

**The Nigeria Teachers Social Studies Training Curriculum and Sustainable Development Goals: A Content Analysis**

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**Abstract:** The concept of sustainable development has become a widely used construct that is incorporated into virtually all disciplines and discourses. The implementation and achievement of sustainable development goals in the management of our environmental resources cannot be realized without education, especially at a formal level. Teacher training institutions (colleges of education and faculties of education in universities) are expected through their courses to engage and create awareness of sustainability issues using their training programs. This paper, therefore, presents a content analysis of sustainability themes and concepts in the College of Education Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria. This is with the ultimate goal of exploring how any noticed gaps that could inhibit the promotion of education for sustainable development through teacher training can be filled so that the post-2015 sustainable development goals may be better achieved.

**Keywords:** social studies, sustainable development, Nigeria, pre-service teachers.

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## **Introduction**

Globally, education has been recognized as fundamentally important to addressing the critical international and national challenges facing humanity. Ever since the 1987 Brundtland Report, "Our Common Future," expressed international concern for tackling social, economic, and environmental challenges in the issues of sustainability and sustainable development, these have become important issues for teachers and teacher educators. The Brundtland Report argued that "the world's teachers have a crucial role to play in helping to bring about the extensive social changes needed for sustainable development." Agenda 21 was emphatic about the role of education in advancing the goals of sustainable development: "education is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issues. It is critical for achieving environmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, skills and behaviours, consistent with sustainable development and for effective public participation in decision-making" (UNCED, 1992, chap 36, 2). What is explicit in this context is the vital role of teachers and teacher education institutions as a key mechanism for building the capacity of would-be teachers in the process of attaining a sustainable future.

There is an abundance of research into teacher training curricula and Sustainable Development Goals. (This research, however, is notably lacking in the Nigerian context.) In a case study conducted in five Faculties of Education in Manitoba, Canada, it was noted that, despite relevant efforts made for the integration of this education into pre-service teacher education institutions, Education for Sustainable Development was poorly incorporated into the curriculum (Falkenberg & Babiuk, 2014). Álvarez-García, Sureda-Negre, and Comas-Forgas (2016) reported that students indicated that the environmental education course had provided them with new knowledge about environmental matters, improved their environmental awareness, and allowed them to discover new teaching methods for their practice; consequently, it was suggested that courses on environmental issues should be introduced in teacher training curricula in order to improve environmental literacy and sustainability.

Sustainability is a complex concept to define. Its definition tends to connect to the UN Brundtland Commission definition of sustainable development, which is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

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According to Clough, Chameau, and Carmichael (2006), sustainability is “a process that helps create a vibrant economy and a high quality of life, while respecting the need to sustain natural resources and protect the environment. It expresses the principle that future generations should live in a world that the present generation has enjoyed but not diminished.” From the viewpoint of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), sustainability is seen as “encompassing human and ecological health, social justice, secure livelihoods and a better world for all generations.” Succinctly, sustainability is knowledge and practices in the utilization of natural resources that meet the needs of present generations without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is about practices that support human, ecological, economic, and social vitality.

Three interrelated dimensions of sustainability are common in the literature: environment, socio-cultural, and economics. Various scholars have advanced the nexus between education and development, and there seems to be consensus that education is and remains an effective means for addressing developmental challenges (Resnik, 2006; Benavot, 2002). In this respect, teachers have been identified as critical agents for this task. The period of the 2005-2015 Decade Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) hinged it on the recognition of the important role of education in the future realization of the sustainability of environmental resources and economic and social well-being.

In the post-2015 agenda, the United Nations expanded and identified 17 sustainable development goals with 169 targets to be pursued and achieved by the year 2030. The SDG agenda acknowledges the role of education in the socio-economic and political progress of all. Goal 4, target 4.7, aims to

... ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development (United Nations, 2015).

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Undoubtedly, the goal and targets have implications for teacher education. In order for teacher education programs to be effective, the knowledge of sustainable development, theories of teaching and learning, and practical knowledge of teaching skills or experience should be integrated into the training programs. Teacher education institutions should prepare teacher trainees to play a role in addressing the ecological and socio-economic concerns and democratic values of the society. Teacher trainees, both pre-service and in-service, need to be empowered, well-trained, professionally qualified, and supported within well-resourced, efficient, and effectively planned teacher education programs in order to achieve SDG 4 (Rambla & Langthaler, 2016).

