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**A SEARCH OF APPROPRIATE ONLINE INSTRUCTIONAL APPLICATIONS IN COVID-19 AREAS: SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS PERCEPTION**

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**Abstract**

*This study investigated the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in covid-19 areas. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A number of 238 teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study. Researcher-designed questionnaire was used for data gathering. The questionnaire was titled: Questionnaire on Social Studies Teachers' Perception towards the use of Online Instructional Applications (QSSTPOIA). The questionnaire was validated and tested for reliability ( $r = 0.78$ ). One research question and three null hypotheses were raised and formulated respectively. Gathered data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Frequency count, percentage and mean) and inferential statistics (independent sample  $t$ -test and Analysis of Variance. The hypotheses were tested 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that the perception of social studies teachers*

*towards the use of online instructional applications in covid-19 areas was positive (Weighted mean = 2.56). Also, the findings of the study unfolded that there was no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in covid-19 areas based on gender ( $t = -.146$ ;  $df = 236$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ), years of experience ( $F_{(2; 235)} = .012$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ) and educational qualification ( $F_{(2; 235)} = .055$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional application was positive. Based on the findings, it can be recommended that virtual teaching-learning should be incorporated into teacher education programme. Also, Social studies teachers should also be exposed to in-service training on how to use the online instructional application.*

**Keywords:** Online instructional applications; COVID-19 areas; teachers perception.

## **Introduction**

The coronavirus pandemic has generated changes in the teaching-learning process in higher education institutions and has influenced the interaction between teachers and students. As a consequence of the pandemic, universities were constrained to carrying out their activity with students exclusively online. In this regard, many governments took measures in order to avoid spreading the virus and to ensure the continuity of the educational process, and universities worldwide adopted online learning. During the present pandemic crisis when the entire globe is sailing amid the storm, technology has played a pivotal role. Technological development and the internet have changed the lives of people immensely and have also brought a huge change in various fields (Nadikattu, 2020). Especially in the education system E-learning has been found to be a significant tool for effectively continuing the teaching-learning process during the lockdown.

The overriding importance of Social studies in nation building in Nigeria can never be over-emphasized despite the continued decline in secondary school students achievement in the subject in their external examination. Social studies is the only discipline that gives an opportunity for important social and moral issues such as attitudes to the destitute, poverty, racism and different types of government, cruelty to animals, and children, brutality and injustice to be introduced into school curriculum (Ikwumelu, 2002). Therefore, in Social studies education, students are exposed not only to social issues but issues that are value laden. Social studies is a core subject in primary schools with quality contents that will help in developing pupils' attitudes, promote responsible citizenship and make pupils appreciate the nation's culture, traditions, and heritage (Barth & Shermis, 2013). It is also maintained that Social studies as a field of study deals with the integration of knowledge, experience and effective use of resources for the purpose of citizenship education (Barth & Shermis, 2013). Social studies is an interdisciplinary subject which has potential capabilities to achieve the aims of education than any other fields of learning. It is a subject which is expected to help in the promotion of consciousness and knowledge of and pride in the child's local culture as well as an understanding of other cultures both within and outside their national boundary (Akpochafo, 2011).

The study assessed the perceptions on the problems of teaching social studies in Upper Basic Schools, Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State-Nigeria. The study used descriptive survey research design. However, 114 out of 126 male and female Social Studies teachers sampled in the study duly filled and returned their questionnaires. Simple random sampling technique was used to select Social Studies teachers'. The study answered two (2) research questions and tested two (2) null hypotheses. The data analysis tools were percentage and frequency counts used in the analysis of bio-data variables of the respondents', mean and standard deviation to answer questions raised by the study and independent t-test sample to test the study's null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha. All the null hypotheses were rejected. The study revealed that there was significant difference between the perceptions of respondents on the problems of teaching social

studies in the study area relative to their gender and geographical locations.

