as soon as possible helps to create a friendly atmosphere. A pupil addressed by his name will pay attention far more easily than if he is referred to as 'you'.

Be positive, not negative.

He praises when necessary and corrects cautiously.

Good mannerisms

He is audible in speech but not loud, he avoid mannerisms such as 'you know', 'em', 'so', 'I mean' etc.

He always considers individual differences.

The teacher must realize that the pupils under him are different individuals with specific individual characteristics. He must recognize those characteristics and use them to advantage.

He is democratic.

That is, he is co-operative and willing to share planning and decision making with all his class, he gives help, guidance, and assistance readily to individuals who need it, while at the same time keeping the class busy. He believes in and encourages group participations as much as possible among his pupils, he is objective and impartial to foster learning in dealing. He praises and rewards his pupils for any good work done. All these lead to the pupils liking the teacher and wanting to be near him.

The Current National Curriculum

The content of curriculum are the facts, skills, concepts, and generalizations that constitute learning experiences.

Curriculum Objectives

Curriculum objective, especially in social studies constitutes what the teacher and the learner are expected to accomplish.

- Well-stated and unambiguous
- Adequate in scope;
- Measurable to a large extent;
- Exhaustive in terms of knowledge, skill and attitude to be acquired; and attainable a reality.

Curriculum Activities

These are the various activities that are combined with the methods and strategies of teaching the subject. You must state how the learners will be led into the learning process, e.g., using excursion, demonstration, presentation, storytelling, inquiry, discoveries, or any other methods discussed in this and other manuals to ensure that;

- The activities are adequate to meet the needs, interest, and peculiar circumstances of all learners.
- They reflect the objectives and contents of the curriculum.
- Both girls and boys are equally involved in all the activities and that lessons take cognizance of the cultural backgrounds of the learners.

Structure of Curriculum

A curriculum may be arranged from year one to year three of the primary school level. For example, the basic science curriculum is organized around four major themes:

- i. You and your environment
- ii. Living and non- living things
- iii. Science and development
- iv. You and energy.

These themes are then sub-divided into topics in a way that presents science in an integrated manner from year one through year six. For each year, the themes have topics along with behavioral performance objectives, content, activities, materials, and evaluation guide. Some themes recur and are spiral in nature, i.e., they may recur at a different level. Such themes include environment, energy, technology, and health. The spiral nature of these themes ensure that the contents become gradually challenging as learners progress from year to year.

The curriculum is activity- based and is presented in a standard format covering topics, performance objective, pupil/teacher activities, teacher / learning materials and suggested evaluation procedures.

In the course of implementing the curriculum, the teacher may encounter some challenges which may include;

- Inadequate and unqualified teachers.
- Inability to meaningfully interpret the performance objectives.
- Inadequate provision of infrastructure.

- Skipping of unfamiliar content areas by the teacher.
- Inability to organize activities for pupils.
- Skipping activities where materials are not readily available.
- Lack of assessment skills.
- Lack of adequate communication skills.
- Rushing the pupils to finish the scheme of work for lack of time.

Large class size

As a solution to these challenges, the teacher may seek the assistance of more experienced colleagues and obtain information about resources for teaching. You will need to do a lot of reading and browsing the internet on your subject for relevant materials for teaching and learning your subject. From the above description of curriculum, the amorphous nature of the word curriculum has given rise over the years to many interpretations.

For avoidance of doubt, UNESCO (2011) conveyed these interpretations among others:

- Curriculum is that which is taught in school.
- Curriculum is a set of subjects.
- Curriculum is content.
- Curriculum is a program of studies.
- Curriculum is a set of materials.
- Curriculum is a sequence of courses.
- curriculum is course of study.
- Curriculum is everything that goes on within the school including extra-class activities, guidance, and interpersonal relationship.
- Curriculum is what is taught both inside and outside of school that is directed by the school.
- Curriculum is everything that is planned by school personnel.
- Curriculum is a series of experiences undergone by learners in school.
- Curriculum is that which an individual learner experience because of schooling.