### **Teacher education in Nigeria: An overview**

According to Good's Dictionary of Education, teacher education includes "all the formal and non-formal activities and experiences that help to qualify a person to assume responsibilities of a member of the educational profession or to discharge his responsibilities more effectively." From Osuji's (2015) perspective, it is the "professional education of teachers towards attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge considered desirable so as to make them efficient and effective in their work in accordance with the need of a society at any point in time" (p. 296). Lawal (2013), quoting Obanya (2007), added that teacher education is a program related to the development of the proficiency and competence of teachers for the purpose of empowering them to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein. It encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory, and professional skills.

The evolution of teacher education in Nigeria can be traced back to the establishment of the Hope-Waddel Training Institute at Calabar in 1895 and St. Andrew's College, Oyo, in 1896. A major significant event in the development of teacher education in Nigeria involved the implementation of recommendations of the Ashby Commission's 1959 report on education (Nakpodia & Urien, 2011; Ekpiken & Ukpabio, 2014; Osuji, 2015). At the time of its independence in 1960, Nigeria did not have a teacher training college awarding certificates higher than diploma and Grade I Teacher's Certificates. However, with the report of the Ashby Commission, which prescribed education as a tool for national economic expansion, tertiary institutions were established, including five universities, and Grade I Teachers Colleges were upgraded to Nigeria

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Certificate in Education-awarding colleges called Advanced Teacher Training Colleges (many of which are now called Colleges of Education), established to produce well-qualified non-graduate teachers to teach lower classes in the secondary schools (Lawal, 2013). Another part of the Ashby Commission's recommendation was the introduction of courses in education leading to bachelor's degrees in education (Bachelor of Arts in Education B.A (Ed.) or Bachelor of Science in Education B.Sc. (Ed.) or Bachelor of Education B.Ed.). The University of Nigeria started awarding the B.A. (Ed.) and B.Sc. (Ed.) in 1961, the University of Ibadan in 1963, Ahmadu Bello University in 1964, University of Lagos in 1965, and the University of Ife, Ile-Ife, in 1967.

In Nigeria, teacher education programs are offered at both pre- and in-service levels by different teacher education institutions. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014:30) states that "no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers." It states that the goals of teacher education are to:

- Produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our school system;
- Encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- Help teachers to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals.
- Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations;
- Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

In addition, the policy states that "teacher education shall continue to take cognizance of changes in methodology and in the curriculum; and teachers shall be regularly exposed to innovations in their profession" (p.31).

The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) prescribes the teaching of Social Studies as a core subject in the primary and junior secondary schools and as an elective at the senior secondary school. The implication of this is that Social Studies education is recognized as a subject capable of assisting in the realization of the national objectives of education, which in themselves are a reflection of the national philosophy.

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The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) was established in 1989 by the Federal Government of Nigeria to ensure quality control and maintenance of national minimum standards for the training of teachers for the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE). One of the major responsibilities of the NCCE is to design a curriculum for all programs that will meet the aims of the beneficiaries. The NCCE pursues its functions through accreditation, monitoring and inspection exercises of all teacher training institutions. The main functions of the NCCE include harmonizing entry requirements and duration of courses in the Colleges, and laying down minimum standards and accreditations for all programs of teacher education after obtaining the government's approval. The colleges of education, according to the NCCE, are tertiary educational institutions that prepare intermediate-level teachers for a minimum of three years to qualify them to teach their respective subjects. There are a total of 82 colleges of education in Nigeria, with 22 federal, 14 private, and 46 state colleges.

The Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) is a three-year program of teacher education designed to expose the students to courses in general education, subject areas, subject methodology, and teaching practice. Thus, according to the National Commission for Colleges of Education's minimum standards (2012), the Social Studies program is designed with the goal of producing teachers who are both professionally committed and academically competent in its philosophy, content, and methodology. The program is designed to achieve the following:

- Produce professionally and academically competent NCE Social Studies teachers for the Basic 1-9 schools;
- Prepare teachers who will inculcate in their pupils rational adjustment to their physical and social environment through acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, values, appreciations, and skills necessary for developing social and civic responsibilities;
- Produce students who are capable of benefiting from further education in Social Studies and other related areas.

