

Lecturers' Perception of Social Studies as An Instrument for Social Stability, Political and Economic Development Among Students of Colleges of Education in North Central, Nigeria

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Abstract- *This study investigates lecturers' perceptions of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting social stability, political engagement, and economic development among students in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. Utilizing a descriptive survey design, data were gathered from 370 lecturers through a self-structured questionnaire, analyzed using statistical methods including means, standard deviations and t-tests. The findings indicate a strong consensus among lecturers on the importance of Social Studies in enhancing social stability, with no significant differences observed in perceptions based on gender. The study highlights the need for improved teaching methods, curriculum relevance, and resource allocation to strengthen the role of Social Studies education in fostering socio-political and economic development in Nigeria.*

Indexed Terms- *Perception, Social Studies, Instrument, Social Stability, Political, Economic and Development*

I. INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, education is recognized by the Federal Government as a crucial tool for national development, emphasizing its transformative power for socio-economic growth (FRN, 2014). This pursuit of education serves not only to acquire knowledge but also to cultivate essential values and attitudes necessary for societal survival and progress (Jaiyeoba, 2017). Particularly relevant is the field of Social Studies, which integrates cognitive, emotional, and social skills to prepare individuals for real-life challenges (Mezieobi, 2014). The curriculum of Social Studies is designed to be adaptable and responsive to

contemporary societal needs, thereby fostering social stability and addressing the pressing issues that communities face (Akinpelu in Offorma, 2016).

However, despite the acknowledged importance of Social Studies Education in promoting socio-political and economic stability, Nigeria continues to face numerous challenges that hinder its development (Lawrence, 2014). Scholars point to structural deficiencies rooted in the colonial past, arguing that these legacies have left Nigeria vulnerable to ongoing socio-economic issues (Walter, 2018). The colonial exploitation that has historically deprived African nations of their resources continues to stifle progress and exacerbates underdevelopment (Awoyemi, 2020). Therefore, this study aims to explore how lecturers perceive Social Studies as a pivotal instrument for promoting social stability, which is essential for political and economic development among students in the College of Education in North Central Nigeria.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The significance of education in fostering socio-economic and political development is widely acknowledged, particularly by the Nigerian Federal Government, which regards it as essential for national progress. However, there are growing concerns about the effectiveness of Social Studies as a means to promote social stability, political engagement, and economic growth among students. While social stability is vital for enabling individuals to plan their lives without disruption, political development is crucial for ensuring citizen participation in democratic processes, and economic development focuses on wealth creation that benefits the community through job opportunities and tax revenue. Despite Nigeria's

vast potential and a current trajectory of economic growth and democratic resilience, the nation struggles with the perceived ineffectiveness of Social Studies in achieving these goals. This ineffectiveness stems from challenges such as inadequate teaching methods, insufficient resources, and poor teacher training, which hinder students' development of the necessary skills and values for maintaining social harmony and participating in political processes. The failure to adequately prepare students can lead to disengagement from civic duties, political instability, and broader socio-economic implications, including compromised national security and diminished global competitiveness. It is these pressing issues that have prompted the researcher to establish focused objectives for the study.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to examine lecturers' perception of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting social stability, political and economic development among students of College of Education in North Central Nigeria. Other specific objective is to; examine lecturers' perception of the status of Social Studies as an instrument, promoting social stability political and economic development among students of Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study

What is the perception of lecturers regarding the status of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting social stability for political and economic development among students in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

V. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses were formulated at 0.05 level of significant to guide the study

H₀₁: There is no significant different between the perceptions of male and female lecturers regarding the status of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting social stability for political and economic

development among students in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

VI. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Social Studies promote social stability by fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills among citizens (Kumar et al., 2018). By teaching students about different cultures, histories, and perspectives, Social Studies help reduce prejudices and promote tolerance (Gilliland & Dunn, 2018). In Nigeria, Social Studies can be used to address issues like ethnic and religious tensions, which are major threats to social stability (Ukiwo, 2018).

