

ASSESSMENT OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTION
OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION IN
TEACHING DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN
JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

¹Saba, BABA KUDU, ²Jimoh Kayode, IBRAHIM
Department of Social Studies, School of Arts and Social Sciences,
Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin Nigeria.

and

³I.D. ABUBAKAR

³Department of Arts and Social Science, Faculty of Education,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Abstract

The study assessed Perception of Social Studies teachers on Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in Junior Secondary Schools in Kwara State – Nigeria. The study was survey research designed and 392 teachers representing (25%) of population was sampled for the study, out of which 372 were usable. The study employed simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques to select the sample. The study used questionnaire titled “Teachers’ Perception on Social Studies Education Questionnaire (TEPSSSETDEVAQ). The study raised three objectives, stated three research questions and formulated three hypotheses. The data analysis tools were independent t-test random, mean and standard deviation. The study retained all hypotheses at 0.05 alpha. The finding revealed that there was no significant difference on account of gender, locations and qualification level among teachers

in Kwara State. The finding revealed that the teachers have positive views on the ability of Social Studies Education as a core course offered at junior secondary schools in Nigeria to address democratic values. In the light of the findings, the paper recommended that curriculum of Social Studies at Junior Secondary schools should be subjected to periodic review in order to take care of the inadequacies and make it more relevant to the socio-political need of contemporary Nigeria as demanded by the National Policy on Education.

Introduction

There seems to be a lack of consensus by educators and educational philosophers on what should be the content of the school curriculum, what should constitute liberal education and what we should educate for. The question of content and goals of education therefore becomes important to make education functional.

Education is a vital component of any society, but especially of a democracy. The aim of democratic education is to produce independent, questioning, analytical and critical citizens through teaching the principles and practice of democracy, encouraging them to challenge conventional thinking with careful reading and research findings. "It refers to lifelong learning, the active participation of stakeholders of education (students, parents and other related people) in the schooling process, controlling and monitoring the change and improvement within the process of education, localization of education as the components of democratic education" (Kincal, 2003).

Establishing democracy mostly depends on the understanding, skills and attitude of people which would be the primary responsibility of education. Education is not the only source of establishing democratic culture; family, media and other institutions contribute to this process as well. However, schools have the essential role in this process as they maintain structure and formal educational programme (Kincal, 2003).

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responsibility of education. Education is not the only source of establishing a democratic culture; family, media and other institutions contribute to this process as well. However, schools have the essential role in this process as they maintain structured and formal educational programmes (Doanay, 1997).

Surely, the most important component of formal educational programmes is the teacher. Therefore, teachers need to have not only an understanding of democratic society, values, behaviour and attitudes but also need to practice this knowledge and understanding in the classroom, otherwise, the information about democracy would not work out in the long term (Ravits, 1991). However, the practices of teachers are determined by their perceptions, experiences, attitudes, and values about democracy. Therefore, before we shift our gaze at what teachers are doing in the classroom activities, it is a must that we focus upon their existing attitudes and values.

Shechtman (2002) defines values as “desirable transitional goals, varying in importance that serves as guiding principles in people’s lives. These life principles represent an individual’s unique interpretation of the right way to behave”. In Shechtman (2002) values are referred to as the “main cognitive weapon” to foster self-respect which would give opportunity to individuals to adopt and perform more effectively and cope with reality more effectively. Values can be defined as mental and emotional judgements representing attitudes and interest in the abstract manner (Selvi, 2006). In the educational context, “valuing is concerned with the worth or value a student (a teacher) attaches to a particular object, phenomenon or behaviours” which then would be values about democracy and democratic culture. “Democracy is an attitude and something out of self-perception, it respects others’ opinion and aims for social justices, equal opportunity, and peoples right of liberty” (Accmoglu and Robinson, 2006).

According to Erunke (2011), democracy is the system, either of government under which the people exercise governmental power directly or indirectly through representatives elected by them. By this standard, a state could be turned if it provides institutions for the expression and supremacy of the popular will on basic questions

of social direction and policy. Dincal and Lik (2003) identify the democratic values as justice, equity, freedom, respect for the collaboration, self-efficacy, honesty, tolerance, sensitivity, searching of effectiveness, responsibility, respect for differences, security, improvement and perception.

Similarly, Ozipolet (2010) identifies human and student centred education, civil rights, skill teaching, self-development, value education, and respecting social rules as the basic components of democratic education. He also argues that teachers need not only behave in these values and components but also practice them in their classrooms.

Consequently, democracy makes a leader, both subordinate and responsible to civil society. However, democracy can only be developed adequately in an educationally developed nation because no democratic experiment can succeed, no matter how well planned, if the majority of her citizens are illiterates and uneducated. The people need to be politically educated and well enlightened to be able to assess their representative objectives and correctly as well as to have a good government of their choice.

