

PDF - EFFECT OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY ON UPPER BASIC SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND RETENTION IN SOCIAL STUDIES -

researchcub.info **ABSTRACT**

The study was designed and conducted to determine the effectiveness of the Collaborative learning instructional strategy (CLIS) in influencing students' achievement and retention in Upper Basic Secondary School Social Studies. Five research questions and five null hypotheses guided the study. A Quasi-Experimental Pre-test, Post-test, Non-equivalent Control Group Design was adopted for the study. A sample of 124 upper Basic VII Social Studies students, drawn by both purposive and simple random sampling techniques from two co-educational schools in Agege Education District 1 was used for the study. The two schools were assigned to experimental and control groups respectively. Two intact classes in each school (one as experimental and the other one as control group) were randomly selected. The experimental and control groups were taught the concept of values, leadership and followership, science and technology by the regular social studies teachers. Three instruments Pre-SSAT, Post-SSAT and Retention Test were developed, duly validated and reliability of coefficient (.086) before using them for data collection. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested at (0.05) using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). The result of data analysis showed that, there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught social studies with collaborative learning instructional strategy and those taught with lecture method. There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of male and female students exposed to collaborative learning instructional strategy. There is a significant difference in the mean achievement score of students exposed to collaborative learning instructional strategy in their post test and retention test. A major educational implication of the findings is that the use of Collaborative learning Instructional Strategy (CLIS) was found to be more effective than the lecture method on students' achievement and retention. Based on these, some recommendations were made that seminars and workshops should be organized by government and relevant professional bodies like Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSSAN) should educate teachers on the use of Collaborative learning as they may not be familiar with it.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background to the Study**

Education as an important tool for national development has become one of the major concerns of government in recent times in Nigeria. It is a matter of grave concern for educational stakeholders that the level of achievement and commitment of students to learning is reducing day –in–day–out. One of the major causes identified is the ineffective teaching of the school subjects including social studies. (Abdu-Raheem, 2012)

Social studies is a discipline that involves experiences which deal with the problems of human relationship in the school and the larger community. Social Studies could be seen as a programme of study in schools which is used to inculcate in the learners the knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions considered important in human relationship in the society (Adeyemi, 2003). It also includes human relationships with other culture. These experiences and their rightful application form the values which control the social relations of individuals. Social Studies has the special focus of positively influencing, modifying and changing pupil's behaviour in the direction of acceptable norms, values, beliefs, attitudes and practices of the society (Morriset, 1980). A competent teacher of Social Studies must acquaint himself or herself with Social Studies methodology and be well groomed in the application of the various methods of teaching social studies.

The general aim of curriculum planners for Social Studies is to provide a forum whereby children will be taught to imbibe the values in the society. The provisions and objectives set for the accomplishment of social goals are sufficiently worthwhile to achieve the set goals. The values emphasised in the current curriculum of Social Studies are those ones which are important to get across to school children. (Adesina & Adeyemi, 2009). Commonwealth of Learning (2000), defined curriculum as a composite whole including the learner, the teacher, teaching and learning methodologies, anticipated and unanticipated experiences, outputs and outcomes possible within a learning institution. With the values and attitudes for survival, aimed at in the national guide, it is hopeful that students at the end of the courses should be able to develop the right type of attitude and learn more about their society and others and the right type of value of Social Studies as a school subject.

The aims and objectives of education that may help the individual to develop physically and socially, and be able to contribute to national development as stated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), include the following:

- the inculcation of the right of values for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society.
- the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competence both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live and to contribute to the development of his society. (FRN, p.8)

These characteristics of the national objectives are fully reflected in the Social Studies objectives. Social Studies, apart from imparting knowledge and providing valuable information necessary in life, also aims at helping students to acquire desirable social habits, attitudes and values needed for the survival of the individual in the society.

Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (2007) clearly spelt out that the overall objectives of Social Studies at both the lower basic and upper basic (Junior Secondary) levels should enable pupils and students to achieve the following:

1. Develop the ability to adapt to his or her changing environment.
2. Become responsible and disciplined individuals capable and willing to contribute to the

development of their societies.

3. Inculcate the right types of values.

4. Develop a sense of comprehension towards other people, their diverse cultures, history and those fundamental things that make them human.

