

Principals and Teachers Perception of Social Studies Curriculum Implementation in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State

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Abstract

This study investigated Principals and Teachers Perception of Social Studies Curriculum Implementation in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population comprised all principal and social studies teachers in Ehime Mbano LGA while the sample consisted of 97 principals and social studies teachers drawn using simple random sampling technique. A self-designed questionnaire titled 'Social Studies Principal and Teachers' Perception Questionnaire (SSTPQ) was the instrument used for the study. The questionnaire was validated and reliability test carried out which yielded a cronbachs alfa reliability coefficient of 0.85. Data were analysed with mean and standard deviation. t-test analysis was used for the test of hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between principals and social study teachers in Ehime Mbano L.G.A on Social Studies curriculum implementation. The study revealed that there was social studies curriculum implementation but there was no significant gender difference in this perception among teacher unlike the principals. It was therefore recommended that more investigation should be carried out as to this effect to find other factors that are proliferating deviancy among youths. Among other recommendations, teachers should be trained on modern and improved methods of teaching Social Studies.

Keywords: Social Studies, Curriculum implementation, Gender.

Introduction

A verified means by which any nation maintains steady development and environmental sustainability is through education. The acquisition of knowledge, values, morals, skills, beliefs, habit and personal development that is vital for nationhood is all made possible via education. Education has been seen as a veritable instrument for effective national development (FRN, 2013). The vitality of education is seen in societal and country's cultural, political and socioeconomic development (Ofojebe, 2014). O' Conor cited in Obasi, Kanno and Obih (2017) looked at education as a systematic process by which society consciously transmits cultural heritage to generations through schools, colleges and other tertiary institutions. Education gears towards human emancipation seen in individual becoming civilized, refined and cultured. Ikegbusi (2012)

acknowledged that education is the only means to make a society socialized; with the primary goal to make the individual a holistic person. However, education is a necessary force in the economic, intellectual, social and cultural empowerment (Adesina, 2011). The researcher further reiterated that education has the capacity to bring about behavioural and character changes, as well as restructure capabilities for desired development. In Nigeria, subjects are design to bring about change in behaviour but social studies as a subject offered at lower and upper basic education was design specifically to bring about behavioural and character changes which make individuals better citizens.

To be a better citizen, citizenship education is paramount. Citizenship education which provides students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that would make them sound, competent and responsible citizens who are knowledgeable to contribute to the community, and display moral and civic excellence is made possible through social studies (National Council of the Social Studies, 2004). Social study is a subject taught at junior secondary schools with a curriculum that could enable persons to achieve moral, societal and educational goals. Many countries of the world introduced social studies in their school system in order to address ardent issues. For instance, Edinyang and Ubi (2013) narrated that the British government introduced social studies curriculum into their educational system after the First and Second World Wars importantly to address social problems, pacify the conscience of the citizens to obey constituted authority, and contribute positively towards societal development.

Most Nigerians in the late 1960s agreed that the schools must be Nigerian in outlook rather than emphasizing foreign ideas. According to Fafunwa (1974), the colonial system of education alienated Nigerians from their cultural environment. It was thought by Nigerian educators that through Social Studies, the love of the country could be kindled in the Nigerian child in such a way that they would develop a strong attachment to their country and to further expose them to the problems in the society and equip them with the necessary skills needed for their survival in their environment (Edinyang, Tandu, & Gimba, 2015). Therefore, Social Studies is seen as school discipline for the young generations (Okam, 2012). This subject was introduced essentially to enable students to adapt to their environment and be able to adjust to the stress of ever changing society. The curriculum was designed in to equip students with the needed skills to be acquainted and survive in their environment (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, NERDC, 2013).

Over the years the social studies curriculum has passed through innovation to meet the need of the time. In 2014 NERDC introduced social studies as a theme in a single subject "Religion and National value curriculum" and recently renamed it "National Values" in July, 2017 (National Universities Commission, 2017). Further, the National Policy on Education (NPE) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) elaborately listed social studies curriculum overall objectives as: development of ability of the students to the changing environment; becoming responsible and disciplined individuals who are capable and willing to contribute to the development of the society; inculcating the right type of values; developing sense of comprehension towards other people, their diverse cultures, history and those fundamental things that make them human and developing a sense of solidarity and sharing, based on a sense of security in one's own identity. Social studies curriculum is basic to a great number of social science-based professional courses for learners (Godfrey, 2009).

