
SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON SOME DETERMINANTS OF STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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ABSTRACT: *The focus of this study was on secondary school teachers' perception on some determinants of students' performance in Social studies. Three research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated by the researchers that guided the study. The design of this study was descriptive survey research design aimed at eliciting information from the respondents on factors that determine students performance in secondary schools and the population of the study comprised 115 secondary school teachers teach Social studies in Abakaliki education zone. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire and data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for all research questions and t-test statistical tool was used for testing the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that government related factors, teachers' related factors and students' factors are some determinants of students' performance in Social studies. The researchers recommended based on the findings that only competent and qualified Social studies teachers should be employ to teach the subject in secondary schools*

KEYWORDS: Secondary School Teachers', Perception, Students' Performance, Social Studies

INTRODUCTION

The overriding importance of Social studies in nation building in Nigeria can never be overemphasized despite the continue decline in secondary school students achievement in the subject in their external examination. Social studies is the only discipline that gives an opportunity for important social and moral issues such as attitudes to the destitute, poverty, racism and different types of government, cruelty to animals, and children, brutality and injustice to be introduced into school curriculum (Ikwumelu, 2002). Therefore, in Social studies education, students are exposed to not only to social issues but issues that are value-laden. This informed Edozie (2001:39) view that Social studies is;

a dynamic, systematic and integrated discipline for generating knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours necessary for dealing with contemporary life issues, for understanding man and the factors which influence his relationship with himself in particular and his society generally in a sustainable manner.

Kissock (1981:3) equally opined that Social studies is "a program of study which the society uses to instill in the students the knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions which it considers important concerning the relationships human beings have with each other, their world and

themselves". This implies that it (Social studies) is a means through which a society propagates its acceptable norms, attitudes, values and behaviours. Social studies therefore, is expected to contribute immeasurably to the development of confidence, hope and positive self-image in over children in conflicting ideologies, values, and attitudes, since Social studies according Jarolimek (1977), aims at helping young people develop competence that enable them to deal with and to some extent manage the physical and social forces of the world in which they live. It also provides young people with feeling of hope in the future and confidence in their ability to solve social problem.

Despite the laudable objectives of Social studies as articulated in the Nigerian school curriculum there has been a dismay arising from expected outcome of Social studies curriculum implementation. The performance of students in certificate examinations have not been so impressive. And such performances have been source of worries to stakeholders in the educational industry. Lamenting on the poor performance, the chief examiner's report on the performance of students in Social studies examination in the July 2014 said "the performance is generally poor. It was disheartening to see the degree of ignorance among candidates of Social studies in their home country", (Ebonyi State Secondary Education Board, 2014:12).

In addition, Oyibe and Mbang (2013) opined that Social studies education in Nigeria for long had been criticized for not quite preparing students for effective living in the society. According to them, that inability of Social studies education to actualize its expected goals of preparing students for worthy living is proved beyond reasonable doubt by the poor level of performance of Social studies students in external examination". Poor performances of Social studies students had been attributed to a number of factors by Social studies educators. For instance, Chukwu (2009) attributed it to poor teachers' qualification and content presentation while Mkpka (2001) attributed it to wrong selection and poor uses of Social studies instructional methods and materials, others pointed accusing finger to poor teaching methods involving selection and application of orthodox or traditional methods in Social studies classroom (Mezieobi, 1991). Ede and Onyia (2002) observed that poor teaching techniques by teachers, lack of interest and poor concentration by the students that offer Social studies in the Nigerian secondary school examination among other factors are responsible for the dismay performance of students in the subject.

Considering the importance of Social studies in our everyday lives, Ikwumelu and Oyibe (2011) suggested that all the teachers of Social studies at all levels of education need to be familiar with the content, methods and materials of teaching the subject in order to interpret the content of Social studies, correctly and encourage its learning. This is mainly because when Social studies methods and materials are related to content, learning will cease to be fragmentary and memorization of unrelated facts and concepts will end.

Unfortunately, as rightly observed by Bozimo and Ikwumelu (2009) that social awareness and social understanding are still not being developed, students still consider either to take for granted what their teachers offer or to reject it out of hand, probably as a result of either poor classroom interaction or the quality of instruction with regard to overall academic achievement of students. Social studies teachers should know that they are the ones who interpret the aims and objectives of Social studies and ensure that the students are educated in line these aims and objectives, since the quality of Social studies output depends wholly on the adequacy in quality as well as the level of devotion of its work force.

