



EXPERIENCE AS A FACTOR INFLUENCING UPPER BASIC SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL STUDIES ORIENTATIONS IN SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

Yusuf, Abdulraheem¹

Department of Social Sciences Education
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria
yuabra25@gmail.com

Arogundade, Mikhail Bayo²

Federal Teaching Hospital Staff Secondary School,
Ido-Ekiti, Nigeria
mikhailarogundade@gmail.com

Bello, Muhinat B³

Department of Social Sciences Education³
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria.
muhinat4islam@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the Upper Basic School Teachers' perception of three social studies orientations in South –West of Nigeria. Survey type of research design using questionnaire was adopted for the study. The population consisted of all social studies teachers in South-West, Nigeria. The sample comprised of 646 Upper Basic School Social Studies teachers selected using multi-stage sampling techniques. The two main research questions were analyzed using percentage, while one-way ANOVA was used to test all the hypothesis generated. The study revealed among others that social studies teachers have a diverse perception of all the orientations, but they were more favourably predisposed to citizenship transmission orientation. Less experienced, moderately experienced and highly experienced teachers are significantly different in their perception of all the orientations. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that social studies teachers should be inclusive in the teaching of all these orientations as entrenched in the social studies curriculum without giving much priority to one orientation over the others.

KEY WORDS: Orientation, Citizenship, experience, eclectic, curriculum, and inclusive

Corresponding Author: BELLO, Muhinat B. email: muhinat4islam@yahoo.com

1 INTRODUCTION

One of the paramount aims of education in our school system is to produce citizens who will solve immediate and future problems of their community and not citizens who will learn, imbibe and acquire knowledge, values, behaviours and dispositions that are not relevant to the survival and continuous growth of their society. Social studies as one of the core subjects in our schools are to help students acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, dispositions, and viable understandings that will make them as citizens to contribute meaningfully to the nation building process using their abilities to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good.

However, in spite of the lofty responsibility to create and produce effective citizens for the perpetuation of our society being saddled on the shoulder of social studies education, since 1916 when the Committee on the Reorganization of Secondary Schools Association introduced the subject for the first time in American Schools, unending polemics have trailed it existence up to the present moment (Kochha, 2006). This has made scholars and experts in the field over the years to express their views about this conflicting nature of the subject. Barth, Barr, and Shermis (1977) described social studies as a garden variety curriculum that confuses both teachers and students alike. Barth (1990) in his own view, described the subject as a mystery to most people and particularly perplexing to college students who sometimes wondered why a preparation in elementary education or social science and humanities would end with certification to teach social studies.

Irrespective of different opinions and positions being canvassed by different experts in the field on the nature of the subject, Trump and Miller (1976) during the tense years of 1960's and 1970's of the great debate and polemics over the nature, purpose and scope of the field saw the necessity of defining social studies, otherwise it will continue to be amorphous, as this can make people ascribe anything to the subject. In their landmark expositions in unravelling the nature of social studies education, Barth et al., (1977) crafted three historical orientations to serve as a basis to understand the subject. They classified them as citizenship transmission, social science, and reflective inquiry. Over the years, these three orientations have been regarded and accepted as the basic epistemological

foundation of curriculum development in social studies education.

Citizenship transmission orientation is the transmission of knowledge of cultural heritage of the people; their values, norms, beliefs, attitudes and disposition to students to learn so as to perpetuate the existence of society from generation to generation. Social science orientation is the integration and interdisciplinary teaching of various social science disciplines in terms of their concepts, themes, and generalisations and constructs to address crucial issues in social studies education. Reflective inquiry orientation deals with the students identifying problems or issues of concern in their society and developing processes and methods to unravel these problems and also to resolve value-laden issues through the process of value analysis and value clarification.

Adewuya (2002) in his reflection on pedagogical issues in social studies over the years observed that the response of teachers to use the new methods has taken various forms: ranging from a half hearted compliance and defiance to outright condemnation. This is very paramount because there is the need for a conceptual clarification of the nature and purpose of the subject is highly crucial to its successful teaching. In addition, because teachers are not sufficiently involved in curriculum planning, such teachers with limited conceptions of the purpose of the subject attacked or misinterpreted the intention of the programme and substituted their own philosophy which may run counter to the writers' philosophy.

This might perhaps have influenced the opinion of Okam (2008) which suggested that curriculum processes and practices like methodology of inquiry, employment of decision making processes and principles, including the use of critical thinking and problem-solving procedures which are inbuilt into the interactions in the teaching of the subject were relegated to the background in many classrooms today by teachers.

