
**TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARENESS OF
TEACHING METHODS AS PREDICTORS OF SUCCESS
IN TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES IN JUNIOR
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OSUN STATE**

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Abstract

The study investigated the relationship between teachers' qualifications and awareness of Social Studies teaching methods in the teaching and learning of Social Studies in public junior secondary schools in Osun State. The research adopted a descriptive survey method. The sample consisted of 123 teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents in 6 public schools in the three Senatorial Districts of Osun State. Instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire of 16 items divided into two sections. Descriptive statistics were used to answer research questions set for the study while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyse data generated by the hypotheses. Findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between awareness of strategies and teachers' qualifications. The relationship between awareness of strategies and teachers' qualification was moderate and statistically significant. It was also found that the relationship between awareness of strategies and teachers' area of specialization was high and statistically significant. It was concluded that the

Social Studies teachers' performance in achieving teaching effectiveness in junior secondary schools was dependent on the method of instruction and that if the goal of teaching would be achieved, teachers should possess the right qualifications and adopt teaching strategies that would stimulate students' interest to learn.

Keywords: Teachers' qualification, Problem-solving method, Experimental strategy, Motivation.

Introduction

In recent years, academic performance of students in secondary schools (junior and senior) is dwindling in Osun State. This has been a source of worry to the stakeholders in education and a subject of political bickerings for the politicians who saw in the weak performances of the students an opportunity to either castigate the government of the day as an opposition or the occasion for defence and buck-passing by the government of the day (Adeyemo, 2022). Rather than being a source of disputes and political horse-trading, the poor performance called for serious concern on the part of the government, teachers, school administrators and parents.

Mass failure in school examinations could be traced to the school, teachers, parents and students. Hence, the causes of students' poor performances are usually complex and investigations would have to be conducted to find out the actual cause (Ajayi & Osalusi, 2013). The study which adopted a descriptive survey design looked at the causes of mass failure in WASSCE in Ado-Ekiti Local Government of Ekiti State. The data was analyzed through simple descriptive statistics (frequency and percentages). The study found that the government, teachers, parents and schools were responsible for the poor performance. The implication of this study is that while the proprietor of a school, which in the case of public secondary school is the government may be able blamed for some lapses, other stakeholders such as the teachers, parents and the entire school community may not be exonerated. The above finding is comprehensive and may explain the root cause of poor school performance.

Social Studies is a multidisciplinary discipline which harnesses knowledge in social sciences, humanities and sometimes environmental sciences to understand the nature of man in the complex human environment. It is, therefore, susceptible to diverse definitions, interpretations by scholars (Gamde & David, 2021; Egan, 2021). Gamde and David (2021) conceptualized Social Studies as a course of study that has the purpose of instilling knowledge, skills and attitudes in the learners for them to have an unbiased and progressive view of various socialization processes within human society. The definition, therefore, suggests that Social Studies is an agent of cultural developments, values and attitudes. This line of thought is corroborated by Egan (2021) in the study conducted to examine the conceptual framework of Social Studies. The author viewed the subject as that which had tendencies to promote functional knowledge, desirable values and problem-solving behaviours.

A discipline as complex, wide and diverse as Social Studies necessarily requires special training and qualification of the personnel because of the enormity of methodologies needed in passing the message. Gamde and David (2021) extensively reviewed literature on Social Studies teaching methods. The authors noted that these were as diverse as the discipline itself and they recommended that the methods employed by the teachers should be connected with the content and the students' interest. They therefore opined that Social Studies teachers should improve their performance skills through the acquisition of content-relevant skills.

Jekayinfa (2014) defined teaching as a process. It was viewed as an activity that was designed to achieve learning. It was an aspect of education that required integrity, intellectual competence; sense of judgements and adequate preparation. Based on the definition, the author identified the function of teaching and teachers to include "class management, school management, communication, evaluation, diagnosis of problems, recording, reporting, character building and social services in and outside school."

Teaching is therefore a complex professional skills and expertise which teachers must master through acquisition of right qualifications; years of experience; knowledge of the content and

use of adequate instructional methods. In the teaching of Social Studies, the importance of right qualifications and experiences could not be overlooked. Findings of many research works have indicated that competences of teachers depend on their qualifications (Ipaye, 2012; Okeke, 2013; Pennel, Fisherman, Yamaguichi & Gallagher, 2017; Ferguson, 2018). According to Ipaye (2012), teachers' qualification affected their understanding and implementation of the curriculum. Also, Okeke (2013), attempted to identify the influence of teachers on the students' understanding of the subject. Furthermore, Ferguson (2018) reported that teacher quality was the most potent educational factor in student academic success. This point was emphasized and driven home by Pennel *et al* (2017), when they suggested that professional/academic qualification of the teacher was a determinant of academic performance.

