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**EFFECTS OF GROUP-INVESTIGATION TECHNIQUE ON  
JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES  
TOWARDS SOCIAL STUDIES IN JOS NORTH,  
PLATEAU STATE**

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**Abstract**

*The study was carried out to investigate the effects of group-investigation technique on junior secondary school students' attitudes towards Social Studies in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. The design of the study was a quasi-experimental research design while the population comprised 309 junior secondary II students of two junior secondary schools. The sample size for the study was one hundred and twenty-two (122) junior secondary II Social Studies students from two intact classes. An instrument titled Social Studies Students' Attitude Scale (SSAS) was used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to construct validity and the KMO measure of sampling adequacy of the students' attitudes towards Social Studies was .668. with a reliability coefficient of 0.956. The data collected were analysed with simple percentage, t-test of independent samples and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). Based on the data collected and analyzed, it was found the group investigation*

*learning technique was effective in improving students attitude toward Social Studies without gender discrimination among gender groups. The study recommended that if group investigation learning technique is incorporated into the national universal basic education Social Studies curriculum, Social Studies teachers should prepare and avail themselves to the workshops on the application of group investigation in the teaching of Social Studies.*

**Keywords:** Attitudes, Group-Investigation, Technique, Social Studies.

### **Introduction**

Social Studies is a subject that seeks to nurture responsible citizenship in students through the various teaching and learning methods, strategies and techniques used to impart knowledge. The process of Social Studies instruction is complex and requires cooperation and communication between the teacher and the students on one side, and between students to students, as well as students to materials. Social Studies equip the students to acquire new skills, values, attitudes, appreciations, knowledge and understanding of concepts, facts, generalizations and societal issues (Najmonnisa & Haroon, 2014). Therefore, the contributions of Social Studies to nation building are enormous which include among others, patriotism, loyalty, respect for one another, friendliness and tolerance which help to build in the young ones' values for national development.

Social Studies content is student activity-packed, involving the near-total control of the learning situation by the students, and reducing the teachers' dominant of the teaching-learning process. Thus, not all teaching techniques are effective for the teaching and learning of Social Studies. Okam (2008) has opined that teachers of Social Studies should evolve techniques that require students' working together, sharing of ideas and actively participate in the teaching-learning process. Such techniques will generate greater performance and enhance students' attitudes in Social Studies.

Students' negative attitudes towards the subject seem to be questionable judging from their various performances. Also, the utilization of conventional teaching-learning methods, strategies, and techniques whereby Social Studies teachers stand in front of students, talking and rendering students into passive listeners is another issue at stake. These approaches to teaching-learning seem to be negative to Social Studies lessons accomplishment (Ige & Aremu, 2005). With Ige and Aremu's submission, no meaningful learning can take place in such situation. Perceiving the possible link between students' attitude towards Social Studies and teaching approaches, it therefore, befits Social Studies teachers to device or utilize teaching strategies and techniques among other factors, as the centre-piece of improving Social Studies learning outcomes in classrooms as well as attitudes of students towards the subject.

One of the factors that may likely influence students' attitude towards Social Studies is gender which is a socio-cultural construct that assigns roles, attitudes and values that are considered appropriate for each sex. Ekeh (2010) asserted that gender implies the character of being male or female, man or woman, boy or girl. From another point of view, the role an individual play in society determines his or her gender, these roles played by individuals in society are imposed on them by society. One of such roles is active participation in some of the affairs of the society which may influence students' attitude towards learning.

In an attempt to look for a students' friendly and participatory teaching technique that will reduce rote-learning among junior secondary students, the researcher wants to find an alternative by looking at group-investigation cooperative-learning technique. Group investigation occurs when students work together in small groups and are rewarded for their collective accomplishments, which facilitates interdependence, and involves the entire spectrum of learning activities in which groups of students work together in or out classroom. It can be as simple and informal as pairs working together in a Think-pair-share procedure, where students consider a question individually, discuss their ideas with one another and reach a consensus answer, then share the results with the entire class. The group-investigation technique is useful in other subject

areas, especially in the sciences and since it is successful in other subject areas or fields, can it be successful in Social Studies subject area too? It is against this backdrop that the present study investigated the effects of group-investigation technique on junior secondary II students' attitudes towards Social Studies education in Jos, Plateau State.