These objectives and curriculum structure indicate that the graduates of the NCE program are expected to be professionally competent in their chosen career. Therefore, the curriculum

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contains components of real work and professional studies in teaching that will produce a competent social studies teacher.

In Nigeria, social studies is defined as the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school program, Social Studies provide a coordinated and systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. Social Studies education in Nigeria is a problem-solving school subject (Ogunyemi, 2003, 2005). It implies that the country requires not only citizens who can think critically and constructively, but also those with sound social, political, and environmental orientation. Social Studies as a discipline and as a way of life strives to equip the young learners with such knowledge, values, and skills through its contents and methods. Its content is rich and versatile, the methods diverse and unique.

The Nigerian Social Studies program is designed to:

- Develop a capacity to learn and acquire basic skills including those of listening, reading, speaking, writing, and calculation, together with those of observation, analysis, and inference, which are essential to the formation of sound judgment;
- Ensure the acquisition of the relevant body of knowledge and information which is an essential pre-requisite to personal development as well as to a positive personal contribution to the betterment of humankind; create awareness that discipline is essential for an orderly society;
- Inculcate positive values and appropriate values of integrity, honesty, hard work, fairness, justice, and togetherness for the development of the nation;
- Develop the ability for a rational utilization of cultural, spiritual, and natural resources and their conservation for national development;
- Appreciate the diversity and interdependence of all members of the local and national communities and the country and international understanding (Ogunyemi, 2003).

There are few detailed studies on Education for Sustainability in Nigeria (Ajayi et al., 2004; Raheem et al., 2004; Ogunyemi, 2005). Research on document/content analysis of sustainability

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concepts is rare in the literature. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to analyze the content of the Social Studies Curriculum of the Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Arts and Social Sciences (2012 Edition) for sustainability themes and concepts.

Specifically, the following questions were raised: To what extent do National Commission for Colleges of Education Curriculum standards for Social Studies contain themes and topics of sustainable development and sustainability? What dominant general categories and patterns regarding sustainable development goals and sustainability are expressed in the document?

### **Method**

This qualitative study employed a content analysis tool of relational analysis to assess the extent to which sustainability themes and concepts are reflected in the Social Studies courses of the College of Education in Nigeria. The Social Studies Curriculum of the Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Arts and Social Sciences (2012 Edition) is the curriculum document prescribing all the courses in the subject at the college of education level in the country.

The study also carried out the identification and development of categories and strands of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). This involved identifying the tripod components of ESD with their respective strands, presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: The Tripod Components of ESD and their corresponding strands**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Socio-cultural</b></li><li>• food security</li><li>• human rights</li><li>• peace and human security</li><li>• gender equality</li><li>• cultural diversity, intercultural understanding</li><li>• health, HIV/AIDS</li><li>• governance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Environmental</b></li><li>• natural resources</li><li>• climate change</li><li>• rural development</li><li>• sustainable urbanization</li><li>• air quality</li><li>• biodiversity and habitat</li><li>• disaster prevention and mitigation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Economic perspectives</b></li><li>• poverty reduction</li><li>• corporate responsibility and accountability</li><li>• market economy</li></ul>
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The analysis involved x-raying the curriculum content areas using each of the strands to determine the degree of their focus on sustainability and sustainable goals. The NCE Minimum Standards Curriculum for NCE Social Studies was also analyzed. This involved exploring the meaning of the topics and the underlying physical messages derivable from them in relation to the earlier identified categories and strands of ESD. The percentage of such reflections was calculated for each of the topics using the content of their course description vis-à-vis the major ESD categories. The results were then used to draw inferences about the percentage of topics and concepts reflecting ESD categories and corresponding strands in the Curriculum.