Social studies curriculum addresses economic, political, psychological, physical and technological relevance of the cultural and moral way of life of a people to national development. Its content is organized around social and environmental issues affecting man's existence, ability to perform, and conserve the environment for sustainable development (Mezieobi, Akpochafo, & Mezieobi, 2010). Social studies curriculum is one of such programmes that deserve national attention especially in the planning and implementation of the curriculum. In curriculum planning, target audience is paramount to ensure effective teaching and learning.

However, implementation of the curriculum is not anyways out of the business of effective teaching and learning. A beautifully planned curriculum without proper implementation is a failure. Curriculum is a planned body of knowledge, skills and attitudes that is logically grouped into subject topics taught to learners in academic institutions (Ikehi, Ifeanyieze, & Ugwuoke, 2014). The researchers maintained that teaching process is paramount in the implementation action of the curriculum of any subject. Mkpa and Izuagba, (2012) opined that curriculum implementation is often referred holistically as all aspects of educational experience within the reach of the student in the school. Implementation of Social Studies curriculum has to do with the act of carrying out or executing the curriculum contents of Social Studies by way of teaching pupils and allowing them learn from its contents. Curriculum implementation gives that medium through which stated policies by the curriculum designers and developers are transcribed into practice such as the discharge of instruction by the teacher in the classroom (Mkandawire, 2013). Sometimes, the effectiveness of the teacher in the discharge of instructions in the classroom depends on the teachers' years of experience, exposure and qualifications.

It is a known fact that the teacher quality and qualifications have great influence on curriculum implementation. Although, Anyiam (2021) revealed that teachers' qualification is not a factor that influences students' academic achievement but reiterated that teachers teaching experience is paramount in ensuring students learning. However, scholars have stated that professional and academic qualifications of teacher are two vital concepts which cannot be separated in an attempt to analyze the effectiveness of the teacher in curriculum implementation. Nwaubani, Ottoh-Offiong, Usulor, and Okeke (2016) acknowledged that teacher qualification is one of the elements that produce a positive result in instructional delivery of social studies. Further, Okam (2012) stressed that only professionally trained social studies teachers can successfully produce a desired result in instructional delivery. The training of teacher then is important before engaging in curriculum implementation, since another qualifier for the name teacher is curriculum implementer (Mkpa in Obilo & Sangoliye, 2010). The training is expected to expose the teacher to necessary skills, knowledge of the curriculum content, and proper utilization of instructional resources in order to become an effective teacher (Okoro, Emenyonu, & Akaraonye, 2012).

Further, the absence of well trained and qualified teachers of social studies would make it difficult to deliver effectively a workable educational system in Nigeria (Nwaubani, Ottoh-Offiong, Usulor, & Okeke, 2016). This implies that for Nigeria to have a functional and quality educational system, it must constantly endeavor to produce qualified teachers who are competent enough in the coverage of vital subjects such as social studies.

Social studies curriculum is so broad that covering it is paramount for effective learning, hence a vital aspect in curriculum implementation. This requires subject/content mastery by the teachers of social studies. However, Umadi (2012) stated that the unique nature of social studies education appears to draw extra ordinary attention to the fact that at all stages of its teaching

process and content implementation are always problematic. Based on this premise, it is pertinent for the curriculum developers to take into consideration the proper means to ensure that what has been designed is properly implemented to ensure the actualization of the objectives of social studies.

Unfortunately, social studies curriculum has not been properly implemented. Based on this premise, Elochukwu (2019) stated that teachers hold the general and strong view that the Social Studies curriculum has not been properly implemented. This statement beacons on the fact that the teaching and learning of Social Studies over the years have not led to the actualization of the objectives set for the subject. Again, Social Studies students have no trace of those positive social attitudes and changes expected of them to display having studied Social Studies. Dada et al (2018) stated that social studies curriculum is not properly implemented owing to the fact that teachers of Social Studies find it extremely difficult to apply specific techniques that could help facilitate the realization of the desired objectives of the subject. Adeyemo and Ogunsola (2020) in their study found that teacher perceptions on Social Studies curriculum implementation favours the conception that social studies implementation could not be described as either a failure or a complete success. On the contrary Ezemora (2019) acknowledged certainly that the teachers' opinions say that the implementation of Social Studies curriculum over the years has yielded a positive result. This variation has created a hazy conclusion in the nature of social studies curriculum implementation. Due to the dynamic, innovative and new method of doing things evident in different facet of life coupled with innovation of curriculum it becomes pertinent to investigate the principals and teachers perception of social studies curriculum implementation.

