PERCEPTION OF JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN LEARNING SOCIAL STUDIES IN KADUNA NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KADUNA STATE

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Abstract
The study investigated the perception of junior secondary school students in learning social studies in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State. Two (2) research questions were raised and answered. The research design used was descriptive survey, using researcher designed questionnaire. There are twenty-eight (28) junior secondary schools in the study area with a target population of one hundred and twenty (120) teachers comprised of fifty-two (52) were male teachers and sixty-eight (68) as female social studies teachers respectively. Data analyses were undertaken through the use of descriptive statistics as frequency counts and mean value. The findings of this study revealed that teacher - related factor are rated as one most important figure which greatly affects the learning of social studies. It was obvious that poor access to learning materials by students at the junior secondary schools affect what they learn in social studies. The study therefore recommended that there is also the need for the concerned authorities to put to an end whatever difficulties that may stand the way of students in learning social studies.

Keywords: Learning, Perception, Social Studies, Junior Secondary Schools

Introduction
The school is the formal institution set aside by the society for the purpose of learning. As societies therefore get more complex by the day, the home, which has the parents as the first teachers, can no longer cope with the learning processes of the child (Lassa, 2002). It was to this effect that formal education was tamed as something that cannot just be provided by anybody, as it requires a trained teacher who plans and delivers the lessons or instructions in such a way that the lesson objectives can be achieved. Dowden (2007) affirms the harmonious importance of the learners, the teachers and the curriculum, well implemented in a conducive environment.

Curriculum within this context could therefore be described as a course of study which embraces the total spectrums of content, resources, materials and methods of teaching through which the purposes of education are achieved. In essence, the totality of information presented to the learners or acquired by them in the different subjects offered in schools including social studies. Social studies was designed and introduced into the national curriculum of primary and junior secondary schools, to provide functional social education to Nigerian children and youths. The programme is further expected to make good citizens and patriots out of the youths of Nigeria. Unfortunately, the programme had been implemented for many years now in our schools without
success in terms of inculcating the right values of good citizenship among the youths (National Council for the Social Studies, 1992).

The youths are so much rich in knowledge of social concepts and facts, but deficient in expected social values, attitudes and behaviours that characterized socially responsible citizens. Sequel to this, it was assumed that this deficiency arises from the way the subject is taught and learnt in the classrooms. This fact is thus contrary to what the philosophy of social studies in Nigerian schools should be. Expectedly, it should make the students competent in decision making, problem solving, dealing with change and developing attitudes appropriate for effective citizenship in a pluralist democratic society. This philosophy however cannot be achieved without effective implementation of the designed curriculum. It was recorded that social studies at the junior secondary school levels derived its contents from broad range of subjects such as Economics, Anthropology, Philosophy, Geography and History.

It is worthy to note that social studies at JSS level is an important subject as it is meant to prepare citizens for active participation in the society, help students acquire basic knowledge, positive attitudes, values and social skills needed for responsible citizenship and to be a contributing member of their societies. The curriculum of social studies education at JSS level adopted broad field approach and covers wide areas as culture, time, continuity, and change; people, individual, and environments; individual development and identity; individual, groups, and institutions; power, authority, and governance; science, technology, and society, global connection, social issues, civic ideas and practice (Universal Basic Education, 2007).

Going by the present happenings today in our societies, the minds of the youths need to be exposed to critical thinking, analysis and problem solving strategies in a fast - changing world. In striving to achieve these goals, social studies curriculum had carefully considered the use of multi-disciplinary approach that takes cognizance of the socio-economic, political, religious, physical, scientific and technological aspects of life. The contents of what to learn in social studies at JSS level were therefore thematically organized in order to make teaching and learning more realistic. Above all, an individual can be said to have learned if there is transparent, obvious progressive and relatively permanent change in the person as to the way he/she will usually react to issues when prompted. The present study centered on the perception of junior secondary school students at learning social studies in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State became essential in view of the aforementioned points raised.

Social studies education is an embodiment of all other aspects of life which exposes one to areas of development, economic, social, political and otherwise. Based on this, one would have envisaged that students offering social studies should as a matter of importance develop a very good perception towards the subject. There is no doubt about it that students’ interest and disposition towards the learning of social studies is so worrisome on certain grounds. These are: one, the study has identified the complexity nature of how the subject - social studies are been taught by its teachers in schools. Makinde (2006) asserts that teachers’ approaches in teaching social studies are complex thereby making the comprehension of the subject difficult for the students even when they attempt to study on their own. Also, unavailability of instructional materials in the teaching of social studies was observed as potential barriers to the level of students’ interest and likely disposition to the subject. In schools where there are non-
availability of instructional materials, students’ comprehension becomes a tedious task and this affect what they learn in the subject on their own.

