

GENDER AND AREA OF SPECIALIZATION OF TEACHERS ON THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM IN JUNIOR SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA.

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*ABSTRACT*

*The study examined gender and area of specialization of teachers in the implementation of social studies curriculum in Junior Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The population of this study consisted of all the 225 teachers teaching social studies in the 334 Junior Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. The study adopted Expost-Facto research design while simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents. The instrument for data collection which was tagged "Teachers Gender and Area of Specialization and Implementation of Social Studies Curriculum Questionnaire (TGASISSCQ)" was administered to the respondents and used for the study. The instrument was validated by two educational evaluators in the faculty of education. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics was used to test the hypotheses. From the results of the data analysis, it was observed that there is significant difference in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on gender. There is significant difference in the implementation junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on areas of specialization. In conclusion, teachers in Akwa Ibom State actively involve themselves in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum. It was therefore recommended that social studies professional teachers should be recruited to teach the subject in the Junior Secondary Schools.*

**Key words: Gender of Teacher, Implementation of Social Studies Curriculum**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The relevance of secondary school education is to provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education at a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background. Secondary education also seeks to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future role. To achieve these aims, secondary education is divided into two stages: Junior Secondary School stage and Senior Secondary School stage; each with duration of three years. According to National Policy on Education (2004), Junior Secondary School shall be both pre-vocational and academic. Students who complete Junior Secondary School shall be streamed into the Senior Secondary School, the Technical College, an out-of-school vocational training center and an apprenticeship scheme. In the past, Social Studies was taught as History, Geography and Civics, separately. These individual subjects are concerned with various ways man relates with his environment. Recently, Social Studies has taken a different dimension. It is being regarded now as an integration of various subjects related to man, his physical and social environment.

The introduction of Social Studies into secondary school curriculum in 1982 has posed considerable challenges to the teachers, not only in the breadth of the subject coverage but also in the methodology of teaching. Emphasis is placed more on students' learning through discovery, inquiry and self-expression supported with good instructional materials for effective teaching and useful output. Hence, the teacher's major role is to guide the students appropriately in order to enable them fit into the learning experience effectively.

Teachers are the pivot for effective implementation of the social studies curriculum. For proper implementation of the social studies curriculum, the importance of qualified teacher cannot be overemphasized. Asiabaka, (2002) stated that the success of any integrated education programme is determined by the objectives of the programme, availability of equipment and teachers. Nolam et.al further stressed that exception of well-defined objectives, the most important factor is availability of qualified teachers. No curriculum can be effective without a good teacher because it is the responsibility of the teacher to offset deficiencies in curriculum in text books and equipment. Ekong, (2003) theorized that a teacher experience can have a great outcome on the implementation of social studies curricula in schools. A teacher must be well engrossed into mastering of the subject content of Social Studies to enhance teaching and learning. In spite of the several methods of teaching, the teachers' methods largely depend on his understanding of the subject matter which has to do with years of experience. Alebeosu (2000) opined that male teachers' achievement is not significantly different from female teachers in the teaching and implementation of Social Studies in the Junior Secondary School. The immediate problem always encountered in teaching social studies is how to get teachers ready to teach the subject in the way it should be taught. Such teachers must not only excel in the philosophy and methodology of social studies, they must in addition know how to successfully present the subject. This study is, therefore, an attempt to fill the existing gap in implementation of Social Studies curriculum in junior secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is a major concern that the emergence of social studies into secondary school curriculum in 1982 has posed considerable challenges to the teachers not only in the breadth of the subject coverage but also in the methodology of teaching. This is more so in Akwa Ibom State Junior secondary schools (Akpan, 2001). Essential factors have been advanced as affecting proper adaptability of social studies at the Junior Secondary School level. When students perform poorly in social studies examinations, they are blamed for their intellectual inability and poor attitude toward the subject while little or no blame is attributed to teachers' characteristics.