5. Develop the capacity to recognise the many dimensions of being human in different cultural and social contexts.

6. Develop a sense of solidarity and sharing based on a sense of security in one's own identity. (p.6)

In spite of the important place of Social Studies in our educational system, students' academic achievement in the subject has shown a fluctuating decline especially in Junior Secondary Certificate Examination in Agege Education District 1 of Lagos State. For instance, the Lagos State Examination Board, (2012), Social Studies analysis of Agege Education District 1 has indicated that as at 2008, the percentage of males that passed was 18.31%, and in 2009 it increased to 24.53%, and in 2010 it dropped to 18.31%. While the percentage of the females that passed in 2008 was 21.53%, in 2009 it increased to 26.15% and in 2010 it dropped to 21.53%. This is an indication of low retention of what is taught and subsequently poor achievement. Factors which have been identified as contributing to the persistent low retention and poor level of achievement in Social Studies include the following:

- Poor teaching methods adopted by teachers.

- The prominent use of text and lecture instructional techniques/strategies by Social Studies teachers.

- Learner variables such as gender and home background.

- Lack of organised strategies for concept formation, teacher characteristics and memory skills (Falade, 2001).

The aforementioned gives an indication that there may be low desire in the area of social studies. This may also be an indication that meaningful learning had not taken place. It has been observed that effective teaching may facilitate learning and make it more meaningful.

In line with this, Sander (2001) stated that effective teaching helps the learner to learn better, while poor teaching would naturally lead to poor learning and consequently poor achievement. Abdu-Raheem (2011) noted that lecture method commonly used for teaching / learning process in Nigerian schools is not so effective because the students are not given the opportunity to interact with the environment and maximally develop their intellectual capabilities. Under the lecture approach, the teacher according to Yusuf (2007) simply becomes only the expositor and drill master while the learner remains the listener and a store house of facts that can be retrieved when a student hears his name called by the teacher.

The method of teaching could be regarded as the vehicle through which a message is delivered (Salawu, 1999). There exist several methods of instruction which have permeated

our educational system over the years. Classroom experience shows that in most cases, two or more teaching methods are combined by teachers in classroom practice.

The lecture method according to Awotua-Efebo (2001), is mainly teacher-centred, with the students being consistently passive and contents are taught as absolute knowledge. Lecture method allows a great deal of information to be passed to the learners and favours handling of large classes. In spite of this advantage, the lecture method does not stimulate student's innovation, inquiry and scientific attitudes. It encourages students to cram facts which are easily forgotten (Okwilagwe, 2002). Furthermore, it does not facilitate the development of reasoning skills and processes in the students. These, among other reasons have not enhanced learning in students and thus had led to poor achievement of students in social studies. However, there is still the need to search and incorporate modern instructional strategies or techniques which the advanced world has long accepted into their classrooms. It is likely that intervening variables like gender, retention and academic ability can also have an effect on the effectiveness of teaching methods and learning outcomes. Gender refers to the social attributes associated with being a male or female. It is an attribute that differentiates feminine from masculine socially (Lee, 2001). It is a related term that stresses the roles and responsibilities of male and female (Okeke, 1999). In this statement, gender is referred to one's sex; it becomes a factor in classroom instruction when the teacher creates a learning environment that favours either the boys or girls. This study will find out whether gender will influence the achievement of students in social studies if exposed to collaborative learning.

Retention is a repeated performance by a learner of the behaviour that an acquired piece of knowledge is always intended to elicit in the learner after an interval of time. Chauhan (1998), described Retention as a direct correlate of positive transfer of learning. This means that high retention may lead to high achievement which is a factor of many variables such as interval between learning and retrieval, intervening experiences, specific subject involved, teaching strategies/methods used and environmental situations, among others. Evidence from researches showed that there is no consistency on the variables that may lead to the students retaining more of what they have learnt. Separate studies carried out by Ndukwe (2000), Nnadi (2001) and Eze (2002) showed that there was no significant differences between the pupils mean post achievement and retention scores. These findings suggest that there is need to carry out more studies to clarify issues related to achievement and retention as it concerns methods of teaching. Since there is no consensus on the effect of methods on students' retention and achievement, there is need to investigate a learner oriented method and its effect on achievement and retention. The overall achievement and retention in social studies and any other social sciences subjects are very much related to many other variables, which are evident in the studies carried out by other researchers. The variables include: academic ability levels of learners, gender issues, teaching-learning

environment(location), teaching methods , teachers ability to use the various methods and materials provided, students backgrounds, level of intelligence, students cognitive styles, among other variables(Moore,2000;Mukaila,2000;Ogunleye,2002;Eccles,2002).