Learning is relatively permanent products of experiences that come out as a result of the interaction between individual and environment. A part of a person’s all learnings occur incidentally while an important part of it occurs in a specially structured learning environment in a planned and programmed manner. The concept of learning which is of vital importance in terms of explaining human behaviours is one of the important subject areas whose questions are tried to be answered in the body of literature such as how and through which processes learning occurs. In the historical process, there have arisen many theories that are still acceptable despite of some criticism. Learning theories that are interested in learning and ways of learning in order to understand and explain learning process explain learning as a process in which behaviour changes, is shaped or controlled. These theories may be classified under different headings according to some criteria. On the other hand, although these theories have some common views, they also have different points of view, which have been developed considering biological, psychological, physiological, neurological structure of human.

The term academic achievement has obviously been defined in different forms by different scholars. To Travers in Isnian (2009), academic achievement refers to the result of what an individual has learnt from some educational experiences. International Observatory on Academic Achievement (IOAA) (2009) refers to academic achievement as the achievement, by an individual, of the objectives related to various types of knowledge and skill which is socially established based on the age, prior learning and capacity of the individuals with regard to education, socialization and qualification. In order to determine pupils’ academic achievement, there is the necessity for a standard of measurement. Bell, (2011) notes that success in every academic endeavour is generally measured by actual performance in academic tests, examinations, or continuous assessment, though there is no general agreement on how it is best tested. The purpose of evaluating academic performance are: to provide a framework of knowing how students fare in school, to have constant standard to which all students are held, and in order to foster improvement and make full use of the learning process. Academically, successful pupils will have more opportunities than those with less education.

Social studies is a reformatory school instruction designed to equip learners with desirable attitudes, values, skills and knowledge for cohesive social existence in Nigerian society (Mezieobi, 2011). Adekeye, (1982) in Onipe (2004) defines social studies as a subject which teaches self - awareness in pupils and inculcates self - discipline, self - reliance, self - services which in turn develops a sound mind in a sound body capable of dealing with the stresses and strain of life. Social studies is a body of knowledge that looks at the whole of education enterprise from social perspectives. The subject is concerned with the study of man and his complex relationship with his environment. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse democratic society in an inter-dependent world. Within the school programmes, social studies provides co-ordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archeology, economics, geography, history, law, political science, religion etc as well as appreciate content from the humanities, mathematics and natural science. The general objectives of social studies education as an academic discipline according to Dubey & Barth (1980), should aim at achieving the following:
1. Exposing the diverse and ever changing physical and social environment as a whole including its natural resources, together with the rational use and conservation of these resources for development;
2. Developing in the learners, the capacity to learn and acquire skills including not only the basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing but also of developing the skills of hand together with those of analysis and inference which are important in the formation of sound judgment;
3. Developing in children, positive and desirable values of citizenship and the desires in them to make positive contribution to the creation of a united Nigeria; and
4. Inculcating in the learners sympathetic views which will enable them to appreciate the diversity and interdependence of all members of the local community and of the wider national and international community.

Student’s related factor is one of the important aspects of high fail rate in social studies plays vital role in a teaching learning process. Without students interest in the teaching learning actives there is no possibility to achieve knowledge in subject matter. Student’s achievement depends on their need, interest, practices and seriousness in subject matter. Students related factors include social studies anxiety, prior knowledge of students and student’s labor in learning social studies. Teacher related factors are the one aspect of low pass rate in social studies at secondary level. Teacher is a person who provides education for students individually and motivate for teaching learning activities. The children’s education depends on the role of teacher in teaching learning activities. Positive attitude of teacher creates positive direction to students for learning social studies. The researcher emphasized on the teacher factors that included motivation towards students and assessment system of student which affected students pass in mathematics from Humla district. Among different factors, affecting social studies learning one of the teacher related factor is motivation. Motivation is the one important factor of high failure in social studies. Motivation is the internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in students to be continually interested and committed to learn something. The process of motivation stems from stimulation which is turns followed by an emotional reaction followed by a specific behaviour response.

Environment related factors are very important aspect of students high fail rate social studies. In this study, environment related factors refer teaching learning environment and home environment. Teaching learning environment indicated that the environment inside of classroom. Home environment indicate family environment. These different environmental factors determine the students’ activities in learning. Parents related factors are the one of the important aspect of students pass in social studies. Parents role are play important in of their children education. Almost children education depends on their family background and parent’s economic status. The home is the first school o the children and second is school. Home environment affects directly on child school of the children education. Consequently, it is determine the social studies learning of children. Educational backgrounds of parent are one and important aspect of the parents plays a role for studying social studies. The education of child does not depend on only teacher role but also depend on their parents’ awareness interest and knowledge about handing and guiding their children at home. Parents can introduce and teach values are depending on their parents’ education. Uneducated person do not know important of social studies knowledge in their life and they cannot force to learn social studies to their child.
Purpose of the Study
The specific purpose of this study includes:
1. Assess the factors affecting the learning of social studies among the public junior secondary school students.
2. Investigate the difficulties encountered by students in learning social studies at the public junior secondary school students.

Research Questions
The following questions were raised in the study.
1. What are the factors affecting the learning of social studies among the public junior secondary school students in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State?
2. What are the difficulties encountered by students as they learn social studies at the public junior secondary school of Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State?

