
**NEW DIRECTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT AND
EVALUATION IN SOCIAL STUDIES:
A CASE OF INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) USE
IN SOCIAL STUDIES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN JOS NORTH, PLATEAU STATE**

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Abstract

The study aimed at examining how ICT use could facilitate better assessment and evaluation in Social Studies. Five research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey was adopted for the study. A sample of 35 Social Studies teachers was conveniently selected out of the population. A structured questionnaire designed by the researcher was used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by a senior lecturer with a test-retest reliability index of 0.72. Percentage was used for data analysis. Results showed that the widely used traditional mode of assessment and evaluation in Social Studies are paper and pencil tests, assignment and written examinations. Also, some of the challenges of traditional mode of assessment and evaluation in Social Studies include invalid instruments, effects of examination malpractice, large class size among others. The new dimension in assessment and evaluation includes the use of digital devices in assessment and evaluation of students. It was recommended among other things that Social Studies

teachers should be trained on the use of ICT in assessment and evaluation of learning outcomes.

Keywords: Assessment, Evaluation, Digital Devices, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Traditional methods

Introduction

Assessment and evaluation are two critical indispensable ingredients in education. No meaningful educational progress could be said to be recorded without assessing and evaluating students' learning outcomes. Assessment and evaluation are at the center of all improvements regarding the quality of education or the effective workings of a school. They have great roles to play in education. They help monitor students' educational progress, screen learners, used for promotion, diagnosing learning challenges and selection (Ugodulunwa, 2008). Over the years, Social Studies teachers have been assessing and evaluating learners' learning outcomes. The teachers are known to use the traditional modes of assessment which are basically, the paper and pencil test, oral quizzes, questioning skills among others (Omoifo, 2015). Often time assessment is confused with evaluation. However, the two terms are not the same. Omoifo saw assessment as related series of measures used to determine a complex attribute of an individual or group of individuals. This involves gathering and interpreting information about student's level of attainment of learning goals. In essence, assessment data are used to identify individual student weaknesses and strengths so that educators can provide specialized academic support, educational programming, or social services.

On the other hand, evaluation means measuring or observing the process to judge it or to determine its worth or value by comparing it to others or some kinds of a standard (Weir & Roberts, 2014). Simply put, evaluation is a judgment of value or worth of a thing, process or procedure or product. The emphasis of evaluation is based upon broad personality change and the major

objectives in the educational program (Howard & Donaghue, 2015). Evaluation is used as an ongoing measure and learning tool to improve learning.

Teachers of Social Studies have been assessing and evaluating students' learning outcomes. However, the use of the traditional paper and pencil tests (which focuses only on the cognitive domain, neglecting the other two domains) does not provide a valid or holistic picture of the learner, hence clamping decisions by the affected person. Some of the limitations of the traditional mode of assessment and evaluation in Social Studies include concentration on only cognitive domain (neglecting the affective and psychomotor domains). Raymond (2012) also queried the authenticity of some of the instruments used in assessing and evaluating learners' outcomes or educational progress. Raymond maintained that some of the instruments tend to emphasize recall or declaration or procedural knowledge and provide little indication either of the level at which students understand the subject matter or of the quality of their thinking. The identified weaknesses of the traditional instruments of assessment and evaluation used by Social Studies teachers call for a paradigm shift in Social Studies assessment and evaluation (Rober-Okah, 2012). There is a need for a more valid mode of assessment and evaluation that will give a holistic picture of students' performance in Social Studies in the three domains of behavior.

Educators over the years have been seeking ways of making assessment and evaluation better and more reliable (Mbah, 2020). The advent of ICT and its subsequent application in education has been applauded in literature. For example, regarding the indispensability of ICT in education, Yusuf (20017) and Nwabueze and Ozioko (2011) noted that ICT use in education pedagogy helps facilitate learning as well reduces stress for both the teachers and the learners. In the same manner, Raymond (2012) argued that ICT as an innovative instrument can help teachers and students to search for more knowledge in their areas of the discipline.

It is against this backdrop that the study is being undertaken to examine how the adoption of information and communication

technology (ICT) in Social Studies could help improve assessment and evaluation in the subject area in public secondary schools in Jos North LGA of Plateau State, Nigeria.

Social Studies is the subject that deals with man and his relationship with his social environment. It is a compulsory subject at the primary and junior secondary school levels of education. Over the years, Social Studies educators have been using paper and pencil tests, quizzes, oral examinations, and questioning as modes of assessment and evaluation of students' learning outcomes in Social Studies. However, these traditional instruments are vulnerable to some weaknesses which include but not limited to focusing on only cognitive domain, influence of examination malpractices, low validity of instruments and not giving holistic picture of learners' education progress. These identified weakness of the use of traditional instruments for assessing and evaluating learner's outcome in Social Studies makes it imperative for a more authentic approach to be sought that will present a reliable and holistic picture of the true nature of learners. This study therefore, examined how the adoption of ICT in Social Studies will help improve assessment and evaluation of students' learning outcomes in Jos North LGA, Plateau State.