Researcher also considered the following online instructional applications as powerful factors that can be of help to the study; Zoom, google meet, whatsapp, and google classroom. Online learning is beneficial because it is instantly accessible and offers flexible scheduling. In this system, learners use Internet technology to communicate virtually with their teachers and fellow learners through email, whatsapp, video conferencing, instant messaging or using other tools. However Videoconferencing may be effectively used in online learning to enhance group collaboration with sense of community between learners which may replace face to face class room learning to some extent. In the past, students of rural areas were missing many of the opportunities that their urban and suburban peers had taken for granted. Connecting these rural students for online learning via video conferencing can dramatically improve the quality of their learning experience. This enables the rural/disadvantaged learners to both attend school/college from home and gives them access to the experts. Videoconferencing is a synchronous model for interactive voice, video and data transfer between two or more groups/people (Wiesemas & Wang, 2010). Online teaching plays a significant role in education nowadays because of Covid-19 and most of the countries applied different tools of technology in education. One of them is zoom, a tool that helps teachers and learners to work together. But first we should know what this platform is, how it works, and what kind of benefits it has in education. "Zoom combines video conferencing, online meetings and in-conference group chat into one easy-to-use tool that is ideal for online class use, and group work" (Learning Technology Center, 2018)

The teachers' gender, teaching experience and educational qualification are also variable of interest in the study. The gender of the teachers, the years the teachers have spent in teaching and educational qualification are all important variables which must be considered in the study so as to know the influence the variables have on social studies teachers' perception towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 affected areas. The issue of

professionalism in teaching has been on course for quite some decades ago. Scholars argued the necessity of skilled teachers for effective learning. Ngada in Fajonyomi (2007) emphasized that the success or failure of any educational programme rests majorly on the adequate availability of qualified (professional), competent and dedicated teachers. Seweje and Jegede (2005) noted that the ability of a teacher to teach is not derived only from one's academic background but it is based upon outstanding pedagogical skill acquired. Schuler (2004) grouped teachers into three levels of teaching experience (3-6; 7-10 and more than 10 years). His findings revealed that experienced teachers' perception of their teaching objectives were significantly more subject-oriented than were those of first-year teachers. Hence, effective teaching could be measured by the level of a teacher's subject matter competence. Singh (2010) opines that gender refers to a socio-cultural construct that connotes the differentiated roles and responsibilities of men and women in a particular society. This definition implies that gender determines the role, which one plays in relation to general political, cultural, social and economic system of the society. According to Betiku (2002), gender refers to all the characteristics of male and female, which a particular society has determined and assigned each sex. Many researchers (Gupta & Goplani, 2020; Yanti, Setiawan, & Nurhabibah, 2018) have been carried out study on covid-19 and education but none of these studies was carried to examine the perception of social studies teachers on the use of online instructional applications particularly in Kwara central where this study was carried out and this is the gap the study filled.

The outbreak of corona-virus disease pandemic has now been spread to many countries including Nigeria. The spread of this corona-virus has led to loss of many lives. The efforts to nullify the effects of the pandemic and its spread, has led to the closure of schools by federal and state governments. The shutdown of most schools has tremendous effect on the academic syllabus thereby affecting teaching and learning activities. An alternative way to cushion the effects of the pandemic on teaching and learning activities is the use of online instructional application characterized as virtual learning. Since teachers are regarded as the facilitators

and disseminators of knowledge via the use of virtual means, it is highly important to study and analyse their perceptions towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 affected areas in Kwara state and this necessitated the study.

### **Research Question**

What is the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas?

### **Hypotheses**

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on gender.

**Ho2:** There is no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in covid-19 areas based on years of teaching experience.

**Ho3:** There is no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on educational qualification.

### **Methods**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A number of 238 teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study. Researcher-designed questionnaire was used for data gathering. The questionnaire was titled: Questionnaire on Social Studies Teachers' Perception towards the use of Online Instructional Applications (QSSTPOIA). QSSTPOIA was divided into two sections – A and B. Section A contains the demographic data of the respondents like gender, years of teaching experience and educational qualification while section B contains ten items on the perception of social studies towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas. A four likert type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was used to elicit the needed data from the respondents. To validate the research instrument, the drafted copies of the questionnaire were given to

Lecturers in the Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin, for face and content validities. To test the instrument for reliability, test retest method was used. The questionnaire was administered twice to 25 pre-service teachers in an interval of two weeks and data from the two administrations were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The reliability coefficient was 0.78. Gathered data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Frequency count, percentage and mean were used to answer the research question while independent sample t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## **Results**

**Research Question:** What is the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas?

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on gender.