Students vary in their academic abilities and this tends to be reflected in the extent to which they are affected by a particular teaching methods. For instance, Diamond and Onwuegbuzie (2001) expressed concern over the influence of different teaching methods on learning benefits of students of different ability groups, stating that differences in intellectual functioning among learners necessitate variations in instructional strategies. Various researches conducted by Okeke (1986), Ezeh (1992) and Udeji (2007) indicated that teaching methods have different effects on students' of different academic ability levels (low, average, high levels) with one group benefitting more from a particular teaching method than the other. In the view of the foregoing, it might be necessary to find out the students' academic ability group (low, average, high) for which a particular teaching method will be more effective. However, there is still the need to search and incorporate modern instructional strategies or techniques like the collaborative learning which the advanced countries have long accepted into their classrooms.

Collaborative learning is an instructional strategy in which students at various performance levels, students work together in small groups toward a common goal. The students are responsible for one another's learning as well as their own. Thus, the success of one student helps other student to be successful. Collaborative Learning (CL), however, is a personal philosophy not just a classroom technique. It suggests a way of dealing with people which respects and highlights group member's abilities and contributions..(Amuradha,1995)

The underlying premise of collaborative learning is based upon consensus building through cooperation among group members, in contrast to competition in which individuals compete against other group members (McGroarty, 1993). This type of learning brings about equality amongst the learners because they tend to help one another. Thus social studies is all about man and his relationship with his environment, because the classroom is a community and the learners will need to work together effectively to achieve a goal.

Based on the nature of Social studies, that involves interaction and discussion, the instructional strategy to be adopted should be learner centred and oriented .This is so because there will be free flow of information through discussion and debates and by so doing, both teachers and learners will gain from lessons. Students learn best when they are actively involved in the process, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the content is presented in other instructional formats. Students who work in collaborative groups seem to appear more satisfied with their classes (Berkman, 1990; Tinto & Associates, 1992).

Proponents of collaborative learning claim that the active exchange of ideas with small group not only increases interest among the participants but also promotes critical thinking.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1980), there is pervasive evidence that cooperative teams achieve at higher levels of thought and retain information longer than students who work quietly as individuals. The shared learning gives students an opportunity to engage in discussion, take responsibility for their own learning, and thus become critical thinkers (Totten, Sills, Digby & Russ, 1991). The thinking skills will enable learners to contribute to the lessons by fully participating in the lessons and the communicative skills will improve learners' ability of interacting with his /her peers and the larger society in their environment. In collaborative learning, ideas, facts and knowledge are exchanged and brain storming is done among the learners so as to achieve the common goal. The researcher proposes that collaborative learning is an instructional strategy that has to do with the learners and the teacher working together in order to solve problems. It is expected that collaborative learning will bridge the ethnic and cultural gaps in the students because learners will work irrespective of their differences. Yusuf (2007) pointed out that efforts have been made to redress the observed inadequacy by teaching the social studies as a discipline that brings the reality of everyday societal living to students with the desire to making them acquire the knowledge, attitude, values and skills required to be responsible and discipline members of their society. Considering the above, it is necessary that an experimental study be carried out to ascertain the actual effect of collaborative learning on students' academic achievement in social studies.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The persistent poor achievement and low retention of students' in Social Studies as revealed by both research results call for concern especially for teachers of social studies. The problem has to a large extent been attributed to ineffective teaching method employed by the teachers of the subject, especially lecture teaching method which is teacher-centred. Consequently, there is a felt need to improve on the teaching and learning of social studies by exploring the use of innovative instructional strategy and learner centred method such as the collaborative learning as proposed by the researcher, since it is believed that meaningful learning may be as a result of active participation by students. Although, many studies have been carried out on some innovative methods, like discussion method, reflective inquiry amongst many others. Findings have shown that they are students' centred and can also enhance learning and achievement. The study therefore aims at investigating the effectiveness of collaborative learning instructional strategy on students' achievement and retention in Social Studies.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to determine the effect of collaborative learning instructional strategy on student's academic achievement and retention in Social Studies in Agege Education District 1 of Lagos State. Specifically, the study will determine

1. The effect of collaborative learning instructional on the achievement scores of students

taught Social Studies.

