
**USE OF ICT AND GENDER AS DETERMINANTS OF
STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS LEARNING SOCIAL
STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
IN DELTA STATE**

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Abstract

The study investigated the use of information and communications technology (ICT) and gender as determinants of students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies in higher education institutions using the Department of Social Studies, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria as a case study. Two hypotheses were developed to direct the investigation. 300 Delta State University students comprised the study sample, which was selected using a straightforward random sampling procedure. Data was collected using an instrument called the "Use of ICT Scale and Students' Attitudes Towards Learning of Social Studies questionnaire" (ISATESSQ). Using multiple regression analysis, the hypotheses were examined at the significance level of 0.05. The results showed that there was a positive correlation between the criterion variable attitude towards Social Studies learning and a low correlation with the use of ICT. Furthermore, students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies and using ICT were unaffected by their gender. The findings also demonstrated that the only students who had a positive attitude towards learning Social

Studies were those who were proficient in using ICT, with a regression coefficient of.258 and a beta weight of.592. However, when it came to determining students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies, gender was not a significant determinant. These results led to recommendations that all students, regardless of gender, be encouraged to learn how to use ICT and gain the necessary skills for learning activities. The use of ICT in Social Studies teaching and learning should be promoted by institutions.

Keywords: ICT, Gender, Students' attitude, Social Studies, Higher Education Institutions

Introduction

In modern Nigeria, it has become the norm for all students to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the classroom. The adoption of technology-based instruction is becoming more common in Nigerian schools and higher education institutions (HEIs) as a result of the globalisation, digitization, and computerization of everything, including education. The introduction of ICT into higher education institutions (HEIs) has had an impact on students' attitudes towards teaching and learning as well as how they think, act, and respond to situations. The way people think, work, and live has radically altered as a result of the evolution and change of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in our society (Grabe & Grabe, 2017). In order to educate students for life in "a knowledge society," educational institutions, including colleges and universities, should think about integrating ICT into their curricula (Ghavifekr, Afshari & Amla Salleh, 2012). When utilising ICT in their regular courses, higher education instructors and administrators are regarded as the most significant individuals. This is due to the fact that they get pupils ready for the current digital era. The reason for this is that ICT can establish a proactive and dynamic environment for teaching and learning (Arnseth & Hatlevik, 2012).

Sorting out the arguments about how gender and ICT use relate to students' attitudes towards Social Studies is the major goal of the topic's talks. An individual's sentiments, views, beliefs, and perceptions about a specific object, subject matter, experience, exposure, etc. can all be considered aspects of their attitude. According to Agulanna and Onukogu (2012), p. 15, attitude is the "learned inclination to appraise something, person, or topic in a particular way." According to Petty, Wegener, and Fabrigan (2017), attitude refers to a comparatively steady assessment of people, things, circumstances, or problems along a continuum ranging from favourable (positive) to unfavourable (negative). Similarly, Cetin (2016) proposed that attitude is an inclination ascribed to persons that generates concepts, emotions, and actions concerning a psychological entity in a systematic way. Kara (2010) defines attitude as the capacity to influence others to act in ways that are consistent with other people, things, occasions, and foundations—that is, as unalterable and unchanging ideas, emotions, and dispositions. An individual's behaviour and disposition towards a specific object, occasion, event, presentation, experience, and so forth are influenced by their attitude. Generally speaking, attitudes are developed to fulfil a need for the one holding them (Agulanna & Onukogu, 2012). For example, attitudes influence how people behave in relation to goals. They also assist people in interpreting new information in light of preexisting beliefs. They went on to say that experiences and education shape opinions. The learning theories state that modelling, operant conditioning, and classical conditioning are the methods by which attitudes are acquired (Agulanna & Onukogu, 2012).

Additionally, learning for this paper will be seen as gaining knowledge to adopt the proper mindset. Learning is any activity, experience, or exposure that a person has that has the potential to expose them to modifications in their behavioural patterns. A person's character, value orientation, cultural and traditional views, and other aspects can all be impacted by their education (Mezieobi & Anugom, 2017). According to Agulanna and

Nwachukwu (2014), learning can be defined as a generally permanent shift in behaviour or knowledge that comes from experiences. This is a common and widely recognised conceptualization of learning. A further definition of learning is the process or experience of acquiring knowledge or abilities.

According to Piaget (2001), learning is a mental process that depends on perception and awareness, on how new information and stimuli are incorporated into the existing knowledge base (a process he called assimilation), and on how the entire database is reorganised through reasoning—a previously learned mental mechanism—resulting in changes to existing mental structures and the formation of new ones (a process he called accommodation). The concept of learning is incredibly tricky. Agulanna and Nwachukwu (2014) claimed that learning is an illusive idea that is not observable directly because of this. The student may occasionally be unaware that they have picked up new knowledge. The most fascinating aspect of education is this (Ametefe & Ametefe, 2017).