In the words of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), "Social Studies education is essential for promoting social stability and national unity" (NCSS, 2019). The council emphasizes that Social Studies education helps students develop skills like communication, problem-solving, and decision-making, which are essential for resolving conflicts and promoting social harmony.

Social Studies can promote political development by empowering citizens with knowledge about the political process and their roles in it (Shieh, 2017). By teaching students about governance, democracy, and citizenship, Social Studies can encourage them to participate in the political process and hold leaders accountable (Foster & Gomes, 2015). In Nigeria, Social Studies can be used to promote political literacy among citizens, which is essential for good governance and democratic stability (Adebiyi & Odoh, 2019).

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria's National Policy on Education (FRN, 2015), "Social Studies education is essential for promoting political awareness and civic responsibility among citizens." The policy recognizes that Social Studies education can help citizens understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens of a democracy.

Social Studies can promote economic development by teaching students about entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainable development (Kotler et al., 2019). By emphasizing the importance of economics and entrepreneurship in Social Studies education, Nigeria

can develop a culture of innovation and self-reliance among its citizens (Olukoga & Ogundeji, 2018). In addition, Social Studies can help students understand the impact of economic policies on their daily lives and communities (Ekechukwu & Obasi, 2016). In the words of the World Bank's report on Nigeria's economic development (World Bank, 2019), "education is a key driver of economic growth and development." The report emphasizes that investing in education can help Nigeria achieve sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty.

VII. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in the research study, detailing the research design, population, sample size, and data collection procedures. A descriptive survey method was adopted for this study, as it allows for the collection of information without altering the existing environment, providing a comprehensive overview of the situation being examined (Maisamari, 2013). The study population consisted of 810 Social Studies lecturers from Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria, and a sample size of 379 lecturers was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan table, applying simple random and proportionate sampling techniques to ensure fair representation across the study area. Data collection was facilitated through a self-structured questionnaire, the Lecturers' Perception of Social Studies as an Instrument for Promoting Social Stability (LPSSIPSSQ), designed to measure respondents' perceptions based on a four-point Likert scale.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, content and face validity were established through consultations with experts who reviewed the questionnaire for clarity and relevance. A pilot test was conducted, resulting in an overall reliability index of 0.86 based on Cronbach Alpha statistics, indicating that the instrument is consistent and dependable. Data collection involved the researcher administering questionnaires with the help of trained assistants, ensuring proper guidance for respondents. The data analysis method utilized basic statistical parameters such as percentages, means, and standard deviations to address research questions, while t-tests and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed to test specific

hypotheses, allowing for a robust analysis of the collected data.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

This presents the data collected from the research, focusing on how the findings relate to the study's objectives. Out of 379 distributed questionnaires, 370 were completed and returned. The primary data gathered through the questionnaire were analyzed using statistical parameters such as percentages, means, and standard deviations to address the research questions. Additionally, t-test statistics and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed to test the hypotheses, with results displayed through tables and charts for clearer understanding and interpretation of findings.

The demographic data of respondents revealed significant patterns related to their characteristics. Analysis showed that 54.9% of the lecturers were from urban colleges, while 45.1% were from rural areas, indicating a higher concentration in urban settings. Gender distribution indicated that 52.9% of the respondents were male, compared to 47.1% female. In terms of academic qualifications, the majority of lecturers possessed a Master's in Education (43.8%), followed by Bachelor's degrees (37.3%) and Doctorates (18.9%). Reviewing their lecturing experience, it was found that 55.4% had between 1-5 years of experience, while 33.2% had between 6-10 years, and a smaller percentage had more extensive experience (5.7% for both 11-15 years and 16 years and above). These findings provide critical insights into the characteristics of Social Studies lecturers, which may influence their perceptions of the subject's role in promoting social stability and development.