The dwindling poor performance in Social Studies has been attributed to several attitudinal factors including students' attitude towards Social Studies education, teachers attitudes towards students' abilities and poor teaching strategies and techniques. However, it is not clear which of these factors are responsible for the attitudinal direction towards Social Studies. Hence, whether the use of group-investigation technique would inspire students to learn and improve students' attitudes towards Social Studies is the question this study attempts to answer.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study examined the effects of group-investigation technique on junior secondary school students' attitudes towards Social Studies in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

- i. find out the pre-test attitude of junior secondary two students towards Social Studies in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria.
- ii. examine the post-test attitude of junior secondary two students towards Social Studies.
- iii. Investigate the pre-test and post-test attitude profile of the experimental and control groups towards Social Studies.
- iv. determine the pre-test and post-test attitude profile of male and female students towards Social Studies in the experimental group.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide the study:

- i. What is the pre-test attitude of junior secondary two

- students towards Social Studies in Jos, Plateau State?
- ii. What is the post-test attitude of junior secondary two students towards Social Studies in Jos, Plateau State?
- iii. What is the pre-test and post-test attitude profile of the experimental and control groups towards Social Studies?
- iv. What is the pre-test and post-test attitude profile of male and female students towards Social Studies in the experimental group?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the experimental and control groups on pre-test attitude towards Social Studies mean scores.
2. There is no significant difference between the experimental and control groups on post-test attitude towards Social Studies mean scores.
3. There is no interaction effect between gender and treatment groups attitude towards Social Studies mean scores.

### **Methods**

This study adopted a quasi-experimental research design. Specifically, the non-equivalent pre-test–post-test control group design, in which intact groups were assigned to the experimental and control groups. The population of the study consists of all junior secondary II Social Studies students in Jos North, Plateau State with a student population of 309 (148 males students and 161 females). The sample comprised of two Junior Secondary Schools randomly selected from the 174 junior secondary school students in the control and experimental classes respectively.

The instrument used for data collection was titled Social Studies Students' Attitude Scale (SSAS). The SSAS consisted of two sections. Section one contained personal information about the respondents such as name of school, school type, age and gender, while the

section two contained 30 items on students' attitude towards learning Social Studies. The **SSAS** was subjected to construct validity. The reliability of the SSAS was estimated using the Cronbach Alpha through the aid of SPSS. The reliability coefficient of 0.956 was estimated for the SSA scale. The treatment was given during regular school lessons for 6 weeks in the term's instructional unit in Social Studies for the JSS II students. The experimental group were taught using the group investigation technique while the control group were taught same topics using presentation technique to run concurrently. Research questions one to four were answered using percentages. Hypothesis one was tested with t-test of independent samples while the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test hypotheses two to four.

## Results

**Research Question One:** what is the pre-test attitude of junior secondary two students towards Social Studies in Jos, Plateau State?

**Table 1: Pre-test Attitude of Students toward Social Studies in the Experimental and Control Groups**

Group	Attitude			Total
	Negative	Neutral	Positive	
Experimental	92(92.9%)	6(6.1%)	1(1%)	99(100%)
Control	72 (93.5%)	3(3.9%)	2(2.6%)	77(100%)

Table 1 reveals the pretest attitude of JSS II students towards Social Studies in the experimental and control groups in Jos Plateau State. The result showed that 92 (92.9%) out of the 99 students in the experimental group had a negative attitude, 6 (6.1%) had neutral attitude, while 1 (1%) had positive attitude towards Social Studies before exposure to treatment. Also, 72 (93.5%) out of the 77 students in the control group had negative attitude, 3 (3.9%) students had neutral attitude, while 2(2.6%) students had negative attitude towards Social Studies. Table 1 showed that both the experimental and control groups had negative attitude towards

Social Studies before treatment. It indicates that they were at the same level of attitude before exposure to treatment.

**Research Question Two:** What is the post-test attitude of junior secondary two students towards Social Studies in Jos, Plateau State?