Purpose of the Study

The study is designed to examine new directions for assessment and evaluation in Social Studies: A case of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use in Social Studies in public secondary schools in Jos North. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. determine the prevalent instruments used by Social Studies teachers in assessing and evaluating students' learning outcomes.
- ii. identify the weakness of the traditional mode of assessment and evaluation.
- iii. identify ICT tools /platforms which could be used by Social Studies educators for assessing and evaluating learners' learning outcomes.

- iv. examine the prospects in the adoption of ICT tools/platforms in Social Studies education assessment and evaluation.
- v. ascertain the challenges of adoption of ICT tools/ platforms in Social Studies education assessment and evaluation.

Research Questions

- i. What are the prevalent mode of assessment and evaluation used by Social Studies teachers in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?
- ii. What are the weaknesses of the traditional mode of assessment and evaluation in Social Studies in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?
- iii. Which ICT platforms could be used by Social Studies educators for assessing and evaluating learners' learning outcomes in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?
- iv. What are the prospects in the adoption of ICT tools/platforms in assessment and evaluation in Social Studies in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?
- v. What are the challenges Social Studies educators face in adopting ICT tools/ platforms in Social Studies assessment and evaluation in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?

Methods

The study is a descriptive survey. The population is all the Social Studies teachers in the 23 government secondary schools in Jos North LGA. A sample of 40 Social Studies teachers was conveniently selected and used. Data were elicited from the selected teachers by means of a self-designed structured four-point questionnaire tagged ICT Integration in Assessment and Evaluation in Social Studies Questionnaire (ICTIAESSQ). The instrument was validated by a senior lecturer in the Measurement and Evaluation department from Nasarawa State University, Keffi. Personal contact method was used in data collection. The test-

retest reliability of the questionnaire was 0.72 indicative of high reliability. The Percentage was used for data analysis with 50% as benchmark. This means that items with percentage responses below 50% were not taken as influential though were recognized.

Results

Research Question One: What are the prevalent mode of assessment and evaluation used by Social Studies teachers in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?

Table 1: Prevalent Mode of Assessment and Evaluation in the Traditional Method of Teaching

S/N	Statement	Agreed		Disagreed	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Paper and pencil tests	39	97.5	1	2.5
2.	Quizzes	20	50.0	20	50.0
3.	Assignments	37	92.5	03	7.5
4.	Questioning techniques	23	57.5	22	42.5
5.	Formal terminal examination	28	70	12	30

Data in table 1 shows that the widely used assessment techniques in the traditional mode are paper and pencil tests (97.5%) and assignments (92.5%). Also, Table 1 shows that the least used assessment tool is quizzes (50%). However, all the items in Table 1 are valid as they all have 50% and above affirmative response.

Research Question Two: What are the weaknesses of the traditional mode of assessment and evaluation in Social Studies in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?

Table 2: Weakness of Traditional Mode of Assessment and Evaluation in Social Studies

S/No	Statement	Agreed		Disagreed	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	They focus only on the cognitive domain neglecting other domains of behaviour	38	95	02	05
2.	Results obtained may be faulty due to incidences of examination malpractice	35	87.5	05	12.5
3.	They are tedious to use in cases of large population	32	80.0	08	20.0
4.	Their use may be inconveniencing to some category of learners	30	75.0	10	25.5
5.	They are capital intensive in administration	27	67.5	13	32.5

Table 2 shows that the main weakness of the traditional mode of assessment and evaluation in Social Studies are their focus on only cognitive domain (95%), influence of examination malpractices (87.5%) and their tedious nature in cases of large population (80.0%). The least observed weakness is that they are capital intensive to administer (67.5%).

Research Question Three: Which ICT tools /platforms could be used by Social Studies educators for assessing and evaluating learners' learning outcomes in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?

Table 3: ICT Tools/ Platforms for Assessment and Evaluation in Social Studies

S/No	Statement	Agreed		Disagreed	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Zoom video conferencing	33	82.5	07	17.5
2.	Google Classroom	36	90	04	10.0
3.	Google Meet	37	92.5	03	7.5
4.	Closed WhatsApp settings	30	75.0	10	25.0
5.	Cloud computing	28	70.0	14	30

Going by data in Table 3, the popular opinion is the use of Google Meet (92.5%) and Google classroom (90.0%). The least acceptable ICT platform is cloud computing (70%).

Research Question Four: What are the prospects in the adoption of ICT tools/platforms in assessment and evaluation in Social Studies in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?

Table 4: Prospects in the Adoption of ICT in Assessment and Evaluation in Social Studies

S/No	Statement	Agreed		Disagreed	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	They are flexible and easy to use	25	62.5	15	37.5
2.	Their use prospects better reliable results	37	92.5	03	7.5
3.	There is no fear of influence of examination malpractice	35	87.5	05	12.5
4.	Results obtained could be checkmated via internet security	36	90.0	04	10.0
5.	Their use is suitable for large population	33	82.5	07	18.0
6.	There is high level of convenience in their usage	34	85.0	06	15.0

Evidences in table 4 reveal that reliable results (92.5%) and security (90%) are lead prospects accruing from integrating ICT in assessment and evaluation in Social Studies. The least observed prospect is that of flexibility with 62.5% affirmative response.