Gender is another aspect in this research. Gender is important when it comes to schooling. The gender of a person can affect how they feel about learning. Gender is the social construction of female and male identity, not just the biological differences between men and women. Additionally, it discusses how those differences have been positively seen, used, and depended upon to classify men and women and to impose expectations onto them (Nzewi, 2017). Aydon (2015) defined gender as the social construct that distinguishes men and women based on a set of distinguishing characteristics. It is neither a psychological or biological construction, but rather a social one. Comparably, Ametefe and Ametefe (2017) defined gender as a social construct that establishes and differentiates roles and statuses for men and women, especially with regard to how they participate in and contribute to social, political, and economic activities and are rewarded by the majority of social institutions and the economy. Gender is a contextual issue in research in general, it has been emphasised. According to Oluwagbohunmi

(2014), 90% of male students outperform their female counterparts. The findings were statistically significant, with a 5% significance threshold. Additionally, Voyer and Voyer (2014) discovered that academic performance is higher in women than in men. The findings had a 5% statistical significance. The two perspectives are at odds with one another.

Students studying Social Studies are exposed to the value of justice, quality, and access in all areas of human activity. Mezieobi (2016) asserts that mastering Social Studies as a stand-alone subject in the classroom is critical for success in any environment or society, including Nigeria. According to Osakwe (2013), Social Studies is an academic discipline that looks at people in all of their relationships with one another. According to Mezieobi, Ossai, and Young (2013), a society uses a Social Studies curriculum to teach students or learners the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours that are important in the relationships people have with themselves, their environment, and one another. Moreover, there is an abundance of Social Studies definitions due to the diversity of individuals involved in the field, including non-professionals, generalist Social Studies workers, and professional Social Studies educators (Mezieobi, Fubara & Mezieobi, 2018). The broadest definition of Social Studies is an integrated field of study that examines how humans coexist harmoniously with their environments and provides people with the intellectual, affective, social, and occupational skills they need to understand their surroundings, solve problems in their worlds, and deal with them in a way that allows them to function effectively in society (Mezieobi et al., 2018). The notion that Social Studies professors are becoming extinct sparked interest in students' attitudes towards Social Studies (Mezieobi, 2016). Additionally, it was crucial to investigate attempting to comprehend students' perceptions of Social Studies given the current conditions surrounding the subject's teaching and learning in schools and its division into civic education, value education, and other programmes.

Similarly, in the Nigerian context, educational establishments that offer bachelor's, master's, doctorate, higher national diploma (HND), national diploma (ND), Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE), and other advanced degrees are referred to as higher education institutions (HEIs). The number of definitions for the subject of Social Studies has increased dramatically as a result of establishments such universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and monotechnics (Mezieobi, Fubara & Mezieobi, 2018).

Additionally, a number of research on various factors have been used to determine how higher education institution (HEI) students feel about learning. In their 2015 study, Ludwig, Burton, Weingarten, Milan, Myers, and Kligler looked at high school students' health and concluded that it had a significant impact on how they felt about learning. In order to investigate the academic accomplishment of students, Sharma (2014) also looked at institutional determinants, parent education, household income, and classroom climate. According to him, all of factors influence how pupils feel about learning. Mosteller (1995) examined the relationship between students' attitudes towards learning and the institution's location—rural or urban. Gbore (2013) looked at the relative contributions of student attitudes towards learning and teacher variables. He identified how attitudes of both teachers and students impact learning. Oloyede (2010) investigated the chemistry of self-concept in higher education institutions (HEIs). He pointed out that students' views towards studying chemistry in higher education institutions (HEIs) are influenced by their self-concept.

Additionally, Sharma and Jha (2014) looked into the educational attainment of parents. They identified that, depending on the success or failure of the parents' educational endeavours, the parents' educational attainment can have a beneficial or negative influence on students' attitudes towards learning. Language issues are the primary source of other significant cognitive delays in deaf children, according to a 2002 study by Schick, de Villiers, and Hoffmeister. Language issues are the primary source of other significant cognitive delays in deaf

children, according to a 2002 study by Schick, de Villiers, and Hoffmeister. According to them, kids who are unable to comprehend sophisticated grammatical structures, such as complements, may find it difficult to comprehend how their opinions and ideas could differ from those of others (Noormohamadi, 2008). Nevertheless, not all of these studies included gender and mother tongue as predictors of students' perceptions of entrepreneurship education (EE) in higher education institutions (HEIs). In light of this, this study at Delta State University, Abraka aims to investigate how gender and ICT are used to determine students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies.

Objectives of the Study

This study examined the use of ICT and gender as determinants of students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies at Delta State University, Abraka. The specific objectives are to:

- i. determine the coefficient correlation between the use of ICT and students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies.
- ii. ascertain the coefficient correlation between gender and students' attitude towards Social Studies learning.
- iii. obtain the multiple relationships between the use of ICT, gender and students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies.