2. The effect of collaborative learning instructional strategy on gender achievement of students' in Social Studies.

3. The effect of collaborative learning instructional strategy on students' retention in Social Studies.

4. The interaction effect of collaborative learning instructional strategy and gender on students' achievement in social studies.

5. The influence of academic ability level on achievement of students taught social studies using the collaborative learning instructional strategy.

### **Significance of the Study**

The result of this study is expected to have both theoretical and practical significance. This study is theoretically justified by the fact that there is a discrepancy between the student actual development levels. This means that the achievement of the child depends on the help from a competent partner or a knowledgeable peer. The Vygotsky's theory of zone proximal development theory believes that the knowledgeable partner could be the teacher or the peer group, the teacher in this case acts as a scaffold who gives support and guidance to the student where it is necessary. This theory is synonymous with the constructivist theory that believes in the students' discovery of principles and by so doing it makes learning to be learners-centred and promotes participation on the part of the learners and the teachers other than being passive and regurgitate facts that lead to memorization of knowledge. In other words, the collaborative learning instructional strategy is in conformity with the theory emphasizing that learners need to collaborate effectively with the peers with the assistance of the teacher. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development theory will enable teachers of social studies to facilitate learning rather than imparting learning because of the nature of the subject that has to do with problem solving and discovery. The result of this study will therefore help in authenticating the tenets of Vygotsky's theory.

The Social learning theory of Albert Bandura is based on the principles of observation, imitation and modelling. This theory will enable learners to emulate good attitudes and values amongst their peers, because the collaborative learning will bring learners together to work for a common goal, since the main aim is to aspire for a goal, the stronger ones will help the weaker ones, and by so doing they learn from one another in terms of character and learning. The findings of this study will help in authenticating the tenets of Albert Bandura's theory.

The findings of this result will be of benefit to the curriculum planners, government, teachers and students. From the findings, curriculum planners will benefit since they will be provided with information that may be used in recommending effective innovations in teaching strategies. Also, the findings will provide information that will be used to sensitize the government on the need for workshops, seminars, and conferences on new teaching

techniques like the collaborative learning instructional strategy as an effective way for teaching Social Studies. It will also enable them to re-train teachers by organising symposia, workshops and training on the use of collaborative methods. The use of lecture teaching method will be jettisoned as curriculum planners will find the need to improve on it.

This study will be significant to the teachers because they will find the study useful as it will suggest a better method of social studies teaching and learning process as a sure way of achieving their set objectives with less pains. It will sensitize teachers of social studies to the adoption of better instructional strategies.

The students will find this study helpful because it will help them to work together as one so as to achieve a common goal and also to solve their immediate problems. It will also enhance good team work and working together in harmoniously with one other irrespective of their ethnic or cultural differences.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study will be restricted to the Upper Basic 8 (JSS II) students' of Agege Education District 1 of Lagos State. The work is restricted to Upper Basic 8 students offering Social Studies. The content scope of this study will cover values, types of values, importance of values, the concept of leadership and followership, science and technology.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions are formulated to guide the study;

1. What is the mean achievement score of students' taught social studies using collaborative learning instructional strategy and those taught using the lecture method.
2. What is the effect of gender on the mean achievement score of students' taught social studies using collaborative learning instructional strategy?
3. What is the effect of collaborative learning instructional strategy on students' retention in Social Studies?
4. What is the interaction effect of collaborative learning instructional strategy and gender on students' achievement in Social Studies?
5. What is the influence of academic ability level on achievement of students' taught social studies using the collaborative learning?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H<sub>01</sub>. There is no significant difference in the mean achievement score of students' taught Social Studies with collaborative learning instructional strategy and those taught with lecture method.

H<sub>02</sub> There is no significant difference in the gender achievement scores of students' taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy.

H<sub>03</sub> There is no significant difference in the collaborative learning instructional strategy on students' retention.



H0<sub>4</sub> There is no significant difference in the interaction effect of collaborative learning instructional strategy and gender on students' achievement in Social Studies.

H0<sub>5</sub> There is no significance difference in the academic ability level on achievement of students' taught social studies using the collaborative learning instructional strategy.

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Regards!!!