Teachers' experience is probably the key factor in personnel policies that affect employees. The underlying assumption is that experience promotes effectiveness (Rice, 2010). Findings from studies have shown that the impact of the teacher is felt during the first few years of teaching, after that, marginal returns diminish (Harris & Sass, 2007; Rockoff & Staiger, 2006). This is in line with the study of Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) who concluded that there is little evidence that

improvement continues after the first three years. In addition, Sass, Hannaway, XU and Figlio (2010) concluded that research has shown that less experienced teachers are more effective than teachers with more experience. However, these findings are in contrast with the findings of Adeyemi (2007) who stated that teachers with five years and above teaching experience achieve better results than teachers with less than five years teaching experience.

Furthermore, findings from previous studies on social studies orientations appear to be conflicting. Firstly, some of the studies were conducted in Nigeria, for instance like the studies of Jekayinfa (1996); Okunloye (2001) and Udoukpong and Okon (2012) while others were conducted outside the shore of Nigeria, like the studies of Adeyemi (1992); Griffith (2003); Park (2008); Acikalm (2011) and Kaymacki and Ata (2012). This difference in locale with its own socio-cultural milieu influenced the outcome of these various studies. These previous studies conducted outside the country were more recent and larger in number than those conducted within the shore of Nigeria. In addition, the criteria used by previous researchers in determining years of teaching experience are not uniform and similar. Okunloye (2001) and Kaymacki and Ata (2012) used the number of years teachers spent teaching as a criteria for determining different categories of years of teaching experience, while Griffith (2003) used chronological age of respondents (teachers) as the determinant to measure different strata of years of teaching experience. All these factors have contributed to the inconclusiveness of previous studies, and therefore in this present study, different criteria will be used to determine years of teaching experience as thus – 0-5yrs (less experienced), 6-10yrs (moderately experienced) and 10yrs and above (highly experienced).

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are stated below:

1. What are the hierarchical levels of teacher perception of social studies orientation?
2. Do less experienced, moderately experienced, and highly experienced social studies teachers differ in their perception of social studies orientations?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested in this study:

H01: Less experienced, moderately and highly experienced social studies teachers are not significantly different in their perception of citizenship transmission orientation.

H02: Less experienced, moderately experienced and highly experienced social studies teachers are not significantly different in their perception of social science orientation.

H03: Less experienced, moderately experienced and highly experienced social studies teachers are not significantly different in their perception of reflective inquiry orientation.

2 METHODOLOGY

The study used a survey research design. A target population of all of the Upper Basic School social studies teachers in three states namely Ekiti, Ondo and Osun State was chosen for the study. The sample for the study consisted of 646 Upper Basic School social studies teachers selected from 323 Upper Basic Schools from the 1,744 secondary schools with the three states selected. The sole method used for data collection was a questionnaire adopted from DuBey & Barth (1980) Social Studies Traditions Checklist. The questionnaire contained 27 items involving three social studies orientations of citizenship transmission, social science and reflective inquiry but modified to suit the purpose of this present study. It also sought biodata information on respondents' years of teaching experience as thus – 0-5yrs (Less experienced teacher), 6-10yrs (moderately experienced teacher) and 10yrs and above (highly experienced teacher).

The content validity was ascertained by experts in social studies Education. A test-re-test method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.74 was obtained and this was considered adequate for the study. To analyse the data obtained both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed. The percentage was used for the demographic analysis of the data and one-way ANOVA was used to test all the hypotheses. The 0.05 level of significance was assumed in testing the entire hypothesis.

3 RESULTS

1. What are the hierarchical levels of teachers perception of social studies orientations?

Table 1: Teachers perception in hierarchical

Orientations	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Undecided (%)
Citizenship Transmission	5076 (87.31%)	573 (9.86%)	165 (2.84%)
Social Science	4938 (84.93%)	627 (10.87%)	249 (4.28%)
Reflective Inquiry	4476 (76.99%)	996 (17.13%)	342 (5.88%)

Table 1 showed that the perception scores for citizenship transmission orientations is 5076 (87.31%), while 573(9.86%) respondents disagreed, 165 (2.84%) remain undecided. For social science orientation, the perception scores is 4938(84.93%), 627 (10.87%) disagreed and 249 (4.28%) remain undecided. Thirdly, the perception scores for reflective inquiry orientation is 4476(76.99%), 996 (17.13%) disagreed, while 342 (5.88%) remain undecided.