Research Question Five: What are the challenges Social Studies educators face in adopting ICT tools/ platforms in Social Studies assessment and evaluation in public junior secondary schools in Jos North LGA?

Table 5: Challenges of ICT Integration in Assessment and Evaluation in Social Studies

S/No	Statement	Agreed		Disagreed	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Irregular power supply	37	92.5	03	7.5
2.	Low internet connectivity in some school areas.	28	70	12	30.2
3.	Poor ICT awareness and skills on the part of some Social Studies teachers	38	95.0	02	5.0
4.	Lack of ICT tools in schools	39	97.5	01	2.5
5.	Poor funding of schools	36	90.0	05	05
6.	High cost of ICT gadgets	35	87.5	10.0	12.5

Going by data in Table 5, lack of ICT tools (97.5%), poor ICT awareness and skills by some Social Studies teacher (95%) and poor funding of schools (90%) are lead factors that militate against effective ICT integration in assessment and evaluation in Social Studies education. The least observed factor is that of low internet connectivity (70%).

Discussions

The study was on new directions for assessment and evaluation in Social Studies: A case of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use in Social Studies education in public secondary schools in Jos North Plateau state. The study found that paper and pencil tests and assignments are the prevalent modes of assessment and evaluation used by Social Studies teachers. This result is not surprising because most teachers are very conversant with paper and pencil tests. In the same vein, the ease with which most of these teacher-made paper and pencil tests are prepared makes them very handy to be used. This is in tandem with Omoifo (2015) who stated that many tests used in schools are teacher-made and they do not pass through any validation tests. The use of such tests may not give the true picture of learners' behavior in the three domains of behaviour. The study equally discovered that the traditional modes of assessment and evaluation had some serious weaknesses. Some of the weaknesses include faulty results

orchestrated by the incidences of examination malpractices and their neglect of other domains of behavior. This finding agrees with the submission of Howard and Donaghue (2015) who noted that it may be detrimental and deceptive if teachers or school administrators take relevant decisions about learners without a comprehensive evaluation of the learners' learning outcome in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of behavior. This is necessary because to produce well balanced learners, performance must be certified adequate in the three domain. Focusing on only one aspect of an individual to take a decision may be misleading.

In the same vein, it was gathered that some ICT platforms/tools exist which could be used for the assessment and evaluation of learners in Social Studies. Notable among them is the Google applications (Google meet and classroom). Google applications are versatile in use as well as easy and cheaper to manage than most other online platforms (Mbah, 2020). Moreover, Google applications can be easily accessed and utilized with minimal training and coaching. Their ease of operation and simplicity of algorithm makes them very useful in educational assessment and evaluation.

Some of the prospects of the adoption of ICT tools/platforms in assessment and evaluation in Social Studies include holistic assessment results and more reliable or authentic results. Nwabueze and Ozioko (2011) documented that ICT helps education in through providing new methods of acquiring, disseminating knowledge and using them. The study found some challenges which include high cost of ICT tools and poor ICT awareness on the part of some Social Studies teachers. Yusuf (2007) had argued that some teachers are still in the dark regarding the reality that ICT has come to stay and its usefulness in education delivery. Yusuf maintained that until technophobia (fear of technology) is effectively dealt with by some teachers in the various schools, ICT integration in school assessment and evaluation may not be achieved. That is why Rober-Okah (2012) lamented about the high cost of ICT tools which demands that

huge sum of money be expended for its full effective integration into the school system.

Conclusion

The study was designed to make a case for the integration of ICT in assessment and evaluation in Social Studies in public secondary schools in Jos North. From the results, it was gathered that Social Studies teachers mostly use paper and pencil tests and assignments for learners' assessment and evaluation. The traditional mode of assessment and evaluation were found to have some inherent weaknesses which include, focusing on only the cognitive domain, presenting faulty results due to incidences of examination malpractice among others. Some of the ICT platforms/ tools which could be used in assessment and evaluation in Social Studies include Zoom Video conferencing, Google Meet and Google Classroom among others. The study equally discovered that the integration of ICT tools/ platform in Social Studies has a lot of prospects which includes helping to promote holistic assessment in the three domains of behavior and presenting a more valid result among others. Some challenges of integration of ICT tools/ platforms in Social Studies include lack of ICT tools in the schools and poor ICT awareness and skills on the part of some Social Studies teachers. The study concludes, therefore, that integrating ICT tools/platform in Social Studies has better prospects and will be more beneficial in presenting authentic assessment data about learners.

Recommendations

Based on the major findings from the study, some recommendations were suggested. One of such is that the traditional modes of assessment were found to have some inherent weaknesses, hence teachers of Social Studies are to desist from their usage and to explore better ways of assessing and evaluating learners' learning outcomes in schools. In the same manner, teachers of Social Studies should be trained in the use of ICT tools and gadgets so that they can be conversant with their application

in students' assessment and evaluation. Schools should try to provide the necessary ICT tools/for effective integration of ICT in Social Studies. Finally, the government and other corporate agencies should help provide ICT tools to schools to fast track its integration in school assessment and evaluation

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