Studies have also been conducted on Social Studies teachers' awareness of teaching methods in the subject areas. According to Abdul-Raheem (2015), teachers' awareness and understanding of students' awareness predisposed them to make use of the method to remedy the gap. The study was conducted on teachers' perception of effectiveness of various school methods used in teaching Social Studies. The outcome of the study indicated that there was a significant effect of teachers' awareness of Social Studies methods on their classroom performances. It was specifically found that methods used by qualified teachers were different from those used by non-qualified teachers. The implication of these was that qualified teachers had better chance of using methods more beneficial to students in Nigerian secondary schools.

Odey and Odey (2021) also carried out a study to determine teacher pedagogic variables and the differences in the academic performance of secondary schools' Social Studies students in Cross River State. The study made use of expository research design. Results of the study indicated that teachers' educational qualifications and experience predicted success in the classroom teaching of Social Studies. The study, therefore, advised teacher training institutions to critically interrogate would-be teachers to ensure interest in the teaching subject. This finding aligns with Lassa (2000) to the effect that the teachers' role in formal education was

to initiate, control and implement the learning process.

The paucity of teachers of Social Studies in Nigerian Schools have been identified to contribute largely to students' underachievement in examination and poor understanding of the subject matter for national development (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Jackson, 2015; Odey & Odey 2019). While Jackson (2015) opined that the qualifications of teachers determine their competence, Odey and Odey (2019) found that the deterioration in students' performance in Social Studies could be attributed to poor instructional quality. Darling-Hammond (2000) reasoned that teachers' qualification was a major quality of the teacher which determines the effectiveness in teaching. Despite these findings, efforts at improving students' performance in Social Studies have not yielded much fruit in Osun State, hence the decision to conduct the study among teachers in Osun State public secondary schools.

Objectives of Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of teachers' qualification and awareness of teaching methods on teachers' teaching effectiveness in Social Studies in Junior Secondary Schools. The specific objectives of the study were to:

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Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for the study:

- i. To what extent would teachers' qualification affect Social Studies' teachers teaching effectiveness?
- ii. To what extent would teachers' awareness of teaching methods affect teachers' teaching performance in Social Studies?

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey method to examine teachers' perceptions of the influence of teachers' qualifications and awareness of teaching methods on the classroom performance of Social Studies teachers in Osun State. The population of the study consisted of Social Studies teachers in Junior Secondary School Students in Osun State. Six public junior secondary schools, two each from the three senatorial districts were purposively selected, while all the teachers teaching Social Studies in the six schools participated in the study. A total of 123 teachers were selected.

A self-designed questionnaire, namely: Teachers' Qualifications and Awareness of Methods of Teaching Social Studies (TQAMTS) was used. It was scored on four point likert method with a mean criterion of 2.50. The instrument was validated by experts in Social Studies at the Osun State College of Education, Ila-Orangun and Federal College of Education, Iwo. The co-efficient or reliability of the instrument was 0.81. The researcher administered the instrument through the help of research assistants. The respondents completed the questionnaire in their various schools and their responses were collected immediately. Inferential statistics and simple percentage were used for the analysis of the data generated by the research questions while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the null hypotheses of the study.

Results

Research Question One: To what extent would teachers' qualification affect Social Studies teachers' teaching effectiveness?

Table 1: Social Studies Teachers' Perceptions of the Extent Teachers' Qualification Affect Teaching Effectiveness Social Studies

S/N	Items	Mean Weight	Rank
1.	Teachers' qualification determines students' performance	3.61	2nd
2.	Teachers' with adequate qualification teaches effectively	3.23	4th
3.	Teachers' qualification determines teacher awareness of teaching methods	3.81	1st
4.	Lack of Social Studies teaching qualification negatively affect teachers content delivery activities	3.46	3rd

Results in Table 1 show the extent to which teachers of Social Studies perceived that qualifications affected their performance in classroom teaching. The perception that teachers' qualification determined teachers' awareness of teaching methods ranked 1st at the mean weight of 3.81 and teachers' qualification as determinant of students' performance ranked second with mean weight of 3.61. Lack of Social studies qualification ranked third with the mean weight of 3.46. It was found that lack of Social Studies teaching qualification negatively affected Social Studies teachers' content delivery. The test item which ranked least was that teachers with adequate qualifications taught effectively with the mean weight of 3.23. However, the four items were above the mean criterion of 2.50, hence, they were accepted to have predicted Social Studies teaching effectiveness.