Furthermore, it is pertinent to note that effective delivery of Social studies curriculum content in classroom demands that teachers should have a basic knowledge of all that the students must know, together with an ability to relate the content, methods sequence, and pace of his work to instructional materials to enhance effective communication. In addition, Gulmund (2002) enjoins teachers to pay attention to such issues as mentioned above and apply direct teaching with suitable instructional materials. According to him, strict adherence to the above suggestion will make Social studies classroom interaction more participatory and enjoyable and enhance the achievement of its instructional and programme objectives. It is upon these that the study sought to ascertain the perception of secondary school teachers on some determinants of students' performance in Social studies.

Research Questions and Null hypotheses

The following research question and null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance were formulated to guide the conduct of this study. These are;

1. What are the government related factors that determine secondary school students' performance in Social studies in Abakaliki?
2. What are the teachers related factors that determine secondary school students' performance in Social studies in Abakaliki?
3. What are the teachers related factors that determine secondary school students' performance in Social studies in Abakaliki?

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of male and female teachers on the extent provision government factors will enhance students' performance in Social studies.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of teachers in urban and rural secondary school on the extent teacher commitment to duty enhance students' performance in Social studies.

METHODOLOGY

The design of this study was descriptive survey research design aimed at eliciting information from the respondents on factors that determine students' performance in secondary schools and the population of the study comprised 115 secondary school teachers who teach Social studies in Abakaliki education zone. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire and data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for all research questions and t-test statistical tool was used for testing the null hypotheses. The items that had mean scores above 2.50 were accepted while items that had mean score below 2.50 were rejected.

Presentation and Discussion of Results

Research Question 1: What are the Government related factors that determine secondary school students' performance in Social studies in Abakaliki? Data collected from items 1-7 were used to answer the research question. Summary of results of data analysis were presented in table 1.

Table 1: Mean Perception of Teachers on Government Related factors that Determine of students' Performance in Social studies

S/No	Item Focus	X	STD	Decision
1	Provision of conducive learning environment	2.98	2.05	Accepted
2	Provision of teachers' motivation to work	3.25	1.40	Accepted
3	Provision of instructional materials	3.12	1.21	Accepted
4	Establishment libraries in schools	3.03	1.09	Accepted
5	Regular and commitment in instructional supervision	3.01	1.11	Accepted
6	Regular payment of teachers' salaries	3.19	1.32	Accepted
7	Enactment of laws to promote teaching profession	3.11	1.09	Accepted

Grand mean=3.10

The results of data analysis presented in table 1 revealed that the respondents accepted that all items in table 1 are determinat of students' performance in Social studies. The grand mean of all items in table 1 is 3.10 which greater than 2.50. This indicate that provision of conducive learning environment, teachers' motivation, instructional materials, school labraries, and regular payment of teachers' salaries and commitment to instructional supervision are the government related factors that determine students performance in Social studies.

This findings in line with the view of Adekola (2008), who observed that teeachers are not adequately motivated. According him, it is disheartening to note that poor motivation of teachers in Nigeria is one of the major factors that contribute to students' poor performance in schools whereas government spent almost 75% percent of Nigerian annual budget on political sector and only 5% percent on education which sometimes result to all seasons striking by school teachers. Teachers in the Nigerian schools were not taking care of by the government which rersult to poor commitment to work and professional growth which is supposed to facilitate productivity in the Nigerian educational system.

Reseach Question 2: What are the teachers related factors that determine secondary school students' performance in Social studies in Abakaliki? Data collceted from items 8-15 were used to answer the research question. Summary of results od data analysis were presented in table 2.