Therefore, this study is an attempt to fill the existing gap in implementation of Social Studies curriculum in junior secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Its major focus is on gender and area of specialization of teachers and the issues related to the teaching and learning of social studies in Junior Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom state of Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to examine gender and area of specialization of teachers on the implementation of social studies curriculum in Junior Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study is designed to:

1. Determine the influence of gender of teachers in the implementation of Social Studies curriculum in JSS in Akwa Ibom State.

2. Determine the influence of area of specialization of teachers in the implementation of Social Studies curriculum in JSS in Akwa Ibom State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. How does teacher's gender influence the implementation of Social Studies curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State?
2. In what way does area of specialization of a teacher influence the implementation of Social Studies Curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The Research hypotheses stated for this study were:

1. There is no significant difference in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on areas of specialization.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Gender of teachers and implementation of social studies curriculum**

Gender and attitude are regarded as terms used to describe the behaviour and character traits expected of persons on the basis of being born either as a male or female. According to Guerrero, (2007) who coined that the main reason of gender and attitude must be observed in teaching to achieve desired goals. Certain subjects and problem-solving skills are arrogated to males while other are said to be female dominated. However, studies on gender differences in school achievement are not conclusive. Dickson, (2000), stated that contended gender is not a necessary factor to be linked with school achievement. Arkin, (2006), considered that school achievement especially the female category is closely linked to child upbringing and the type of childhood training given.

Empirical findings as reported by Alebeosu (2000) and Jibowo (2000) showed that sex does not necessarily affect the performance of the subjects in their study areas. Jibowo said: "a child or an adult does not just perform well academically as a result of sex, but that everyone has what it takes to be a success in life given equal opportunities". Women as observed are the mainstay of establishment as they take effective part in some administrative and technological work. Sex or gender have nothing to do with understanding the subject. At times males and females are equal in terms of overall average since different pattern of distinct ability is shown. Females from observation show more proficiency in quantitative and spatial relationship. Secondary school will be fashioned in such a way that: "students irrespective of sex will be equipped to effectively take part in our modern age of science and technology".

The study of gender differences in academic achievement has been an area of interest for researchers. Stephens. (2001) found out the differences in academic achievement between male and female teachers with male teacher performing better than female. According to Ukeje, (2005), there is no gender differences. Male teachers' achievement was not significantly different from girls in the teaching of Social Studies in the Junior Secondary School. Her findings suggests that male and female teachers should be encouraged to go to teach effectively any subject of their choice without having any set stereotype bias.

This finding suggested that Rice, (2003), scrutinized the difference in teachers' performance on non-verbal tests of ability that appeared to arise solely from difference in cultural backgrounds of the children. Non-verbal tests were used since these were supposedly freer from cultural influences than verbal tests and hence, if any differences were discovered, it might be presumed that even larger difference would be recalled on other types of tests. His reports showed that no significant differences between male and female teachers in respect of mean scores or gains made. Consistently, however, the male teachers gained slightly more than the females in every sub-group. Odukeya, (2005) observed that male and female teachers differed in their performances in mathematics and Social Studies. His findings indicate that male teachers performed better than female teachers in mathematics while female teachers performed better in Social Studies.

Most times female teachers excel in verbal abilities while male teachers excel in calculative abilities. The most important fact in what Ezewu, Smith, Maccoby and Jacklin have espoused here is that gender differences in academic abilities and performances do exist. Brierly in Thompson (2005) identified Social Learning and organization of School Curricula as some of the factors that hinder male and female teachers. Decamont (2001) stated that it is in home and classroom that teachers learn to be female, and male teachers learn to be male. This supports the fact that abilities and performances are enhanced by Social Studies.

#### **Area of Specialization of Teachers and Implementation of Social Studies Curriculum**

A speech by Ukeje, (2005), stated that the success of an intergrated social studies Education programme is built on the object of the programme, availability of equipment and of teachers. Idu (2001) reported that review of existing curriculum initiatives was emphasized in the implementation of the UBE so that the type of education received by pupils will be responsive to the needs of the immediate society. For proper implementation of the social studies curriculum, the place of the teacher cannot be overemphasized. From this perspective, the teachers are the pivot for effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum. Their perception about availability of resources, strategies for the success of implementation of Social Studies curriculum is the availability of teachers. Odukeya, (2005) found out that qualified teachers are banned to implement strategies. The implication of this is that qualified teachers availability will lead to the success of implementation of curriculum.