However, teachers as a factor that could influence curriculum implementation have this differences which is rooted in such concept as gender identity and role. These socially accepted roles of male and female teachers may play to influence teachers' effectiveness, learners' interest and achievement, thus influencing the extent of the implementation of social studies curriculum especially in Imo State. Gender is a socio-cultural construct that distinguishes the role of male and female in the society. Onyeukwu (2010) acknowledged that gender is a culturally imposed dichotomy of sexes' duties. Gender also refers to a set of widely held beliefs and expectations about men and women. This role assigned to male and female consciously or unconsciously is a "hidden curriculum" that sends out messages to females encouraging them to conform to gender stereotyped role expectations. Gender issues and gender stereotyping pervade every element of human activity in Nigeria (Nzewi, 2010). According to Okeke (2007), gender has strongly interacted with culture to establish sex role stereotypes that cut through social, economic, political, and educational growth.

However, the school principals who are school administrators are caught in the net of gender because they are made of male and female. These folks have the capacity to give veritable information as to what curriculum implementation is especially in the area of social studies curriculum. These principals perception on social studies curriculum implementation may vary as revealed by literature that gender is a big factor that brings a difference since the role of male and female are not the same. The individual perceptions or opinions held by principals as school administrators will be given consideration in this study. School principal perceptions are the expressed opinions or views of principals on a particular subject matter. In relation to this study, it is opinions or views expressed by individual principals as secondary school administrators on whether Social Studies curriculum under the Universal Basic Education has been properly

implemented or poorly implemented. Based on the premises in the background, the study aimed at investigating the Principals and Teachers Perception of Social Studies Curriculum implementation in Public Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the principals and teachers perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State?
2. What is the gender difference in mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State by JSS Principals?
3. What is the difference in mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State by Social Studies Teachers?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis were formulated

1. **Ho₁**. There is no significant difference in the mean response score on the principals and teachers perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State
2. **Ho₂**. There is no significant gender difference in the mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State by JSS Principals
3. **Ho₃**. There is no significant gender difference in the mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State by Social Studies Teachers

Method

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The entire Public Junior Secondary school principal and social studies teachers in Ehime Mbano LGA formed the population of the study. A sample size of 97 school principals and teachers was drawn from the population. This comprises 45 JSS principals and 52 JSS Social studies teachers summing 97 of whom (18 male & 27 female = 45 principals) and (16 male & 36 female = 52 social studies teachers). This sample was drawn using simple random sampling technique. The sampling technique was deemed appropriate to ensure that principals and teachers have equal chance of participation to avoid bias. A 15 item researchers made instrument titled: "Social Studies Principal and Teachers' Perception Questionnaire (SSTPQ)." was developed for data collection. The instrument is a four point likert scale ranging from strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) to Strongly Disagreed (SD). The (SA) has 4 point down to (SD) having 1 point. The instrument is positively structured. The instrument was face-validated by three experts: one in educational curriculum and two measurement and evaluation expert all from Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri. Data collected were subjected to trial - testing to determine the reliability of the instrument using the Cronbach Alpha statistical method, which yielded reliability coefficients of 0.85. This ascertains that the instrument is highly reliable.

Data collected were analyzed using simple Mean and Standard, t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. All computations were made using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to ensure accuracy of the result.

Results

Research Question One: What is the principals and teachers perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbanjo Local Government Area of Imo State?

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbanjo Local Government Area of Imo State by JSS Principals and Social studies teachers.