Methodology
The study was descriptive survey research design in nature. Comprising One hundred and twenty (120) targeted social studies teachers from the study area. Fifty - two (52) of these teachers were males and sixty - eight (68) were females. Since the population size was not too large, the researchers used the entire figure as sample size. This was in conformity with Gay, Mills and Airasian (2006) that samples should be as large as possible; in general, the larger the sample, the more representative it is likely to be, and the more generalizable the results of the study are likely to be. Study instrument for data collection was titled “Teachers’ Questionnaire into the perception of junior secondary school students in learning of social studies in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State (TQICMACSS)”. The instrument was validated by two (2) experts not below the rank of principal lecturer from Federal College of Education, Zaria. After this, it was subjected to reliability test and reliability test score obtained was 0.89. Data obtained from the field work was sorted out, coded, inputted and analyzed using simple percentages.

Results
Research Question One: What are the factors affecting the learning of social studies among the public junior secondary school students in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State?

Table 1: Respondents’ opinions on factors affecting the learning of social studies in Junior Secondary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>STATEMENTS</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Family issues relating to marriage, children and in - laws.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Teacher related factor especially hatred for the teacher.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Poverty as students has to work earning a living and study as well.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Ignorance as most students learn just for the sake of learning and as well to impress others.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Students understanding of the objectives of why the subject is taught in schools.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cumulative mean = 2.741

Standard/decision mean = 2.500
The general responses of the respondents to each statement were presented in the above table. This was as their cumulative mean responses on all the statements stood at 2.741 which is higher than the 2.500 standard/decision mean. Specifically, it was believed that several factors affect how social studies are learnt or otherwise but teacher related factor rank in top position. This viewpoint attracted the highest mean response of 2.900 with a total of 31 respondents indicated strongly agreed, 38 for agreed as against 31 that disagreed and the other 5 respondents to strongly disagreed. In the same vein, they assert that students’ understanding of the objectives of why the subject is taught in school was examined, as this had the second highest mean agreement of 2.800 as details showed that while a total of 82 indicated strongly agreed, 38 agreed as against 31 that disagreed and the rest of 8 other respondents for strongly disagreed. In summary, teacher factor ranks top among other factors affecting the learning of social studies in junior secondary schools of Kaduna North Local Government Area of Kaduna State. It further suggests that this factor if not looked into may create a dislike for the students from coming close to school.

**Research Question Two:** What are the difficulties encountered by students as they learn social studies at the public junior secondary school of Kaduna North Local Government Area, Kaduna State?

**Table 2: Respondents’ opinions on difficulties faced by students while learning Social Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>STATEMENTS</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Access to learning materials</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Popular belief that social studies is an easy to pass subject.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lack of time as claimed by few students when they are reading.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Absence of un - conducive learning environment.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Poor teacher preparation resulting to unattractive</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>instructional delivery in the classrooms.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cumulative mean = 2.905**

Information from the above table showed the general responses of the respondents to the difficulties faced by students of social studies while learning. This certainly would affect what is to be learnt by the students and to equally assess the possibility of achieving the objectives of why social studies is taught at the junior secondary schools in the study area. The cumulative mean response on all the statements was 2.905 which is higher than the 2.500 standard/decision mean. Specifically, it was believed that access to learning materials poses a great danger to what students’ would have certainly learned. This statement recorded the highest mean response of 2.958 with a total of 83 respondents indicating strongly agreed, 29 as agreed, 32 as disagreed and the rest of 6 indicated strongly disagreed. In the same vein, they assert that poor teacher preparation resulting to unattractive instructional delivery in the classrooms may pose a strong hindrance to what students’ would learn in social studies at this level. As this recorded the second highest mean agreement of 2.925 as details showed that while a total of 32 indicated strongly agreed, 36 as agreed, another 30 disagreed and the rest of 7 picked strongly disagreed. In summary, access to learning materials or otherwise may pose a challenge to what is learnt in social studies in junior secondary schools of Kaduna North Local Government Area of Kaduna State.
Discussions
In research question I, the factors affecting the learning of social studies among the public junior secondary school students was tested. The result of the test conducted using descriptive statistics (frequency counts and mean value) revealed that the respondents were of the opinion that several factors affect the learning of social studies in schools. For once, teacher related factor was rated atop other factors affecting what would have been learnt in the subject.

Research question II investigated the difficulties encountered by students when they are learning social studies at the public junior secondary school students. The result of the test revealed that the respondents were of the view that sometimes the interest may be there to learn the subject but hindrances beyond one’s control may affect it. Some of the various forms through which these hindrances can come up have been outlined. Above all, access to learning materials poses a great limitation to students’ learning of social studies.

Recommendations
1. That effort should be made by schools, parents and students to overcome likely factors that may affects how, when and what they (students) should learn in social studies at this level.
2. There is need for the concerned authorities to put to an end whatever difficulties that may stand the way of students in learning social studies.

References