It is obvious from the result that social studies teachers have diverse perception of the three orientations, but nevertheless, were more favourably predisposed to citizenship transmission orientation than to any other orientations.

2. Do less experienced, moderately experienced and highly experienced social studies teachers differ in their perception of social studies orientations?

Table2: Differences in the perception of Teachers.

Social studies Orientations	Less Experienced Teachers Perception Score or Ratings	Moderately Experienced Teachers Perception Score or Ratings	Highly Experienced Teachers Perception Score or Ratings
Orientation of Citizenship	1060 (83.53%)	2416 (86.04%)	1600 (92.11%)

Transmission Social Sciences	1060 (83.53 %)	2417 (82.51%)	1561 (89.87%)
Reflective Inquiry	1045 (82.35%)	2016 (71.79%)	1415 (81.46%)

Result on table 2 showed that for citizenship transmission orientation, the less experienced teachers have perception scores of 1060 (83.53%), moderately experienced teachers have 2416 (86.04%) and highly experienced teachers have 1600 (92.11%). Secondly, less experienced teachers moderately experienced teachers and highly experienced teachers have perception scores of 1060 (83.53%), 2317 (82.51%) and 1561 (89.87%) respectively for social science orientation. For reflective inquiry orientation, the perception scores of less experienced teachers is 1045 (82.35%), that of moderately experienced teachers is 2016 (71.79%) and that of highly experienced teachers is 1415 (81.46%).

It was revealed from the finding of this study that highly experienced teachers have a higher perception of the three orientations than the less and moderately experienced teachers. Also, all the respondents in this category were more favourably predisposed to citizenship transmission orientation.

Testing of hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Less experienced, moderately experienced and highly experienced teachers are not significantly different in their perception of citizenship transmission orientation.

Table 3: One-way ANOVA of less experienced and citizenship transmission orientation

Group	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	73.519	2	36.760	8.737	0.000
Within Groups	2705.238	643	4.207		
Total	2778.757	645			

P<0.05

Table 3 shows that less experienced, moderately experienced, and highly experienced teachers are significantly different in their perception of citizenship transmission orientation (p-value 0.000)

<0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

In order to determine the source of pairwise significance difference, Scheffe Post hoc test was used. The result is presented in table 4.

Table 4: Scheffe Post hoc test of teachers perception of citizenship transmission orientation by years of teaching experience.

Group	Less Experienced Teachers	Moderately Experienced Teachers	Highly Experienced Teachers	Mean	N
Less Experienced Teachers	*			25.18	141
Moderately Experienced Teachers		*		25.50	312
Highly Experienced Teachers			*	26.08	193

* Mean difference significant at 0.05 alpha level

Table 4 showed that highly experienced teachers are significant different from less experienced and moderately experienced teachers in their perception of citizenship transmission orientation.

Hypothesis 2: Less experienced, moderately experienced, and highly experienced teachers are not significantly different in their perception of social science orientation.

Table 5: One-way ANOVA less teachers and teaching experience

Group	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	98.662	2	49.311	6.089	0.002
Within Groups	5207.206	643	8.089		
Total	305.828	645			

P<0.05

Table 5 shows that less experienced, moderately experienced, and highly experienced teachers are significantly different in their perception of social studies orientation (p-value = 0.002 < 0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

In order to determined the sources of pairwise significant difference, Scheffe Post hoc test was used. The result is presented in table 6.

Table 6: Scheffe post hoc test of teachers perception of social science orientation by years of teaching experience.

Group	Less Experienced Teachers	Moderately Experienced Teachers	Highly Experienced Teachers	Mean	N
Less Experienced Teachers	*			25.06	141
Moderately Experienced Teachers		*		24.98	312
Highly Experienced Teachers			*	25.85	193

* Mean difference significant at 0.05 alpha level

Table 6 showed that highly experienced teachers are significantly different from less experienced and moderately experienced teachers in their perception of social science orientation.

Hypothesis 3: Less experienced, moderately experienced, and Highly experienced teachers are not significantly different in their perception of reflective inquiry orientation.

Table 7: One-way ANOVA of teachers perception of reflective inquiry orientation

Group	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	162.1462	81.073	6.238	12.99	0.000
Within Groups	4010.814	643	8.089	7	
Total	4172.960	645			

P<0.05

Table 7 showed that less experienced, moderately experienced and Highly experienced teachers are significantly different in their perception of reflective inquiry orientation ((p-value =0.000<0.05). therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

In order to determine the source of pair-wise significant difference, scheffe Post hoc test was used. The result is presented in table 8.