### **Results**

Table 2 shows the courses recommended for pre-service social studies teachers, either as a single or double major academic program, and the percentage of ESD concepts reflected in them. From our analysis, the Social Studies Curriculum of the Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Arts and Social Sciences (2012 Edition) contains many topics with direct and indirect relevance to sustainable development and sustainability. The program operates course unit system. Courses have units and status. The status implies whether it is compulsory (courses a student must take and pass) or elective (courses a student can take in order to make up the required additional units for the award of the certificate) and this determines the number of lecture hours allocated for each course.

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**Table 2: Social Studies Topics in the NCCE in Nigeria and Percentage of ESD Concepts Reflected in the Curriculum**

<b>Year 1</b>				
Course title	Course description	Units	Course status	%
Foundation of Social Studies	The definition and scope of Social Studies - The philosophical background of Social Studies a) In relation to the National Policy on Education b) In relation to theory of inter-relationships in learning - The concept of integration in Social Studies - The relationship between Social Studies, the Social Sciences, and other subjects - Aims and objectives of Social Studies - The relationship between Social Studies and Population, family life, Drug and AIDS Education.	2	Compulsory	0%
Man and His Social Environment	- Explain the basic concepts of man in the social environment - Definition and types of man's social environment* - Why man lives in groups* - Family-types, structure, functions, and changing roles*	2	Compulsory	64%

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forms and problems of marriage: customary, religious, and ordinance</li> <li>- Safe age for marriage, family formation, child bearing and rearing practices*</li> <li>- Primary and Secondary groups - definitions, characteristics, and functions</li> <li>- Kinship systems in Africa*</li> <li>- Factors that promote living together: love, customs, morality, Folkways, mores, laws</li> <li>- Women education</li> <li>- Family welfare*</li> <li>- Gender roles *</li> </ul>			
Man and His Physical Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Apply the knowledge obtained in carrying out their daily activities</li> <li>- Develop the right attitudes towards issue of environmental control and management*</li> <li>- The concept of physical environment: Minerals and Rocks; Relief features, soils; Atmosphere, weather and climate; vegetation; water bodies (ponds, streams, rivers, lakes, lagoons, seas and oceans). The influence of physical environment on man's activities and vice-versa*</li> </ul>	2	Compulsory	100%
Introduction to NERDC National		2		0%

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Curriculum for Social Studies				
Nigeria as a Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concept of nation</li> <li>- Nigeria as a geo-political entity</li> <li>- Ethnic groups in Nigeria (number, characteristics, and location)</li> <li>- Population of Nigeria: size and distribution</li> <li>- Integration: Concept and forms</li> <li>- Efforts at national integration (national symbols, new capital city, constitutions, NYSC, Unity Schools, Federal Highways, etc.)</li> <li>- Problems of national integration</li> </ul>	1	Elective	0%
Origin and Nature of Man	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The various explanations of the origin of man, namely: religious, mythical, and scientific.</li> <li>- The beginning of man from apes to homo-sapiens</li> <li>- Harmonizing Forces (tool making, language, Social Organization and Management of Man's Prolonged Childhood)</li> <li>- The uniqueness of man</li> <li>- The interdependence of man</li> <li>- Race and Racism</li> <li>- Humanity Universality</li> </ul>	1	Elective	0%
Man and His Economic Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Man's basic economic problems; Scarcity and choice*</li> <li>- Factors of production*</li> </ul>	2	Elective	67%

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Man's reactions to supply and demand of goods and services</li> <li>- Production systems: primary, secondary, and tertiary*</li> <li>- Sources of government revenue in Nigeria</li> <li>- Economic problems: Inflation, unemployment, poverty and poverty alleviation</li> <li>- Programmes*</li> </ul>			
Man and His Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concepts and role of government in society</li> <li>- Power and Authority</li> <li>- Traditional forms of government: family, clan, village, town, empire, etc.*</li> <li>- Modern forms of government: democracy, autocracy, monarchy, and the military</li> <li>- Organs of government - executive, legislative, judiciary, and the press</li> <li>- Tiers of government in Nigeria - Local, State, and Federal; emphasizing their structure and functions*</li> </ul>	2	Compulsory	40%
<b>Year II</b>				
Nigeria Political Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concepts of nation, state, and country</li> <li>- Nationalist movements and political parties before independence</li> </ul>	2	Compulsory	0%