The emphasis on basic resources is paramount to the teaching of social studies. Social Studies seems very abstract if practical tools are not part of the teaching exercise. What this suggests is that resources such as maps, posters, videotapes and compact disk showing real life situations are paramount for effective social studies teaching. These resources complement the teaching exercise that is carried out by the bottleneck delay and distortion which do not sometimes allow policies to be actualized to the fullest. Ichima, (2000), observed that some factors that affect curriculum usages includes.

- (a) Manpower Requirement: For proper implementation of any policy on education, personnel is an inevitable requirement. Adequate Manpower must be put in place to effect the right changes.
- (b) Population Explosion: the unprecedented increase in number of schools poses a serious problem of implementation of educational policy.

- (c) Statistical Deficiencies: Head (2005), deduced that the fundamental reason the anticipated quantities or goals are never reached is that the figurative usages for our educational plans are never realistic.

Serious discrepancies in the record of Nigeria's population partly explain the inaccurate projections on which the educational plans and policies rest. With such inaccurate projections, implementation of plans and policies become very difficult. The first immediate problem of teaching Social Studies is how to get teachers ready to teach the subject in the way it would be taught. Such teachers must not only excel in the philosophy and methodology of Social Studies, they must in addition know how to successfully present the subject.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study adopted an ex-post facto research design because the phenomena under study had already occurred. Accordingly, the researcher had no direct control over the variables. The researcher could not manipulate the variables but obtained data on already existing variables to study their influence on one another.

### **Area of the Study**

The study area is Akwa Ibom State which is one of the thirty six (36) states of Federal Republic of Nigeria. The proximity of the study area to the researcher informed the researcher's use of Akwa Ibom State for the study.

### **Population**

All the 225 teachers teaching social studies in the 334 Junior Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State constituted the population of this study.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

Simple random sampling technique was used to select 180 social studies teachers for the study. The teachers were selected using a non-proportionate stratified sampling technique of which 60 respondents were obtained from each of the three senatorial districts of the state.

### **Instrumentation**

The main instrument used for this research was researcher-developed questionnaire, tagged "Teachers Gender and Area of Specialization and Implementation of Social Studies Curriculum Questionnaire (TGASISSCQ)". This instrument was made up of two sections (sections A and B). Section A was designed to measure the personal data, (that is teachers characteristics) of the respondents while section B measured implementation of Social Studies Curriculum.

### **Validation of the Instrument**

To ensure the validity of the instrument the researcher made sure that all variables of the research objectives were measured in the questionnaire. Those variables were academic qualification and teaching experience.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

Test-retest reliability study was used to test the reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient obtained here was used to determine the level of reliability of instrument which was administered to 20 teachers who did form part of the main work.

**Administration of Instrument**

To administer the instrument, the researcher visited each of the chosen schools. On reaching the school, the researcher obtained permission from the school authorities who organized the teachers for sampling and administration of the instrument. On the average, the researcher was supposed to cover three schools in a day and this took three weeks to administer the instrument in all the schools selected. In this way, all copies of questionnaire administered were retrieved. The questionnaire was scored in conference by the researcher.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Research Question One**

How does teacher’s gender influence the implementation of Social Studies curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State? In order to answer the research question, descriptive statistical analysis was performed on the data collected (see Table 1).

**TABLE 1**

Descriptive analysis of the influence of teacher’s gender on the implementation of social studies curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State.

Teacher’s Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	Mean	Remarkable Difference
Male	42	80.57**	18.00***	***Remarkable Difference
Female	138	62.57*		

\*\* The highest mean score

\* The least mean score

The result in Table 1 presents the descriptive analysis of how teacher’s gender influence the implementation of social studies curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State. From the result of the analysis it was observed that the mean value of the male teachers (80.57) with respect to implementation of social studies curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State was remarkably higher than that of the female teachers (62.57) with remarkable mean difference of (18.00). The result therefore means that there is remarkable influence of teacher’s gender on the implementation of social studies curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State.