**Table 2: Post-test Attitude of Students toward Social Studies in the Experimental and Control Groups**

Group	Attitude			Total
	Negative	Neutral	Positive	
<b>Experimental</b>	3(3%)	21(21.2%)	75(75.8%)	99(100%)
<b>Control</b>	70 (90.9%)	5(6.5%)	2(2.6%)	77(100%)

Table 2 showed the post-test attitude of students towards Social Studies in the experimental and control groups in Jos, Plateau State. The result indicated that 3 (3%) out of the 99 students in the experimental group had negative attitude, 21 (21.2%) had neutral attitude, while 75 (75.8%) had positive attitude towards Social Studies after exposure to treatment. Also, 70 (90.9%) out of the 77 students in the control group had negative attitude, 5 (6.5%) students had neutral attitude, while 2(2.6%) had positive attitude towards Social Studies. This means that majority of the students in the experimental group had positive attitude in the posttest as against the control group who still recorded negative attitude toward Social Studies.

**Research Question Three:** What is the pre-test and post-test attitude profile of the experimental and control groups towards Social Studies?

From the data in Table 3, the number of students in the experimental group with pre-test negative, neutral and positive attitudes were 7(9%), 34(46%) and 33(45%) respectively, while in the post-test the number of students in the same group were 0(0%), 7(9%), and 67(91%) respectively. The table also shows that the number of Social Studies students with pre-test negative, neutral and positive attitudes towards the subject in the control

group were: 7(15%), 25(52%) and 16(33%) respectively. Whereas the number in the same post-test of the same group were: 3(6%), 22(46%) and 23 (48%).

**Table 3: Results of Pre-test and Post-test Attitude Profile of the Experimental and Control Groups towards Social Studies**

Group	Test	N	Attitude Profile	No.	%
Experimental	Pre-test	74	Negative	7	9
			Neutral	34	46
			Positive	33	45
	Post-test	74	Negative	0	0
			Neutral	7	9
			Positive	67	91
Control	Pre-test	48	Negative	7	15
			Neutral	25	52
			Positive	16	33
	Post-test	48	Negative	3	6
			Neutral	22	46
			Positive	23	48

**Research Question Three:** What is the pre-test and post-test attitude profile of male and female students towards Social Studies in the experimental group?

Table 4 shows that the number of male Social Studies students in the experimental group with pre-test negative, neutral and positive attitudes towards Social Studies were 5(11%), 21 (47%) and 19 (42%) respectively; while the post-test number for the same group were 0 (0%), 2(7%), and 27 (93%) respectively. Moreover, the table reveals that the number of female Social Studies students with pre-test negative, neutral and positive attitude towards Social Studies were 2 (7%), 13 (45%) and 14 (48%) respectively; whereas the post-test number of Social Studies students in the same group were 0 (0%), 2 (7%) and 27 (93%) respectively.

**Table 4: Results of Pre-test and Post-test Attitude Profile of Male and Female Students in the Experimental Group towards Social Studies**

Group	Gender	Test	N	Attitude Profile	No.	%
Experimental	Male	Pre-test	45	Negative	5	11
				Neutral	21	47
				Positive	19	42
	Post-test	45	Negative	0	0	
			Neutral	5	11	
			Positive	40	89	
Control	Female	Pre-test	48	Negative	2	7
				Neutral	13	45
				Positive	14	48
	Post-test	48	Negative	0	0	
			Neutral	2	7	
			Positive	27	93	

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference between the experimental and control groups on pre-test attitude towards Social Studies mean scores.

**Table 5: t-test Analysis of Difference Between Experimental and Control Groups on Pre-test Attitude Towards Social Studies**

Group	N	M	SD	Df	T	P
Experimental	74	64.54	12.87	120	1.53	.130
Control	48	60.94	12.53			

$p > 0.05$

The t-test of independent samples was used to test if any significant difference existed between the experimental and control groups on pre-test attitude towards Social Studies. The SPSS output

of the analysis reveals that the  $t$ -value = 1.53 and  $p$  value = .1.30. Since the  $p$  value is greater than 0.05, it means the difference between the experimental and control groups pre-test attitude towards Social Studies was not significant. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted and considered that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups on pre-test attitude towards Social Studies mean scores.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference between the experimental and control groups on post-test attitude towards Social Studies mean scores