SOCIAL STUDIES: SCHEME OF WORK

Generally speaking, a scheme of work is a plan or schedule that shows what you will teach every week of the term during the school year. Each teacher in a school is expected to make a scheme of work from a given curriculum (NERDC 2012edition) and adjust it where needed.

WHY DO WE MAKE A SCHEME OF WORK

- To identify the topics that you and your learners must cover within a given period and, most importantly to avoid gaps in pupils learning.
- To assist you in establishing realistic targets and to assess whether you have achieved those targets.

Without a scheme of work, you might only teach half of all the topics you need to teach and may miss some important topics. Scheme of work also facilitate continuity, when a teacher leaves the school or is absent, Scheme serve as a map of the material that new teacher needs to cover. A scheme of work also helps to think about the learning sequence.

Planning a scheme of work helps to ensure that learners are always engaged in activities that are:

- Interesting
- Meaningful
- Stimulating and
- Motivating.

A scheme of work makes it easier to sustain the interest of learners and ensure that they learn. To achieve these goals, teachers must understand, among other things,

- How children learn
- The teaching methods that are effective to pupils with different learning styles
- The approaches that can be used to organize content and to group learners and
- The step involved in preparing a scheme of work.

The following figure shows the link between a scheme of work and the concepts listed above.

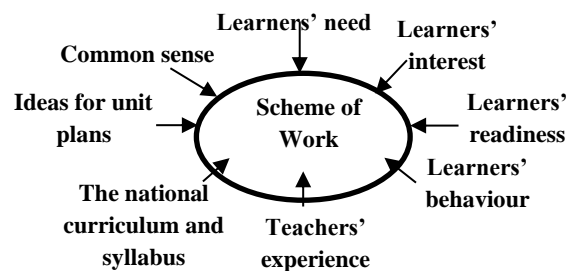


Figure 3: shows the link between a scheme of work and the concept listed.

The National curriculum on Social Studies for Primary School

The national curriculum is the total content to be taught in each subject over several years. For example, the Social Studies curriculum for basic education describes everything to be taught in Social Studies from primary 1 to junior Secondary school III. A curriculum is divided into syllabus. A syllabus is a set of total content to be taught each year for one subject at one level. For example, the Social Studies Primary 1 syllabus only describes everything to be taught in a primary one Social Studies class. A syllabus is then translated into a scheme of work, which in turn is divided into unit plans. Unit plans are then divided into lesson plans.

The figure below illustrates these steps:

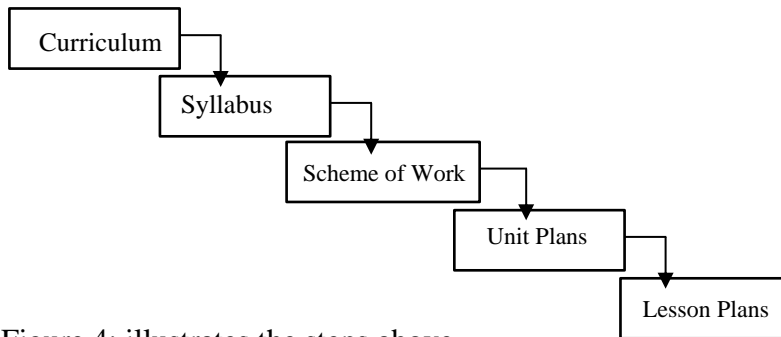


Figure 4: illustrates the steps above.

Implementation and Interpretation of New Basic Education Curriculum

The newly revised curriculum came to being in 2012 and become operational in October 2014. The implication of the new curriculum to Social Studies is that Social Studies is no longer a separated subject in Primary and Junior Secondary School but rather a unit in a new subject called Religion and National Value as new subject comprises five different units as follows:

1. Social studies
2. Christian religious studies
3. Islamic studies
4. Civic Education
5. Security Education

Worthy of note is the newest unit, Security Education. It therefore means that Religion and National Value (RVN) as a subject cannot be successfully taught by one teacher rather five different specialist teachers (Fowowe and Sobulo, 2014).