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Independence, the Republics, and the political parties</li> <li>- Military Rule in Nigeria</li> <li>- Political Issues (population size, power sharing/shift, revenue allocation, resource control, etc.)</li> <li>- Constitutions (meaning, purposes, types)</li> <li>- Constitutional developments in Nigeria since 1914</li> <li>- General provision of the current Nigerian constitution (fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy, citizenship, fundamental human rights, Arms of Government, FCT and General supplementary provision)</li> </ul>			
<p>Practicum for Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) National Curriculum</p>	<p>An overview of NERDC Social Studies National Curriculum for Basic 7-9. Distinctions among curriculum, syllabus, scheme of work, unit plan, and lesson plan; locating social studies syllabuses; preparation of lesson plans in Social Studies; distinction among teaching methods, techniques, and strategies; an overview of Social Studies teaching methods; an overview of instructional resources in Social Studies; evaluation strategies in Social Studies, Micro-teaching (meaning and approaches).</p>	2	Compulsory	0%

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<p>Social Studies Research Methods and Statistics</p>	<p>Research - Concept and content of research: Types of research; Choice of research topic; Purposes/objectives of research - Review of relevant literature - Research methodology (Research Design): Stating research problem; Choice of population; Sample and sampling techniques; Hypothesising - Data collection techniques: Observation, interview, questionnaire, etc. - Organisation and presentation of data and statistical representation. Appendices - Bibliography and References - Statistics: Meaning, Types, and Uses - Descriptive statistics: Measures of central tendency; Measures of variability - Inferential statistics: Parametric and non-parametric</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Compulsory</p>	<p>0%</p>
<p>Field Trip</p>	<p>The course will afford the students the opportunity to visit both far and near environments in terms of educative interest in Social Studies. Students will be out for one to four days of studying both physical and social phenomenon, human activities in terms of housing, occupational practices, dressing, culture, etc. Students will be able to write a</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Compulsory</p>	<p>40%</p>

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	study-report on undertaking field exercise, and by so doing, develop in learners skills of data collection, e.g. interceding, documentation, and reporting.			
Issues and Problems of National Development and Modernization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nature and concepts of national development</li> <li>- Meaning, nature and relationship between modernization and national development*</li> <li>- Dimensions of national development (economic development, political development, social development, legal development, educational development, technology and health, etc.)</li> <li>- Problems of national development (poor data base, corruption, poor plan implementation, external manipulations and illiteracy, etc.)</li> <li>- Factors and processes of modernization*</li> <li>- Aspects of modernization (population, urbanization, education, science and technology, socio-cultural, political, and economic)*</li> </ul>	2	Compulsory	50%
Citizenship Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concept of socialization</li> <li>- Types of socialization (Primary, secondary, adult)</li> </ul>	2	Compulsory	29%

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agents of socialization (Family, peer group, school, mass media, church, mosque, etc.)</li> <li>- Processes of socialization</li> <li>- Political socialization and mass mobilization (MAMSER, NOA, etc.)</li> <li>- Problems of socialization</li> <li>- The role of Social Studies in the socialization and production of good citizens</li> <li>- The concepts of citizen and citizenship education</li> <li>- Types of citizenship (single and dual)</li> <li>- Citizenship acquisition in Nigeria (by birth, by registration, and by national naturalization)</li> <li>- Renunciation and denial of citizenship</li> <li>- Qualities and duties of a good citizen</li> <li>- Fundamental Human Rights*</li> <li>- Lawful denial of fundamental human rights*</li> <li>- Violation and protection of human rights*</li> <li>- Ways in which human rights are violated*</li> <li>- Ways of protecting human rights*</li> </ul>			
Social Services and Social change in Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social administration and social policies defined</li> <li>- Educational institutions: Structures and functions in Nigeria</li> </ul>	1	Elective	54%