**Table 6: Summary Table of ANCOVA Analysis of Difference Between Experimental and Control Groups on Post-test Attitude Towards Social Studies**

Source	Type III SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	128003.781	2	128003.781	919.286	.000
Intercept	409800.764	1	409800.764	2943.070	.000
Post-test Attitude	4.691	1	4.691	.021	.886
GROUP	128003.781	1	128003.781	919.286	.000
Error	16708.113	120	139.243		
Total	682367.00	122			
Corrected Total	144712.893	121			

- a. R. Squared = (Adjusted R Squared = .884)  
P<0.05

The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test if any significant difference existed between the experimental and control groups on post-test attitude towards Social Studies mean scores. The SPSS output of the analysis shows that  $F(1,120) = 919.286$ , while  $p < 0.005$ . Since the  $p$  value is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and considered that there was significant difference between the experimental and control groups on post-test attitude towards Social Studies mean scores. This

means that group investigation technique was very effective in improving towards Social Studies.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no interaction effect between gender and treatment groups attitude towards Social Studies mean scores.

**Table 7: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) of Difference between Gender and Treatment Groups Attitude Towards Social Studies Mean Scores**

Source	Type III SS	df	Mean Square	F	P-value
<b>Corrected model</b>	30510.264	2	15255.13	94.13	.000
<b>Intercept</b>	12015.041	1	12015.041	74.14	.000
<b>Pre-test</b>	17464.622	1	17464.622	107.77	.000
<b>Group</b>	1656.089	1	1656.089	10.22	.002
<b>Error</b>	20581.805	87	162.061		
<b>Total</b>	931949.000	90			
<b>Corrected Total</b>	51092.069	89			

- a. R. Squared = .885 (Adjusted R Squared = .884)  
 $p < 0.05$

The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test if any significant difference existed between the experimental and control groups on post-test attitudes towards Social Studies based on gender. The SPSS output in Table 7 shows that  $F(1,129) = 94.31$ ,  $p < 0.05$  since the p value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Indicating that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups on posttest of male and female attitude mean scores towards Social Studies after treatment. Therefore, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups on posttest of male and female attitude mean scores towards Social Studies.

**Discussions**

The study shows improvement in the attitude profile and mean scores of students in the experimental and control groups after the

intervention. The result of test of hypothesis two thus revealed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups on attitude towards Social Studies mean scores. This outcome of the study was not a surprise because group investigation learning technique involve the students in several learning activities that reduces the boredom commonly experience in the conventional Social Studies classroom sitting. The finding supported Ige and Aremu (2005) assertion that acclaimed the efficacy of students-centered learning technique on all round development of the learner, attitude inclusive, as a strong factor in students achievement.

The finding revealed an improvement in the attitude profile and mean scores of male and female students. The result from test of hypothesis four provided sufficient evidence in this regard. Result of the hypothesis shows that the interaction effect between gender and treatment groups towards Social Studies was not significant. This means that gender did not have significant effect on students attitudes towards Social Studies. The finding refuted Ekeh (2010) who claimed that genetic and gender factors influence attitude. The result of this study is also not in agreement with the submission of Busola (2011) who observed that male students achieved higher than their female counterparts in government which is a social science subject and whose foundation is Social Studies.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommended that Social Studies teachers should endeavour to develop and adopt group investigation learning technique as it would improve students attitude towards the subject as well as help reduce gender gap in Social Studies. Regular sensitization workshops should be organized by the universal basic education commission to retrain Social Studies teachers on the development and use of group investigation learning technique.

### **Conclusion**

The study concluded that group investigation learning technique was effective in fostering significant improvement on the attitude of junior secondary two towards Social Studies. Significant

difference was found to exist between the experimental and control groups on their attitude mean scores in Social Studies. More so, it was found the group investigation learning technique was effective in improving students attitude toward Social Studies without gender discrimination among gender groups. Hence, it was concluded that gender did not influence the effects of group investigation learning technique on the students attitude towards Social Studies.

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