Data Analysis and Results

What is the perception of lecturers regarding the status of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting social stability for political and economic development among students in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Perception of Lecturers regarding the status of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting social stability for political and economic development among students in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

N= 370

cription	N	Mean	SD	Decision
Social Studies education is essential for promoting social stability for political and economic development among students.	370	2.96	0.97	Accepted
The evaluation and assessment methods used in Social Studies classes are effective in measuring student learning outcomes related to social stability for political and economic development.	370	3.91	0.38	Accepted
The teaching methods used in Social Studies classes are effective in promoting social stability for political and economic development among students.	370	3.97	0.16	Accepted
Social Studies education helps students develop critical thinking skills necessary for social stability for political and economic development.	370	3.97	0.17	Accepted
The curriculum of Social Studies is relevant to the needs of students in promoting social stability for political and economic development.	370	3.97	0.17	Accepted
Mean		3.80	0.37	Accepted

Table 1 presents lecturers' perceptions of the role of Social Studies in promoting social stability among students in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria, with an overall mean score of 3.80 (SD = 0.37). The analysis indicates that lecturers consider Social Studies education essential for fostering social stability and political and economic development, as evidenced by an item mean of 2.96 (SD = 0.97). Additionally, they believe that the evaluation and assessment methods used in Social Studies are effective for measuring student learning outcomes related to these goals (mean = 3.91, SD = 0.38). Furthermore, teaching methods utilized in Social Studies classes also received high ratings for their effectiveness in promoting social stability (mean = 3.97, SD = 0.16). Lecturers acknowledged the importance of Social Studies education in developing critical thinking skills necessary for achieving social stability (mean = 3.97, SD = 0.17) and affirmed that the curriculum is relevant to students' needs in this context (mean = 3.97, SD = 0.17). These findings

collectively underscore the significance of evaluation, teaching methods, and curriculum in aligning Social Studies education with the objectives of promoting social stability and supporting political and economic development among students.

Test of Null Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis One (H₀₁): There is no significant different between the perceptions of male and female lecturers regarding the status of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting social stability for political and economic development among students in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Table 3: t-test Analysis of Mean Responses of perceptions of male and female lecturers regarding the status of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting social stability for political and economic development among students in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria

Ownership	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	p-value	Decision
Male	196	3.5150	.16680	.375	.368	.708	Accepted
Female	174	3.5080	.16059				

The t-test analysis presented in Table 3 indicates that the p-value is 0.708, which is greater than the significant level of 0.05 (p ≤ 0.05). This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean assessments of male and female Social Studies

lecturers regarding the status of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting social stability and economic development among students in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. Consequently, the null hypothesis, which asserts that there is no

substantial difference between the perceptions of male and female lecturers, is accepted. The findings suggest that both male and female lecturers have similar views on how Social Studies contributes to social stability in relation to political and economic development for students in these educational institutions.

CONCLUSION

The study explores the perceptions of lecturers in North Central Nigeria regarding the role of Social Studies in promoting social stability, political engagement, and economic development among students in Colleges of Education. The findings indicate that lecturers generally view Social Studies as a crucial instrument for fostering social stability. Despite challenges such as inadequate teaching methods and insufficient resources, the assessment results suggest that both male and female lecturers share similar perceptions about the effectiveness of Social Studies education in contributing to political and economic development. The overall acceptance of the null hypotheses further indicates that there are no significant differences in perceptions based on gender.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study offers several recommendations:

1. Training programs should be implemented for lecturers to adopt innovative teaching strategies tailored to effectively teach Social Studies and enhance students' critical thinking skills.
2. A comprehensive review of the Social Studies curriculum is necessary to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in promoting skills that are vital for social stability.
3. Increased funding and resources should be allocated to Colleges of Education to facilitate better teaching conditions and learning environments.
4. Regular assessments and feedback mechanisms should be established to evaluate the effectiveness of Social Studies education in achieving its objectives related to social stability and development.

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