Thus, to have a stable democracy, the study believes that democratic values should be inculcated in the students as they pass through the educational system. For example, students should be involved in the choice of school prefects, those who are interested for various offices should be made to contest under the supervision of school authority. This may give them the sense of belonging.

Owolabi (2003) asserted that there has been lack of adequate democratic values in Nigerian society which led to the failure of democracy. This means that there has been a lot of disagreement and disharmony in Nigerian society leading to conflicts. In some cases, the absence of democracy has led to direct conflicts and bitterness. This development is worthy of attracting the attention of scholars for research and for Social Studies which by nature is a problem solving discipline. As a result, the researcher is intending to take up the challenge to undertake a study on the topic "Assessment of Teachers' Perception of Social Studies Education in Teaching of Democratic Values in Junior Secondary Schools in Kwara State". The study will examine books and documents with a

view to finding out teachers' perception of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in selected schools in Kwara State. In addition, attempts were made to suggest ways by which Social Studies Education can be used to teach democratic values. This will be aimed in helping to resolve conflicts in the society.

Statement of the Problem

Social Studies is a major part of the school curriculum because it explores values, knowledge, skills, attitudes, participation and provides students with the ability to understand the democratic value associated with being a good citizen. Researches revealed gross inadequacy in the availability of professionally trained Social Studies in teaching democratic values in Junior Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. To assist the students to overcome the rapid social and political changes, and to bring meaningful democratic values a crucial Social Studies curriculum is demanded. This study therefore seeks to provide some insight into the perception of teachers drawn from some randomly selected Junior Secondary Schools in Kwara State about the teaching of democratic values.

Objectives of the Study

The study investigated into teachers' perception of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic value in JSS in Kwara State. More specifically, the research has the following objectives:

1. To examine the perception of male and female teachers of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in JSS in Kwara State.
2. To assess the perception of rural and urban teachers of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in JSS in Kwara State.
3. To examine if differences exist in the perception of Social Studies teachers with Social Studies qualification and those without Social Studies qualification in teaching democratic values in JSS in Kwara State.

Research Questions

The study attempts to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the perception of male and female teachers of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic value in JSS in Kwara State?
2. What is the perception of rural and urban teachers of Social Studies in teaching democratic values in JSS in Kwara State?
3. What is the teachers' perception of Social Studies in teaching democratic values in JSS on the basis of qualification?

Research Hypotheses

On the basis of the research questions raised it is hypothesized as follows:

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their perception of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in JSS in Kwara State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference between rural and urban teachers in their perception of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in JSS in Kwara State.
- Ho₃: There is no significant difference on the Social Studies teachers' perception of Social Studies in the teaching of democratic values on the basis of qualification.

Method

This section deals with the general procedures that were used in carrying out this study. It focused on the research type; population, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation; procedure for data collection and techniques of data analysis.

The research type adopted for this study was descriptive survey design which was employed to assess teachers' perception of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in junior secondary schools in Kwara State. The rationale for using descriptive method is because of its sufficiency in drawing information about the feelings and ideas from large subject.

The population of the study is all the junior secondary school Social Studies teachers in Kwara State. Records available at the

Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board Ilorin shows that there were 1,568 Social Studies teachers in Kwara State, Nigeria.

The selection of the sample considered the purpose of the study. A random sampling was used to select JSS Social Studies teachers based on the assertion of Kennedy (2011) that twenty-five percent (25%) of the entire population should be used as sample to avoid sampling error. Three hundred and ninety-two (392) Social Studies teachers were used as sample size for the study.

The structured instrument titled "Teachers' Perception of Social Studies Education in Teaching Democratic Values Questionnaire (TEPSSETDVAQ) was used. It was divided into two sections. Section 'A' dealt with the bio-data of the respondents, section 'B' provided thirty (30) items based on the variables of gender, location and qualification. The questionnaire was prepared on four modified likert scale, Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree coded 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The validity of the questionnaire was ascertained by the qualified experts and language experts for appropriateness and clarity. The reliability of the questionnaire was analysed using the split half reliability test and correlation coefficient calculated. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) revealed .799 reliability of the instrument.

The researchers accompanied by research assistant visited the schools used for the administration of the questionnaire. Permission was sought to administer questionnaire during the school hours. The researchers gave 15 – 20 minutes for the respondents to respond to the questionnaire, and collected back immediately to avoid the delay and non-return of questionnaire copies.

Results

Research Question 1:

What is the perception of male and female teachers of Social Studies Education in the teaching of democratic values in JSS in Kwara State?

