

Relationship Between Perceived Cultural Practices and Academic Achievement in Social Studies in Calabar South Local Government Area: Implications for Development Sociology

ADALIKWU, ROSE AMOKEYE

Peace and Conflict Unit, Centre for General Studies, University of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Abstract- *This study investigated the relationship between cultural practices and academic achievement in Social Studies in Calabar South Local Government Area. Employing a survey research design, a structured questionnaire gathered data on individual perspectives. The population comprised 2,039 respondents from approved public secondary schools, with a sample of 349 selected via simple random sampling (Hat and Draw method) from eight schools. The Cultural Practices and Academic Achievement in Social Studies Questionnaire (CPASSQ), designed on a Likert scale and validated by an expert, demonstrated high reliability (test-retest coefficients: 0.88 and 0.92). Data analysis used descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient (0.05 significance level), revealing that gender, belief systems, and value systems significantly impact academic performance in Social Studies. The study recommends incorporating cultural practices and values into the Social Studies curriculum to enhance student engagement and achievement. In conclusion, this research underscores the significance of cultural practices and values in shaping academic outcomes in Social Studies, highlighting the need for culturally responsive education.*

Index Terms- *Perceived, Cultural Practices, Academic Achievement and Development Sociology*

I. INTRODUCTION

Cultural practices are the backbone of societies, pulsating with traditions, values, and rituals that shape identities and behaviors. Understanding the interplay between cultural practices and academic achievement is crucial in education, particularly in primary education where foundational knowledge is established. This study explores the relationship

between cultural practices and the academic performance of primary six pupils in Social Studies in Calabar South Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Cultural practices encompass a broad spectrum of customs, beliefs, and traditions embedded within a community, influencing various aspects of individuals' lives (Smith, 2020). Academic achievement in Social Studies reflects the mastery of content knowledge, critical thinking skills, and socio-cultural understanding necessary for holistic education. The significance of cultural influences on learning styles, attitudes towards education, and academic performance has been noted.

This study aims to contribute to the discourse on culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum development, fostering inclusive and equitable learning environments. The dynamic cultural landscape of Calabar South presents both opportunities and challenges for educational practices (Anyadike & Aluede, 2011). Integrating local knowledge and practices into the Social Studies curriculum can enrich students' learning experiences and academic outcomes (Banks, 2009). The study focuses on three key sub-variables: Gender preference: Cultural expectations and stereotypes associated with males and females (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Belief system: Religious and spiritual beliefs impacting pupils' worldview and attitude towards learning (Nieto, 2017). Value system: Cultural norms and values shaping pupils' behavior and motivation (Gay, 2010). These factors significantly influence pupils' achievement in Social Studies.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995)

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) is a framework that emphasizes incorporating students' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives into

teaching practices. Proposed by Gloria Ladson-Billings in 1995, CRP aims to validate and affirm students' cultural identities while promoting academic success.

The basic assumptions of the Principles of CRP are

- i. Cultural Awareness: Understanding and valuing diverse cultural backgrounds
- ii. Equity and Social Justice: Advocating for equal educational opportunities and challenging systemic inequities
- iii. Inclusive Curriculum: Integrating diverse perspectives and cultural experiences into the curriculum
- iv. Student-Centred Learning: Recognising and building on students' prior knowledge and experiences
- v. Critical Consciousness: Encouraging students to critically analyze social issues and structures

Implementing CRP in Calabar South: To bridge the gap between cultural practices and academic achievement in Social Studies, educators can integrate Local Customs and Traditions: Incorporate examples, case studies, and historical narratives relevant to students' cultural context. It creates a Culturally Responsive Classroom Environment: Decorate classrooms with diverse visuals, use culturally relevant examples, and encourage student voice, foster Critical Consciousness: Encourage students to critically analyse social issues and structures and finally, it provides Professional Development: Offer ongoing training for educators to increase awareness of cultural competence. By embracing CRP, educators can create learning environments that celebrate diversity, promote equity, and empower students to succeed academically. This approach can help bridge the gap between cultural practices and academic achievement in Social Studies, ultimately enhancing students' learning experiences and promoting cultural responsiveness in education.