Table 1: Principals and Teachers' mean rating and t-test analysis on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbanjo Local Government Area of Imo State

Source of variation	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	df	Sig.(2tailed)	Dec.
Principal	45	49.46	0.68	.050	95	.62	NS
Teacher	52	49.00	0.63				

Table 1 revealed that principals and teachers in Ehime Mbanjo Local Government Area had mean rating of 49.46 and 49.00 with standard deviation of 0.68 and 0.63 respectively in their perceptions on social studies curriculum implementation. However, the independent sample t-test revealed t-cal of .050 and degree of freedom 95 with associated probability value of .62 above the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was upheld that there is no significant difference in the mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbanjo Local Government Area of Imo State by JSS Principals and Social studies teachers. The high mean rating and less standard deviation coupled with the test of no difference indicates that both principals and teachers agreed that social studies curriculum was highly implemented in the schools in Ehime Mbanjo L.G.A.

Research Question Two: What is the gender difference in mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbanjo Local Government Area of Imo State by JSS Principals?

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant gender difference in the mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbanjo Local Government Area of Imo State by JSS Principals

Table 2: Gender difference in the mean rating and t-test analysis on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbanjo Local Government Area of Imo State by Principals

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	df	Sig.(2tailed)	Dec.
Male	18	51.16	4.01	2.121	43	.04	S
Female	27	48.33	4.61				

Table 2 revealed that male and female Principals in Ehime Mbanjo Local Government Area had mean rating of 51.16 and 48.33 with standard deviation of 4.01 and 4.61 respectively in their perceptions on social studies curriculum implementation. However, the independent sample t-test

revealed $df=43$, t -cal of 2.12 with associated probability value of .04 below the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State by male and female principals. The high mean rating and high standard deviation revealed that both male and female principals agreed that social studies curriculum was highly implemented in the schools in Ehime Mbano L.G.A. Though, there is difference in their perception as shown by the test of no difference and higher standard deviation from the mean score by the female principals' response.

Research Question Three: What is the difference in mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State by Social Studies Teachers?

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant gender difference in the mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State by Social Studies Teachers

Table 3: Gender difference in the mean rating and t-test analysis on the perception of Social studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State by Teachers

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	df	Sig.(2tailed)	Dec.
Male	16	50.31	4.07	1.391	50	.170	NS
Female	36	48.41	4.71				

Table 3 revealed that male and female teachers in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area had mean rating of 50.31 and 48.41 with standard deviation of 4.07 and 4.71 respectively in their perceptions on social studies curriculum implementation. However, the independent sample t-test revealed $df=50$, t -cal of 1.391 with associated probability value of .170 above the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was upheld. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean response score on the perception of Social Studies curriculum implementation in Ehime Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State by male and female teachers. The high mean rating indicates that both male and female teachers agreed that social studies curriculum was highly implemented in the schools in Ehime Mbano L.G.A, though, with higher standard deviation from the mean score by the female teachers' response.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in the tables above have revealed that teachers and principals agree that social studies curriculum was implemented in Ehime Mbano L.G.A. The principal and teachers holds no different views in the implementation of social studies curriculum. The findings disagree with the findings of Dada et al (2018) that Social Studies curriculum is not properly implemented owing to the fact that teachers of Social Studies find it extremely difficult to apply specific techniques that could help facilitate the realization of the desired objectives of the subject. However, the study agrees with Ezemora (2019) who acknowledged certainly that the teachers' opinions say that the implementation of Social Studies curriculum over the years has yielded a positive result. The study also studied teachers and principals who are male and female with the finding that male and female teachers have no varying view on social studies curriculum implementation. Although, male and

female principals who are school administrators have a difference in perception of social studies curriculum implementation.

Conclusion

The goal of Social studies is to provide meaningful and veritable outcomes that would go a long way to influence school students' morality and value for the society. By implementing social studies curriculum effectively students who are the present youths and future leaders will acquire the vital skills and attitudes required for good morality and nation building. Adequate implementation of social studies should go a long way to assist the youths in character formation for a stable, peaceful and progressive society and nation. However, adequate implementation of social studies reduces inordinate moral behaviour seen among teenage students who are youths. This study in particular has revealed adequate implementation of social studies curriculum in Ehime Mbano L.G.A. Where disorderliness among youths, poorly behaved youths leading to consistent sabotage of economy to insecurity is still seen among youths, therefore the researcher recommends that more investigation should be carried out as to this effect to find other factors that are proliferating deviancy among youths. Among other recommendations, teachers should be trained on modern and improved methods of teaching Social Studies.

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