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health institutions: Structure and functions, National AIDS/STD Control Programmes in Nigeria (NASCP)*</li> <li>- Housing Policy*</li> <li>- Other services and utilities: Fire, Prison, Postal, Old age pension, Nigeria Police Force, Water Supply, Electricity, Transport, Communication</li> <li>- Attitude to public utilities</li> <li>- Population pressure on social services in Nigeria*</li> </ul> <p>The concept of change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Theories of change</li> <li>- Types of change</li> <li>- Factors and processes of change</li> <li>- Changes in Nigeria before and after 1960 in demographic, economic, socio-cultural and political system*</li> <li>- Change and its effects on the individual and the family in Nigeria*</li> </ul>			
Law-related Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The process of law making in Nigeria</li> <li>-Litigations, criminal and civil cases</li> <li>-Administration of justice; the function of the police, courts and law and prisons services.</li> <li>- The course will equally take a critical look at the role of the judiciary in the implementation of the law, e.g. the hierarchy of courts, personal and independence</li> </ul>	1	Elective	0%

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	- A detailed study of "You and the Law"			
Transportation and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The differences between transportation and communication</li> <li>- Traditional and modern means of Transportation: Advantages and problems*</li> <li>- Traditional and Modern means of Communication: Advantages and problems (E-mail, fax, telex, radio, internet. Practical application should be demonstrated to students*</li> <li>- The role of transportation and communication on national development</li> <li>- The mass media-what is mass media, their role in national development problems, etc.</li> <li>- Students should develop case studies materials on any mass media of their choice (It should form part of student C.A).</li> </ul>	1	Elective	33%
<b>Year III</b>				
Teaching Practice		6	Compulsory	0%
Research Project		3	Compulsory	0%
Population and Family life Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concept of population</li> <li>- The concept of family life</li> <li>- The family life education</li> <li>- The objective of population education</li> </ul>	2	Compulsory	25%

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The objective of family life education</li> <li>- Gender issues and family life education*</li> <li>- Family size and welfare*</li> <li>- The roles of members of the family</li> <li>- The responsibility of parenthood</li> <li>- Population data, i.e. census and vital registration</li> <li>- Population distribution in Nigeria and Africa</li> <li>- The relationship between Social Studies and Population, Family Life, and Aids Education.*</li> <li>- National Population Policy (NPP)</li> <li>- Population dynamics: growth, decline and structure and their socio-economic implication*</li> <li>- Methods of teaching Population/Family life Education</li> </ul>			
Nigeria External Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The concept of Internal Relation</li> <li>- Nigerian foreign policies (Principles and Policies)</li> <li>- Nigeria and ECOWAS (Formation, functioning and problems)</li> <li>- Man in International Community</li> <li>- World Tension: Causes and solutions (games, conferences and membership, etc. *)</li> <li>- Nigeria in the Commonwealth</li> <li>- Nigeria in OPEC</li> </ul>	2	Compulsory	22%

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nigeria in the UNO (contribution benefit and problems)*</li> <li>- Nigeria in the Africa Union</li> </ul>			
Social Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concept of the social institution</li> <li>- Structure and functions of different social institutions such as legal political, economic, religious, educational, health institutions, etc. in Nigeria*</li> <li>- Problems of social institutions in Nigeria*</li> <li>- Religion in Society</li> <li>- Religion in Nigeria</li> <li>- Religion and Morality</li> <li>- Religion and Politics</li> <li>- Conflict and tolerance in Nigeria</li> </ul>	1	Elective	25%
Globalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concept of Globalization</li> <li>- Historical antecedents (colonialism, Imperialism, Europeanization, Westernization, Americanization, etc.)</li> <li>- Who is globalizing, and what is being globalized?</li> <li>- Who is globalizing, and what cannot be globalized?</li> <li>- Impact of globalization on the South (i.e. Developing and Underdeveloped countries, including Nigeria)*</li> <li>- What can Nigeria globalize? How? (i.e. Nigeria and the globalization process)</li> </ul>	1	Elective	17%