Table 2: Mean Perception of Teachers on their Related factors that Determine of students' Performance in Social studies

S/No	Item focus	X	STD	Decision
8	Selection and utilization of instructional materials	3.13	1.40	Accepted
9	Utilization of appropirate instructional methods	3.01	1.48	Accepted
10	Motivation of students' interset in the subject	2.93	2.05	Accepted
11	Teachers' disposition in the classroom	3.23	1.08	Accepted
12	Teachers' qualifications	3.07	1.15	Accepted
13	Teachers' competence	3.11	1.25	Accepted
14	Teachers' levels of exposure	3.05	1.21	Accepted
15	Teachers' knowledge of the subject matter	3.07	1.32	Accepted

Grand mean=3.08

The results of data analysis presented in table 2 revealed that the respondents accepted that all the items in table are the teachers' related factors that determine students performance in Social studies. The grand mean of all items in table 2 is 3.08 which greater than 2.50. Therefore, teacher' competence, qualifications, disposition, and effective utilization of instructional methods amd materials in classroom instruction are teachers' related factors that determine

students' performance in Social studies. The findings of the study in table 2 are supported by Ikwumelu and Oyibe (2011) who observed that poor teachers' qualification, poor selection and inappropriate utilization of instructional methods, materials affect teaching and learning of Social studies. Adekola (2008) added that teachers work commitment, competence and exposure are also responsible for ineffective teaching and learning of Social studies in secondary school not minding the importance of the subject in nation building.

Research Question 3: What are the students' related factors that determine secondary school students' performance in Social studies in Abakaliki? Data collected from items 16-20 were used to answer the research question. Summary of results of data analysis were presented in table 3.

Table 3: Mean Perception of Teachers on Students Related factors that Determine of students' Performance in Social studies

S/No	Item Focus	X	STD	Decision
16	Development of reading culture	3.02	1.17	Accepted
17	Engaging in self-directed learning	3.12	1.16	Accepted
18	Regular attendance to classroom instruction	3.11	1.14	Accepted
19	Active participation in classroom instructional activities	3.25	1.09	Accepted
20	Developing interest in subject	3.17	1.35	Accepted

Grand mean=3.13

The results of data analysis presented in table 3 revealed that the respondents accepted that all items in table 3 are the students related factors that determine students' performance in Social studies. The grand mean of all items in table 2 is 3.13 which greater than 2.50. Therefore, development of reading culture, engage in self-directed learning, attend classes regularly, develop interest in the subject and actively participate classroom instructional activities are the students related factors that determine students performance in Social studies. The findings of the study in table 3 is in line the view of Okoye and Ugochukwu (2008) who maintained that negative attitudes of students to Social studies and poor reading culture affects their performance in the subject

Testing of Null Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of male and female teachers on the extent provision government related factors will enhance students' performance in Social studies.

Table 4: Mean rating of respondents on the extent provision government factors will enhance students' performance in Social studies

Sex	\bar{X}	SD	N	df	tcal	t-tab	P	Decision
Male	3.02	2.65	48	113	0.052	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Female	2.81	1.98	67					

From table 4, it could be observed that although male teachers recorded higher mean score of 3.02 than the female teachers that had 2.81 as the mean score, the difference in these mean scores is statistically not significant at p. 0.05. This is because the calculated value (0.052) is less than the critical value (1.96). therefore the null hypothesis (Ho₁) is accepted which implies that there was no significant difference in the mean opinion of male and female teachers on

extent provision government related factors will enhance students' performance in Social studies.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of teachers in urban and rural secondary school on the extent teachers commitment to duty enhance students' performance in Social studies.

Table 2: Mean opinion of respondents on the extent teachers' commitment to duty enhance students' performance in Social studies

Location	\bar{X}	SD	N	df	tcal	t-tab	P	Decision
Urban	2.93	1.86	71	113	0.048	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Rural	2.12	2.41	44					

From table 1, it could be observed that although secondary school teachers in urban area recorded higher mean score of 2.93 than their counterparts in rural area that had 2.12 as the mean score, the difference in these mean scores is statistically not significant at p. 0.05. This is because the calculated value (0.048) is less than the critical value (1.96). The null hypothesis (Ho₂) therefore, is accepted which implies that there was no significant difference in the mean opinion of secondary school teachers in urban and rural areas on extent teachers commitment to duty enhance students' performance in Social studies

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study have established the some determinants of students' performances in Social studies. It is the researchers' opinion that if all the identifies variables are effectively taken care off. Poor performance of secondary school students in Social studies will be the things of the past.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers made the following recommendations.

1. Government should provide instructional materials and other learning facilities to encourage learning.
2. Only competent and qualified Social studies teachers should be employ to teach the subject in secondary schools.
3. Students on their own should develop positive interest in Social studies considering its relivance in nation building.

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