Research Question 2: To what extent would teachers' awareness of teaching methods, affect teachers' teaching performance in Social Studies?

Table 2: Teachers' Awareness and Teaching Methods

S/N	Items	Mean Weight	Rank
5.	Awareness of Social Studies teaching methods increases with experience	3.51	3rd
6.	Teaching Students through methods of Social Studies improves classroom performance	3.71	1st
7.	The experienced teacher is independent of his/her teaching method	2.14	4th
8.	Knowledge of methods of teaching in Social Studies is easier with teaches with specialization	3.65	2nd

Table 2 presents the results of the influence teachers' awareness of teaching methods and their areas of specialization. The results showed that awareness of teaching methods positively influence teachers' performance in Social Studies classrooms. The item which stated that teaching students through methods of Social Studies improved classroom performance ranked first with the mean weight of 3.71. The implication of this was that the teachers perceived that the use of methods of teaching Social Studies such as inquiry method, problem-solving method, role playing, drama method, inquiring method, among others could improve classroom performance of the pupils. Rank scores of other items indicated that knowledge of methods of teaching Social Studies was easier to grasp by teachers with specialization (NCE, B.Ed or M.Ed) in Social Studies than those who found themselves teaching Social Studies from background in other disciplines (Mean weight 3.65, Rank, 2nd). The item that experience of teachers in the teaching of Social Studies determined their awareness and easy use of Social Studies teaching methods (mean weight: 3.51) ranked 3rd. It was also found that although experience was needed for awareness and use of methods of teaching Social Studies, a teacher was never independent of the methods (mean weight: 2.14; rank score 4th). The implication of this was

that however, much experience a teacher had, she/he must constantly be updating herself/himself with methods of teaching Social Studies because of their dynamic and ever changing nature.

Discussions

Results of the study revealed that teachers' qualification affected Social Studies teachers teaching effectiveness. It also showed that teachers with right teaching qualifications taught effectively and used the right teaching methods. It further revealed that lack of adequate teaching qualifications inversely affected Social Studies teachers' delivery of content. These findings corroborated Ipaye (2012), Jackson (2015) and Pennel *et al* (2017). Particularly, the findings supported Ipaye (2012) and Pennel *et al* (2017) that teachers' educational attainment affected their class performance and that their professional/academic qualification influenced their classroom competence. The findings also supported Jackson (2015) to the effect that teachers with the right qualifications (academic and professional) performed better in the delivery of the content and use of teaching methods than their counterparts who did not possess those qualifications.

The study further found that teachers' awareness of teaching methods greatly enhanced their classroom delivery. This finding was confirmed by Pennel *et al* 2017. Social Studies as a discipline is multidisciplinary and its teaching methods promoted teaching of the discipline (Jackson, 2015; Pennel *et al*, 2017). The interactive effects of teachers' qualifications and awareness of teaching methods showed significant relationship, thus corroborating the findings of the scholars (Odey and Odey, 2019; 2021). It was particularly found that teachers who studied Social Studies rather than adjunct disciplines performed better in the teaching of Social Studies and showed better understanding of teaching methods in Social Studies.

Conclusion

The study investigated teachers' qualifications and awareness of teaching methods as predictors of success in teaching Social Studies in Junior Secondary schools in Osun State. From the empirical

findings of the study which corroborated findings of scholars, it is just to conclude that teachers' qualifications and awareness of teaching methods predicted significantly success in the teaching of Social Studies at the Senior Secondary School level in Osun State. It is also the conclusion of the study that going by the integrative nature of the discipline of Social Studies, teaching qualification in Social Studies could greatly enhance teachers' understanding of the diverse methods of teaching Social Studies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, there is a need that in the recruitment of teachers of Social Studies by the stakeholders at states and national levels, efforts should be made to employ teachers with Social Studies background to teach the subject at Junior Secondary School level. The current situation in which teachers with qualifications in adjunct disciplines teach Social Studies should be discouraged. It is also recommended that through formal and in-service training programmes, knowledge of Social Studies teachers in teaching methods should be constantly updated so as to improve their teaching service delivery. Also, publications of books on the content and methods of teaching Social Studies by teachers and teacher educators should be supported by various educational institutions, research bodies, particularly the National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), while Social Studies curriculum should be constantly updated to reflect its eclectic and comprehensive nature. Further research on the effect of teachers' qualifications and teachers' awareness of teaching methods is advocated on the findings of the study.

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