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*Environmental Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The concept of environment*</li> <li>- The scope of environmental studies*</li> <li>- Environmental hazards:*                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Natural: soil erosion, drought, desert encroachment, ocean encroachment, flooding, storms, etc.*</li> <li>ii) Man-generated: Air pollution, water pollution, land pollution, and despoliation*</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Environmental Management in Nigeria (Laws and Policies)*</li> </ul>	3	Compulsory	100%
**Contemporary Public Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- STD/HIV/AIDS Scourge*</li> <li>- Human rights*</li> <li>- Poverty and poverty alleviation*</li> <li>- Food crises*</li> <li>- Human trafficking</li> <li>- Values education*</li> <li>- Safety awareness education*</li> <li>- Life skills, personal skills*</li> <li>- Drug abuse*</li> <li>- Peace Education*</li> <li>- Child abuse*</li> <li>- Cultism</li> <li>- Religious and Ethnic conflicts, etc.</li> <li>- Corruption – The role of EFCC and ICPC, etc.</li> </ul>	2	Compulsory	71%

**\*Topics and concepts reflecting ESD categories and strands**

**\*\*Only offered in the Double Major in Social Studies**

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The results of the content analysis revealed that about 16 out of the 25 topics highlighted in the Curriculum reflect elements of sustainable development goals and sustainability, as shown in Table 3. This is a reflection of high percentage (64%).

**Table 3: Sustainable Development Related Topics in NCE Social Studies Curriculum in Nigeria**

		<b>Single Major</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Environmental Perspective</b>	<b>Socio-cultural perspectives</b>	<b>Economic perspectives</b>
<b>I</b>	Man and His Physical Environment (100%)	Man and His Social Environment (64%)	Man and His Economic Activities (67%)
		Man and His Government (40%)	
<b>II</b>	Issues and Problems of National Development and Modernization (50%)		
		Social Services and Social Change in Nigeria (54%)	
		Citizenship Education (40%)	
<b>III</b>		Population and Family Life Education (25%)	
		Social Institutions (25%)	
	Nigeria External Relations (22%)		
	Globalization (77%)		
		Field Trip (40%)	
	Transportation and Communication (33%)		Transportation and Communication (33%)
		<b>Double Major</b>	
<b>II</b>	Environmental Studies (100%)	Contemporary Public Issues (71%)	

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From the curriculum content analysis in Table 2, it was discovered that only four topics reflected the Environmental Perspectives of Sustainability, while eight and four reflected Socio-cultural and Economic perspectives, respectively.

### **Discussion**

The results of the curriculum content analysis illuminated that only 2.1 % of the Social Studies Curriculum of the Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Arts and Social Sciences (2012 Edition) reflects Environmental perspectives, while 3.2% and 1.6% reflect Socio-cultural and Economic perspectives, respectively. Nevertheless, we can still examine the relevance of each of these percentages to each of the three strands of sustainability previously highlighted.

#### ***Social Studies pre-service teachers' curriculum and environmental perspectives***

When we look at the Social Studies Curriculum in terms of environmental perspectives, we observe that environment is at the core of Social Studies. With topics like "Man and His Physical Environment," "Man and His Economic Activities," "Issues and Problems of National Development and Modernization," "Environmental Hazards," and "Environmental Management" in the Social Studies Curriculum, sustainable development issues such as disaster prevention and mitigation, climate change, rural development, air quality, biodiversity and habitat, and sustainable urbanization can be imparted into the pre-service teachers during training.

It was also observed that the curriculum contains topics which can be explored to promote ESD values such as social justice, unity, independence, peace, respect, responsibility, citizenship, patriotism, religious tolerance, loyalty, cultural identity, equality, etc. It is believed that exposing the teacher-trainees to these topics can lay a very sound foundation for them to prepare those they are going to teach, post-graduation. Furthermore, they become better positioned to prepare for natural disasters and acquisition of sustainable development ethics.

#### ***Social Studies pre-service teachers' curriculum and socio-cultural perspectives***

The effective teaching of topics like "man and social environment," "social institution," "population and family life," and "citizenship education" prescribed in the curriculum can contribute to the realization of sustainable development goals relating to the socio-cultural

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perspectives strand of sustainability, which includes human rights, peace and human security, gender equality, cultural diversity and intercultural understanding, health, HIV/AIDS, and governance.

Where the Social Studies teachers effectively maximize the teaching of these topics with their trainees, they are more likely to become better groomed in the understanding of cultural diversity and intercultural relationships. They will also be up to date in a rapidly developing world, solve the problems they come across, and become more responsible.