Hypotheses

- i. Students' attitude towards learning Social Studies (LSS) is not significantly related to the use of ICT.
- ii. Students' attitude towards learning of Social Studies (LSS) is not significantly related to the gender.

Methods

In this study, the correlation design was used. The link and variations between two variables were investigated using the correlation design. The basic random sampling method by balloting is the sampling strategy used to choose the study sample.

For the study, three hundred (300) students from Delta State University's Department of Social Studies in Abraka, Delta State, were utilised. "ICT and Students' Attitude Towards Learning Social Studies Questionnaire" was the name of the study tool. The ISATESSQ The survey was divided into sections A and B. There were fifteen (15) items in Section A that were related to the use of ICT, and fifteen (15) items in Section B. Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) were the four possible responses on the 4-likert scale. Test-retest methodology was used to assess the internal consistency of the instrument; the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (PPMCC) yielded a coefficient of 0.72. The items were scored as follows: negative items received inverted scores, whereas positive items received equal weights of SA = 4 points, A = 3 marks, D = 2 marks, and SD = 1 mark. Multiple regression analysis and descriptive statistics were used to analyse the questionnaire data. The statistical software SPSS 15.0 was employed for the computation.

Results

Table one: Mean Statistics on Use of ICT on Students' Attitude towards Learning of Social Studies.

S/N	Use of ICT Knowledge	Std	Rem	×	Std	Rem	
1	I understand Social Studies when we are taught with ICT accessories	3.05	0.43	A	3.50	0.24	A
2	Attending classes where the Social Studies lecturer uses a projector to teach Social Studies makes me understand Social Studies	1.68	0.26	D	2.11	0.35	D
3	Watching movies on the impacts of the use of ICT in teaching Social Studies affects my understanding of Social Studies in the classroom	2.23	0.34	D	2.50	0.38	A
4	I enjoy reading Social Studies books online	1.64		D		0.42	A
5	My school has a lot of resources on use of ICT and Social Studies	1.82		D		0.3.9	A

	skills is well-organised		knowledge building on Social Studies		
7	Computer literacy skills have positively affected my learning capacity in Social Studies	3.05	Ability to adapt to any learning environment while learning Social Studies	0.36	D
8	Consulted books on the use of ICT are always relevant to teaching Social Studies	1.68	Exploring reading group opportunities while learning Social Studies	0.29	D
9	I am being encouraged to research in my school the impacts of the use of ICT in teaching and learning Social Studies	2.23	Receptive to other people's learning ideas and contributions to Social Studies	0.22	D
10	Maintenance of a positive attitude towards learning Social Studies	1.64	Enjoying the positive /favourable attitude towards learning Social Studies	0.24	D
11	Poor information services on the use of ICT in my school discourage me from accessing materials on Social Studies	1.82	Unwillingness to make use of materials on Social Studies for pieces of research	0.25	D
12	I learn in school about the usage of ICT, and without accessing materials on ICT,	1.62	Unwilling to partake in literacy programme on Social Studies	0.22	D
13	Social Studies learning activities on ICT are not prohibited in my school	3.05	Lack of interest in computer skills programme on Social Studies	0.24	D
14	Increase in information materials available on ICT	3.05	Unwilling to read books on Social Studies	0.27	D
15	High levels of crime happen due to the effects of the use of ICT in schools	1.68	inability to make reference/consultation on Social Studies, irrespective of the effects of learning Social Studies	0.22	D
Overall mean				4.48	

The result presented in Table 1 shows that all items are positive/favourable. This is evident in the respondents' agreement with the items' statement shown in the details of the Table above. Meanwhile, the result reveals that students' attitude towards learning Social Studies is greatly influenced by our higher education institutions' (HEIs) knowledge of Social Studies.

Table two: Mean Statistics and correlation between the use of ICT and gender on students' attitude towards learning Social Studies.

Variables	Unstandardised coefficients	Standardised coefficients	T	Sig.
(constant)	23	2.316	19.518	.000
Use of ICT	0.516	0.138	0.592	7.518
Gender	-0.54	0.702	-0.122	-1.542

Dependent variable: students' attitude towards learning of Social Studies.

The regression analysis results indicate that only the students' ICT knowledge with the regression coefficient (0) of 0.516 and a beta weight of 0.592 significantly contributed to students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies. At the same time, the contribution of gender was not significant. The prediction equation is, therefore, as follows:

$$\text{Students' attitude towards learning of Social Studies} = 23 + 0.516(\text{ICT}) - 0.54G$$

Based on the result, the null hypothesis, which proposed a no significant contribution of the individual variable to predicting students' attitudes towards Social Studies learning, was accepted for ICT knowledge and rejected for gender.