Table 8: Scheffe Post hoc test of teachers perception of reflective inquiry orientation by years of teaching experience.

Group	Less Experienced Teachers	Moderately Experienced Teachers	Highly Experienced Teachers	Mean	N
Less Experienced Teachers	*			24.91	141
Moderately Experienced Teachers		*		23.88	312
Highly Experienced Teachers			*	24.86	193

* Mean difference significant at 0.05 alpha level

Table 8 showed that less experienced teachers are significantly different from moderately experienced teachers and while moderately experienced teachers are significantly different from highly experienced teachers in their perception of reflective inquiry orientation.

4. DISCUSSION

Results obtained from this study have shown that though social studies teachers have a diverse perception of social studies orientations, they were observed to be more favourably predisposed to citizenship transmission orientation than to any other orientations. Previous studies of Jekayinfa (1996), Okunloye (2001), and Udoukpong and Okon (2012) conducted within the shore of Nigeria all found that citizenship transmission orientation is the most perceived orientation. This is in congruence with the findings of this study. However, this is at variance within the findings of Adeyemi (1992) and Kaymacki and Ata (2012) whose most perceived orientation was social science which were conducted in Botswana and North Western Turkey respectively, while that of Griffith (2003) and Park (2008) was reflective inquiry and which were also conducted in Caribbean Island, South Korea and Australia respectively. These present findings might be justified in the sense that the society and the school value the inculcation of right values, beliefs, traditions and knowledge that will preserve and sustain the social fabric of society especially in Nigeria and Africa at large into the students from generation to generation.

One of the findings also showed that reflective inquiry orientation seem to be the least favourably

predisposed orientation by all categories of respondents. This has confirmed the conclusions made by Okam (2008) that curriculum processes and practices like methodology of inquiry, employment of decision making process and principles including use of critical thinking and problem solving procedures which are inbuilt into the interactions in the teaching of the subject were relegated to the background in many classrooms today by teachers. The justification for this might be that some of the social studies teachers in today's classroom are not solely the specialists in the field. As it has been shown, teachers from other disciplines teach the subject, and these teachers bring their different prejudiced views and opinions from their various disciplines into the teaching of the subject, thereby confusing its nature, processes and principles.

In one of the findings, highly experienced social studies teachers appear to have a higher perception of all the orientations than the other two categories of experienced teachers. These findings tend to contradict the studies of Hariss and Sass (2007); Kane, Rockoff and Staiger (2006) and Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain (2005) who observed that impact of experience is stronger during the first few years of teaching, after that marginal returns diminish and there is little evidence that improvement continues after the first three years. However, Adeyemi (2007) concluded that teachers with five years and above teaching experience achieve better results than teachers with less than five years teaching experience. The reason why this happened might be that as the teacher garners experience over the time they become adept in the handling of the subject. Even the hypotheses tested in this regard lent credence to these differences. Also, the justification could be attributed to the different climes in which studies were conducted as evident in the previous studies reviewed.

Results from this study further showed that all the three categories of experienced teachers were more favourably predisposed to citizenship transmission orientation. This is in contrast to the findings of Griffith (2003) who observed that younger teachers were favourably predisposed to reflective inquiry orientation, while older teachers tend towards a didactic method of citizenship transmission orientation. The reason might be that the locale where these two studies were conducted might be a contributing factor as the social milieu and culture of a place influence people's world view, which

includes how they employ different methodologies of instruction in teaching in their various schools.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings in this study and the discussion that followed, some conclusions were drawn. First, social studies teachers were more favourably predisposed to citizenship transmission than to any other orientations. Secondly, reflective inquiry has been relegated to the background in the perception of the three orientations by the teachers. And lastly, highly experienced teachers have a higher perception of the three orientations than the other two categories of experienced teachers, and they are significantly different in their perception of all the three orientations.

Social studies teachers should be diverse and inclusive in the teaching of these orientations so that one orientation will not be given priority over the others, in order to achieve the aims and objectives of social studies education. Also, mechanisms and measures should be put in place to ensure that differences in the perception among different categories of experienced teachers does not affect teaching of different components of social studies curriculum in the classroom.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special appreciation goes to the principals and staff of the three state secondary schools, for their support and assistance during the data collection process.

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