The following themes are contained in the Religious and National Value curriculum:

- Content should be planned for all children to take Social Studies, Civic Education and Security Education themes.
- Separate classes should be run for Christian Religious Studies theme and Islamic Studies theme.
- Disaster risk reduction education to be infused into the Civic Education, Social Studies and Security Education themes and create enabling environment for the subjects in your school.

Structure and Curriculum of Social studies for Primary I

Table 1: shows the structure and curriculum of Social Studies for primary 1

Topic	Performance Objectives	Instructional Methods	Instructional Materials	Activities	Learning Outcomes
Meaning of Social Studies	The pupils should be able to: 1. Explain the meaning of social studies.	1. Explain and guides the pupils to explain the meaning of social studies.	1. Pupils' textbooks and workbook	The pupils are to: 1. listen to teachers' explanation 2. Answer questions on the topic.	The pupils are able to: 1. explain the meaning of social studies.
The Family	The pupils should be able to: 1. explain what a family is; 2. Identify types of family; and 3. Describe them.	1. Lead the pupils to find out the meaning of the word 'Family' and through guided questions, explain the types of family. 2. lead the pupils to Identify types of family.	1. Pupils textbooks. 2. Family photographs cartoons, video CDs RMs etc.	The pupils are to: 1. find out from home the meaning of the word 'Family' and report back to class.	The pupils are able to: 1. Explain the meaning of the word 'Family', 2. mention the two types of family; and 3. explain types of family.
Qualities of a good family.	The pupils should be able to: 1. State the qualities of a good family.	1. Guide the pupils to identify and explain qualities of a good family.	1. Pictures and chart showing moral values as honesty, contentment, obedience, discipline etc.	The pupils are to: 1. Role play the family showing the qualities of a good family e.g. honesty, love, caring, etc.	The pupils are able to: 1. mention 3 qualities of a good family.

Meaning and types of culture.	The pupils should be able to: 1.Explain the meaning of culture; and 2.list types of culture.	1.Through guided question and role play, lead the pupils to understand the meaning of the word 'Culture' 2.Lead the pupil to outline types of culture.	1.pictures of people wearing traditional dresses. 2.pictures showing material, and non-materials culture.	The pupils are to: 1.Outline and describe the types of culture.	The pupils are able to: 1.state the meaning of culture; and 2.explain types of culture.
Values that show good moral in our society.	The pupils should be able to: 1.explain values which show morals e.g. what is right and what is wrong.	1. Lead the pupils to identify values which show moral in the society and attitudes that are wrong.	1.Cartoons, posters, ROM film and video clips, regalia, photographs, exhibits etc.	The pupils are to; 1.demonstrate different types of good and bad value.	The pupil are able to; 1.explain the values which are considered right and wrong.
Reasons for taking substances into the body	The pupils should be able to: 1. give reasons for taking substances into the body; and 2. describe the effect of taking substances into the body.	1. call the pupils to demonstrate each of the reasons. 2. Plan a drama sketch showing the reasons for taking substances into the body. 3. Use stories to highlight effects of taking substances into the body. 4. Ask pupils to narrate their experiences of taking substances into the body.	1. posters, charts and pictures of the reasons; and 2. charts, pictures, posters and drawing materials	The pupils are to: 1. demonstrate and dramatize the dramatic. 2. narrate their own experiences of taking substances into the body.	The pupils are able to: 1. give reasons for taking substance into the body.
Overdose (too much eating, drinking, or	The pupils should be able to: 1. demonstrate the looks	1. present pictures of sad faces, protruding stomachs to emphasize the effects of drinking too much.	1. chart, pictures, posters, relating to the topic.	The pupils are to: 1. narrate their experience	The pupils are able to: 1. mention the effects of