Table Three: Mean Statistics and correlation matrix for the relationship between the predictor variables and criterion variable

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Students' attitude towards learning of Social Studies	Use of ICT	Gender
Students' attitude towards learning of Social Studies	300	29.7466	4.44684	2.000	0.598	-0.152
Use of ICT	300	29.2134	5.10242	0.598	2.000	-0.102
Gender	300	2.9	0.998	-0.152	-0.102	2.000

The result from the Table shows the mean of the respondents. The participants' value for students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies was $M=29.7466$, and the use of ICT was $M=29.2134$.

Meanwhile, the matrix correlation between the two variables (use of ICT and gender) and the criterion variable (Social Studies students' attitude towards learning) showed that students' attitudes towards Social Studies learning correlate positively and negatively towards using ICT. Also, gender was not a determinant of students' attitudes towards Social Studies learning and their ICT knowledge.

Table four: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis between the predictor variable and the criterion variable

Multiple R (adjusted) = 0.61 [^] , multiple R ² (ADJUSTED) = 0.186 Adjusted R ² = 0.162, Std. Error of the estimate = 4.26386					
Mode	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	136.922	4	64.462	15.062	0.736 ^b
Resident	1336.264	294	9.09		
Total	1473.186	298			

Dependent variable: Students' attitude towards learning Social Studies

(a) Predictors: (constant), gender, use of ICT.

From Table 3, it was observed that the independent variables gave a co-efficient of multiple regression R^2 of 0.61, multiple R^2 (0.186), and adjusted $R^2 = (0.162)$, which indicates that 93% of the two variables accounted for the student's attitude towards learning of Social Studies. This shows that analysing the independent variables as a block did not contribute to the student's attitude towards learning Social Studies. The Table from the variable analysis also indicated that it produced an F-ratio of 15.062 and was found to be insignificant at 0.05 levels.

Discussions

Table 1 shows that there is no discernible relationship between gender and ICT use and students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies. The study's findings reveal that there is a positive and negative matrix association between students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies and their use of ICT. Furthermore, there was no correlation found between students' attitudes

towards learning Social Studies and their usage of ICT and gender. This finding is consistent with the findings of Almamum, Rahman, Rahman, and Hossaim (2012), who discovered that respondents, irrespective of gender, had positive attitudes towards learning.

Table 2 demonstrates that there is no substantial multiple association between students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies, gender, and ICT knowledge. With a regression coefficient (b) of 0.516 and a beta weight of 0.592, the regression analysis's findings demonstrated that the sole factor substantially influencing students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies was their understanding of ICT. In addition, gender had no discernible effect in determining students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected for gender and accepted for ICT use, suggesting that no individual characteristic significantly contributed to the prediction of students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies. This is consistent with Aryana's (2010) research, which found a positive correlation between students' views regarding learning. Additionally, it was found by Akpan, Mezieobi, and Umoh (2020) that the greatest influence on learning comes from ICT, and that enhancing its use in the classroom is crucial. It is ranked equally high as influencing students' attitudes towards learning Social Studies through ICT.

Furthermore, Pulka and Ayuba (2014) evaluated the factors influencing students' perspectives on entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. The results of the correlation study showed that attitude-influencing elements had a significant impact on students' entrepreneurial mindset.

Conclusion

Numerous studies have been conducted on the subject of ICT use, gender, and students' views towards Social Studies education. This study recognises the role that ICT plays in education and how it affects students' perceptions of studying Social Studies. It's also critical to note that this research did not find a relationship between gender and students' attitudes towards learning Social

Studies. One modern challenge is the use of ICT in Social Studies education (classroom engagement). In the twenty-first century, Social Studies education is crucial, particularly in light of countries' efforts to forge their own moral, ethical, and value systems. Therefore, higher education institutions (HEIs) in Nigeria are urged to reframe the Social Studies curriculum and encourage students to learn Social Studies regardless of their gender, attitude, character, behaviour, self-esteem, background, mother tongue, or level of ICT proficiency, among other factors.

Recommendations

Teachers of Social Studies should advise their students to use ICT to learn about the subject; they should also suggest resources and teaching materials to students. Students studying Social Studies should have access to Social Studies resources for their daily reading; Students should benefit from improved relationships between Social Studies instructors and the school administration. A stronger relationship between the instructor and the students will support learning Social Studies in an efficient manner. Additionally, Social Studies and ICT materials and resources should be available in the school library; modern Social Studies instruction should be practice-based and student-centered. The Social Studies lesson requires the pupils to participate actively. In the SS teaching and learning procedures, the SS teacher can assign roles to the pupils, ask them questions frequently, and require them to demonstrate concepts or ideas. When teaching Social Studies, it is best to use three different approaches. This will facilitate the acquisition of knowledge resulting from the teaching and learning processes for Social Studies students with varying learning styles and comprehension levels.

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