***Social Studies pre-service teachers' curriculum and economic perspectives***

When we look at the Social Studies Curriculum in terms of economic perspectives, we can see that the economy, one of the important fields of Social Studies, makes its effect felt in the curriculum. Yalcinkaya (2013) confirmed this by observing that a “production, distribution and consumption” learning domain has been formed with an economy-based approach. The economic perspectives of the sustainability principle consist of three sub-perspectives, which include poverty reduction, market economy, and corporate responsibility and accountability. These perspectives are well accommodated in the Social Studies Curriculum, through topics like “Man and His Economic Activities,” “Globalization,” and “Transportation and Communication.” In situations where the teacher trainer effectively handles these topics, opportunities for developing in the learners the ethics of sustainable development are quite possible.

Beyond the content analysis, we conducted interviews with some of the teacher educators who were using the curriculum. The lecturers were unanimous in their opinion that the Social Studies teacher training curriculum has rich content matter and methodology on sustainability and sustainable development goals. Lecturers pointed out that the spiral nature of the design of the curriculum provides students with opportunities to learn about sustainability throughout the program. Lecturers were of the view that the Social Studies curriculum for teacher training was adequate in methods of teaching. Methods of teaching taught to the student teachers are those that not only make them responsible citizens, but which they can also use to promote sustainable development concepts, attitudes, values, and skills. Student teachers are taught problem-solving, action learning, issue-enquiry learning, and field-based learning.

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### **Implications of the Findings**

The goal of the study was to identify concepts/topics in the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) Curriculum for teacher preparation that help to promote the goals and ethics of Education for Sustainable Development. Findings from the study will be shared with relevant stakeholders: teachers, teacher educators, researchers in teacher education, and the superintending agency in charge of teacher education in Nigeria, the NCCE.

This is very timely now that the NCCE will be commencing a content area review of the Nigeria Certificate in Education Specialist Teachers' Minimum Standards Curriculum. It is expected that the output of such an exercise will accommodate more content areas that can further help to boost the integration of ESD-related content areas while preparing pre-service teachers at the College of Education level. Furthermore, it is expected that pre-service teachers will be provided more opportunities by their trainers to display ESD competencies that will enable them cope with as well as teach the different sustainability challenges effectively. Teacher educators will also need to assess whether the training program they are providing is capable of preparing their trainees to acquire knowledge and develop practical skills and ethical values that can effectively assist them with the challenges of ESD.

Researchers working in the area of teacher education are equally expected to explore the various ways by which the contents and pedagogies of teacher preparation in the various training institutions can be made to be fully ESD compliant. This is because teachers are part of the major drivers of change in any society; their proper grounding in the integration of ESD into the curriculum will help them play this role more effectively.

### **Conclusion**

Curriculum content analysis can offer insights into the designs of comparative analyses. A thorough content analysis provides a clear articulation of the relevance of a curriculum to an established perspective. From this review, we have been able to identify contentious issues that merit further consideration and investigation.

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From the foregoing, it can be concluded that the content of sustainability and focus on sustainability goals in the Social Studies Curriculum of the Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Arts and Social Sciences (2012 Edition) is limited. The majority of the courses with related content through which sustainability and sustainable development issues can be taught are electives. Based on this conclusion, it is recommended that an attempt to enrich the curriculum with topics that focus more on the three strands of education for sustainable development will help in preparing the Social Studies pre-service teachers for more effective propagation of sustainable development ethics after graduation. It is expected that stakeholders such as teacher trainers, curriculum developers, subject associations, and the superintending agency in charge of teacher education in Nigeria will play an important role in a curriculum review that will accommodate the multidisciplinary features of both the Social Studies curriculum and education for sustainable development, which will focus on sustainable development goals and understanding the various notions of sustainability.

More importantly, teacher educators must reconsider their attitudes, tools, methods, and approaches in delivery of the topics. Lectures must consciously emphasize sustainability and sustainable development goals and values inherent in the topics. The five essential pedagogical principles of sustainability must be seen to be inculcated in the teacher trainees. This should include critical and creative thinking, participation and participatory learning, systematic thinking, and partnerships.

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