**Table 1: Perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas**

S/N	Statements	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	Mean
1	Virtual classes achieve same result as physical class.	61(25.6)	135(56.7)	24(10.1)	18(7.6)	3.00
2	Google meet can be used for instructional purpose.	136(57.1)	80(33.6)	10(4.2)	12(5.0)	3.43
3	Whatsapp can be used to promote learning.	133(55.9)	71(29.8)	22(9.2)	12(5.0)	3.37
4	Microsoft teams can be used for effective teaching.	153(64.3)	51(21.4)	20(8.4)	14(5.9)	3.44
5	WebEx can enhance learning in the face of COVID-19.	83(34.9)	113(47.5)	16(6.7)	26(10.9)	3.06
6	Telegram can be used to conduct classes for large number of students	129(54.2)	87(36.6)	15(6.3)	7(2.9)	3.42
7	Skype fosters virtual learning in the face of COVID-19.	141(59.2)	63(26.5)	23(9.7)	11(4.6)	3.40
8	Edmodo is very good for teaching and learning activities.	158(66.4)	46(19.3)	24(10.1)	10(4.2)	3.48
9	Google classroom is very useful in face of covid-19 pandemic.	78(32.8)	118(49.6)	19(8.0)	23(9.7)	3.05
10	Zoom fosters teaching and learning during COVID-19 era.	139(58.4)	65(27.3)	19(8.0)	15(6.3)	3.38
<b>Weighted Mean</b>						<b>2.56</b>

Table 1 shows the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in covid-19 areas. The respondents agreed with the following statements: Virtual classes achieve same result as physical class (3.00), Google meet can be used for instructional purpose (3.43), Whatsapp can be used to promote learning (3.37), Microsoft teams can be used for effective teaching (3.44), WebEx can enhance learning in the face of COVID-19 (3.06), Telegram can be used to conduct classes for large number of students (3.42), Skype fosters virtual learning in the face of covid-19 (3.40), Edmodo is very good for teaching and learning activities (3.48), Google classroom is very useful in face of COVID-19 pandemic (3.05), Zoom fosters teaching and learning during covid-19 era (3.38). The weighted mean is 2.56 which is numeric indicator that the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas was positive.

**Table 2: Table showing the difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on gender**

Gender	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.	Remark
Male	104	29.13	6.36	-.146	236	.684	Not Significant
Female	134	29.25	6.32				

Table 2 shows the difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on gender. There was no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in covid-19 areas based on gender ( $t = -.146$ ;  $df = 236$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). The hypothesis is therefore not rejected in the light of the result.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online

instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on years of teaching experience.

**Table 3: Summary of ANOVA showing the difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on years of teaching experience**

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Between Groups	.944	2	.472	.012	.988
Within Groups	9490.165	235	40.384		
Total	9491.109	237			

Table 3 shows the difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on years of teaching experience. There was no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on years of teaching experience ( $F_{(2; 235)} = .012$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ). The hypothesis is therefore not rejected in the light of the result since the significant value is greater than 0.05.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on educational qualification.

**Table 4: Summary of ANOVA showing the difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on educational qualification**

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Between Groups	4.461	2	2.230	.055	.946
Within Groups	9486.648	235	40.369		
Total	9491.109	237			

Table 4 shows the difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on educational qualification. There was no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on educational qualification ( $F_{(2;235)} = .055; P > 0.05$ ). The hypothesis is therefore not rejected in the light of the result since the significant value is greater than 0.05.

### **Discussions**

The study investigated the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas. The findings of the study revealed that the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas was positive. This finding was in tandem with the study conducted by Yanti, Setiawan and Nurhabibah (2018). Yanti, Setiawan and Nurhabibah conducted a study and discovered that teachers had a positive perception towards the use of edmodo for educational activities. Similarly, the study corroborated the finding of Manal (2020) which unfolded that teachers and students had positive perceptions towards virtual classes.

Another finding of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on gender. This findings negated the finding of Egbo, Ifeanacho, Okoyeuzu, and Onwumere (2011) which unfolded that there was a difference in the perception and attitude of teachers towards e-learning. The findings of the study also revealed that there was no significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on years of teaching experience. This implies that the number of years spend in teaching service does not necessary influence their perception towards the use of online instructional applications.

Finally, the findings the study revealed that there was no

significant difference in the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas based on educational qualification. This implies that educational qualification of teachers does not predict their perception towards the use of online instructional applications.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that virtual teaching-learning should be incorporated into teacher education programme. Social studies teachers should also be exposed to in-service training on how to use the online instructional applications.

### **Conclusion**

The study investigated the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional applications in COVID-19 areas. Based on the findings of this study it can be concluded that the perception of social studies teachers towards the use of online instructional application was positive. Also, gender, years of teaching experience and educational qualification of social studies teachers did not influence their perception towards the use of online instructional application.

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