<p>smoking)</p>	<p>and behaviours of people who take too much food, drink or smoke. 2. describe the effects of drinking too much; and 3. explain the effects of inhaling too much. 4. say what to do to help somebody who is suffering from too much eating, drinking or inhaling.</p>	<p>2. Ask the pupils to narrate their own experiences. 3. explain the effects of eating and drinking too much</p>		<p>2. demonstrate the behaviours and looks shown in the picture; and 3. suggest what should be done.</p>	<p>drinking too much; 2. describe 3 effects of inhaling too much; and 3. demonstrate the behaviours and looks of people who eat, drink and smoke too much.</p>
<p>Food</p>	<p>The pupils should be able to: 1. define food 2. mention some of the foods eaten in their locality and 3. mention the sources of food in the community</p>	<p>1. Ask the pupils to bring samples of these food items from homes. 2. Ask them to identify the food they brought from home the sources of food they eat.</p>	<p>1. Real food items; 2. Picture of food; 3. Video clips on food; and 4. Pictures of farms and markets where food items are produced, sold and bought.</p>	<p>The pupils are to: 1. bring food items from homes and participate in identifying the food items; and 2. find out from home sources of food in their locality.</p>	<p>The pupils are able to: 1. define food 2. mention 5 of the foods eaten in the locality; and Mention the sources of food in the</p>

					community
Food safety	The pupils should be able to: 1. define what food safety is. Describe the ways of ensuring food safety.	1. Lead the pupils to define food safety. 2. Ask questions to lead pupils to identify ways of making sure that food is safe.	Picture showing different ways of making food safe.	The pupils are to: 1. define food safety, Explain the ways of ensuring food safety.	The pupils are able to: 1. mention ways of ensuring food safety.
Risk factors in food	The pupils should be able to: 1. Explain what risk factors in food are; 2. State the risk factors in food; and Identify risk factors in food distribution and preparation.	1. Lead the pupils to identify and explain risk factors. 2. Present pictures/photographs of risk factors in food distribution and preparation. Guide pupils to state risk factors in food distribution and preparation.	1. Video clips on risk factors in foods and Pictures/photographs of risk factors in food distribution and preparation.	The pupils are too: Participate in class discussion on risk factors associated with food distribution and preparation	The pupils are able to: Identify risk factors associated with food and distribution and preparation
Sources and uses of water	The pupils should be able to: 1. Mention sources of water supply in the	1. Discuss sources of water supply. 3. Use pictures and questions to guide pupils in enumeration the sources of water in homes	1. Pictures depicting sources of water supply; and 2. Pictures showing domestic uses of water	The pupils are to: Participate in discussion	The pupils are able: 1. Mention 4 sources of locality; and Describes 3 uses of

	locality ; and Describe the uses of water in homes				water in homes
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Methods and Techniques of Teaching Social Studies in Primary School

Teachers of Primary School Social Studies need to be conversant with teaching methods adequate for that level. This is because there is no any bad teaching method but teacher may not have aequate knowledge about the use of a particular teaching method.

Teaching methods adequate for Primary School Social Studies include:

- Discussion method
- Source Method
- Demonstration
- Activity – Based Learning
- Questioning
- Simulation
- Expository
- Inquiry
- Reflective teaching
- Cooperative learning
- Value analysis
- Value identification
- Concept mapping
- Lecture method/modified lecture method
- Field trip/Excursion
- Project method
- Role play
- Dramatization
- Debate
- Games and many more

Conclusion

A reflective evaluation of every aspect of curriculum, syllabus, scheme of works and a lesson plan taught provides an essential feedback to you as a pre-service teacher on your strength and weaknesses which will all lead to greater effectiveness on your party as a committed future professional teacher. In conclusion, this paper underscores the indispensable role of teachers in the effective teaching of social studies in the 21st century. It asserts that the quality and training of teachers significantly impact learners' outcomes, making high-quality teachers essential for achieving educational goals. The paper highlights the multidimensional nature of social studies, encompassing various disciplines to foster holistic understanding and values in learners. Effective social studies teachers are characterized by their preparation, demeanor, interaction, democratic approach, and adaptability to individual differences. The paper advocates for comprehensive

curriculum planning, focusing on content, objectives, activities, and assessment to ensure optimal learning experiences. The integration of social studies within the Religion and National Values subject reflects the evolving educational landscape. Moreover, the paper provides a plethora of teaching methods and techniques for educators to engage and inspire primary school learners effectively. Ultimately, the paper underscores the significance of the "teacher factor" as a driving force behind successful social studies education in the contemporary educational landscape.

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