**Research Question Two**

In what way does area of specialization of a teacher influence the implementation of Social Studies Curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State? In order to answer the research question, descriptive statistical analysis was performed on the data collected (see Table 2)

**TABLE 2**

Descriptive analysis of the influence of area of specialization of a teacher on the implementation of social studies Curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State.

area of specialization	N	$\bar{X}$	Mean	Remarkable Difference
Social Studies	140	69.66**	13.01***	***Remarkable Difference
Non-Social Studies	40	56.65*		

\*\* The highest mean score

\* The least mean score

The result in Table 2 presents the descriptive analysis of the way in which area of specialization of a teacher influences the implementation of social studies Curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State. From the result of the analysis it was observed that the mean value of the teachers whose area of specification was social studies (69.66) was remarkably higher than that of their counterparts identified as the non-social studies teachers (56.65) with remarkable mean difference of (13.01). The result therefore means that the area specialization of a teacher has remarkable influence on the implementation of social studies Curriculum in Junior Secondary School in Akwa Ibom State.

### Hypotheses Testing

#### Hypothesis One

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on gender. In order to test the hypothesis, two variables were identified as follows:-

1. Gender (male and female) as the independent variables
2. Implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum as the independent variables.

Independent t-test analysis was used in comparing the two independent groups (See Table 3).

**TABLE 3**

Independent t-test Analysis of the difference in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on gender.

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
Male	42	80.57	5.95	17.21*
Female	138	62.57	5.91	

\*Significant at 0.05 level; df = 178; N = 180; Critical t value = 1.960

Table 3 presents the obtained t –value as (17.21). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical t-value (1.960) at 0.05 levels with 178 degree of freedom. The

obtained t-value (17.21) was greater than the critical t-value (1.960). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant difference in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on gender.

**Hypothesis Two**

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the implementation junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on areas of specialization. In order to test the hypothesis, two variables were identified as follows:-

1. Areas of specialisation as the independent variables
2. Implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum as the independent variables.

Independent t-test analysis was used in comparing the two independent groups (See Table 4).

**TABLE 4**

Independent t-test Analysis of the difference in the implementation junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on areas of specialization.

Areas of Specialisation	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
Social Studies	140	69.66	8.95	
Non-Social Studies	40	56.65	2.68	15.00*

\*Significant at 0.05 level; df = 178; N = 180; Critical t value = 1.960

Table 4 presents the obtained t-value as (15.00). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical t-value (1.960) at 0.05 levels with 178 degree of freedom. The obtained t-value (15.00) was greater than the critical t-value (1.960). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant difference in the implementation junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on areas of specialization.

**Discussion of Findings**

The result of the data analysis in table 3 was significant due to the fact that the obtained t-value (17.21) was greater than the critical t-value (1.960) at 0.05 level with 178 degree of freedom. The result implies that there is significant difference in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on gender. The result therefore was in agreement with the research findings of Guerrero, (2007) who coined that the main reason of gender and attitude must be observed in teaching to achieve desired goals. The result of the findings was also in line with the findings of Stephens, (2001), who found out the differences in academic achievement between male and female teachers with male teacher performing better than female. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was accepted.

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### **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the research work, the following conclusions are deemed necessary: Teachers in Akwa Ibom State actively involve themselves in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum. There is significant difference in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on gender. There is significant difference in the implementation junior secondary Social Studies curriculum among teachers based on areas of specialization.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations are deemed necessary:

1. Social studies professional teachers should be recruited to teach the subject in the Junior Secondary Schools. Such teachers do not only know the philosophy and the methodology of Social Studies, they in addition know how to successfully present the subject.
2. It is necessary for both males and females to be deployed to teach Social Studies in the Junior Secondary Schools in the State with more males than females made to teach Social Studies in the Junior Secondary schools as they have been identified with more effectiveness in the implementation of junior secondary Social Studies curriculum

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