Table 1: Perception of Male and Female Teachers of Social Studies Education in Teaching Democratic Values in Junior Secondary Schools in Kwara State

Gender	N	Mean	Std.dev
Male	219	85.72	6.13
Female	153	87.59	5.57

The table above shows the perception of male and female teachers of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values among JSS teachers in Kwara State. Their calculated mean responses were 85.7215 and 87.5748 for male and female teachers respectively.

Research Question 2:

What is the perception of rural and urban teachers of Social Studies Education in in the teaching of democratic values in junior secondary schools in Kwara State?

Table 2: Perception of Rural and Urban Teachers of Social Studies Education in Teaching Democratic Values

Location	N	Mean	Std.dev
Rural	182	86.23	5.32
Urban	190	86.73	6.53

The table above shows the perception of rural and ureban teachers of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values among JSS teachers in Kwara State. Their calculated mean responses were 86.2363 and 86.7368 for rural and urban teachers respectively.

Research Question 3:

What is the teachers' perception of Social Studies in the teaching of democratic values in JSS on the basis of qualification?

Table 3: Perception of Teachers with Social Studies Qualification and those Without Qualification of Social Studies Education in Teaching Democratic Values

Qualification	N	Mean	Std.dev
With Social Studies Qualification	244	85.7008	6.2007
No Social Studies Qualification	128	85.0000	6.2059

The table above shows the perception of teachers with qualification in Social Studies Education and those without qualification of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values among JSS teachers in Kwara State. Their calculated cumulative mean responses were 85.7008 and 85.0000 for teachers with Social Studies Education qualification and those without Social Studies Education qualification respectively.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of results on account with the result of research questions showed that there is no significant difference on the account of gender, location and qualification in teaching of democratic values in junior secondary schools in Kwara State. Results of the independent t-test statistics show that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers' perception of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in JSS in Kwara State. Their calculated mean responses were 85.7215 and 87.5948 by male and female teachers respectively. This implies that irrespective of the teachers' gender they have high opinion on the capability of Social Studies in perception of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in JSS in Kwara State.

Results of the independent t-test statistics show that there was no significant difference between urban and rural teachers in their perception of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in junior secondary schools in Kwara State. Their calculated mean

responses were 86.7368 and 86.2363 by rural and urban teachers respectively.

Results of the independent t-test statistics shows that there was no significant difference between qualified and non-qualified Social Studies teachers in the perception of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in junior secondary schools in Kwara State. Their calculated mean responses were 85.7008 and 85.0000 by qualified and non-qualified Social Studies teachers respectively.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this research, the following conclusions were drawn:

The Social Studies teachers in the study area demonstrated high optimism on the ability of Social Studies Education in teaching democratic values in JSS in Kwara State. There were no significant differences on account of gender, geographical locations and qualification of teachers on the opinion in that regard. The objectives of breeding effective citizenry are being achieved through Social Studies Education despite some constraints. Also, it has been established that Social Studies Education is still an indispensable subject when it comes to promoting moral sanity and discouraging undesirable ones, especially among JSS students where the subject is a core course offered by all students.

Recommendations

Judging from the findings of the study, the study recommends the following for the effective implementation of Social Studies Education for the development of positive attitudes and values especially among JSS students:

Curriculum of Social Studies at junior secondary schools should be subjected to periodic review in order to take care of the inadequacies and make it more relevant to the socio-political need of contemporary Nigeria as demanded by the National Policy on Education.

There is the need for Social Studies Education teachers to attend seminars, workshops, conferences and in-service training organised by Social Studies and Civic Educators Association of Nigeria

(SOSCEAN), universities and NERC, the government and other relevant bodies. This will enable them attain professional qualification needed for efficient functioning in the Social Studies classroom. Further, authorities concerned should release them on that regard with some financial assistance and moral support.

The Social Studies teachers could be advised to minimise too much dependency on imported or ready-made instructional materials. The teachers should be encouraged to improvise by making use of whatever is available in their local environment.

To curb the problem of acute shortage of textbooks, there is the need to intensify campaigns through conferences, seminars and workshops for indigenous authors who have great knowledge in Social Studies to write textbooks on a variety of topics for use in our junior secondary schools. This could be done through financial assistance from the government and other donor organisations both within and outside the country.

Students should be trained to know and have proper understanding of the Nigerian Social Studies objectives in order to uphold and promote these objectives in his life for a productive and useful citizenry.

There is the need for the government to facilitate the commencement of the teaching of Social Studies Education at senior secondary school level. This will help in extending the goodies of the subject beyond the boundaries of junior secondary schools.

Adequate and qualified and well-motivated Social Studies teachers should be used in the teaching of Social Studies Education in order to ensure its effective teaching.

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