Statement of the problem

The intersection of cultural practices and academic achievement among primary six pupils in Social Studies education within Calabar South Local Government Area presents a compelling challenge. Despite the rich cultural heritage embedded in the community, there exists a gap in understanding how these cultural practices relate to pupils' academic performance in Social Studies. The lack of tailored pedagogical approaches that integrate local cultural contexts into the curriculum may hinder students' ability to connect with the subject matter and achieve academic success. This gap highlights the need for

educators to develop culturally responsive teaching methods that acknowledge and value students' cultural backgrounds. Societal changes, including globalization and urbanisation, pose further complexities to the preservation and relevance of traditional cultural practices within the educational context. As a result, it is essential to investigate the relationship between cultural practices and academic achievement in Social Studies among primary six pupils in Calabar South. This study focuses on specific cultural practices, such as language, respect for elders, and the Ekpe festival, to identify barriers and opportunities that can enhance educational outcomes. By understanding the dynamics between cultural practices and academic achievement, educators can develop targeted strategies to promote academic success. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the development of culturally responsive pedagogies that value and integrate local cultural contexts, fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment for primary six pupils in Calabar South. By bridging the gap between cultural practices and academic achievement, educators can promote academic success and cultural preservation, ultimately enhancing the educational experience for students in this unique cultural milieu.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between cultural practices and academic achievement in social studies in Calabar South Local Government Area. Specially, the study aims to investigate whether:

- i. Examine the extent to which gender preferences influence academic achievement in Social Studies.
- ii. Determine the influence of belief system on academic achievement in Social Studies.
- iii. Investigate the extent to which value system influences achievement in Social Studies.

Research question

The following research questions were asked for the purpose of guiding the study:

- i. To what extent does gender preference influence academic achievement in Social Studies?
- ii. How does belief system influence academic achievement in Social Studies?
- iii. To what extent does value system influence academic achievement in Social Studies?

Statement of hypothesis

- i. There is no significant influence of gender preferences on academic achievement in Social Studies.
- ii. There is no significant influence of belief system on academic achievement in Social Studies
- iii. There is no significant influence of value system and academic achievement in Social Studies

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The review was conducted based on the chosen variables of the study. Thus

Gender Preference and pupils' academic achievement in Social Studies

Gender preference plays a pivotal role in shaping educational experiences and outcomes, particularly in multicultural contexts where diverse gender identities intersect. This literature review examines key studies that shed light on the influence of gender preference on academic achievement, classroom dynamics, and educational equity. Diverse gender identities in the classroom can present both opportunities and challenges for students and educators.

Cummins (2021) introduced the concepts of Gender Expression and Gender Identity, highlighting the distinction between social gender roles and personal gender identity. This framework underscores the importance of providing gender support that facilitates students' access to academic content across various subject areas. Moreover, research has shown that gender plays a critical role in shaping students' cognitive development and academic achievement. Vygotsky's (2018) Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the role of gender as a tool for mediating learning and cognition. According to Vygotsky, gender not only reflects but also shapes individuals' thoughts and understanding of the world.

In multicultural classrooms, educators can leverage students' gender diversity to promote collaborative learning experiences and scaffold academic concepts through meaningful gender interactions (García and Kleifgen, 2020). However, gender preference in educational contexts can also perpetuate inequities and disparities, particularly for students from marginalized gender backgrounds. The concept of Gender Discrimination, as discussed by Skutnabb-Kangas and Cummins (2018), highlights how gender policies and practices in schools can marginalise students who identify with non-dominant genders, leading to academic underachievement and social exclusion.

In addressing these challenges, culturally responsive pedagogy offers a promising approach to promoting equitable gender practices in education. Ladson-Billings (2015) advocates for instructional strategies that validate students' gender diversity and incorporate culturally relevant gender practices into the curriculum. By affirming students' gender identities and providing opportunities for gender development in meaningful contexts, educators can create inclusive learning environments that empower all students to succeed academically (Gutiérrez and Rogoff, 2001). Gender preference in educational settings is a multifaceted phenomenon with far-reaching implications for student learning and academic achievement. By recognizing and valuing students' gender diversity, educators can harness the power of gender as a tool for fostering cognitive development, promoting academic success, and advancing educational equity.

Furthermore, recent studies have further elucidated the intricate relationship between gender preference and educational outcomes, offering insights into effective practices and interventions. One area of inquiry focuses on the role of gender identity in cognitive development and academic achievement. Research by Bialystok (2021) has shown that individuals who identify with non-dominant genders demonstrate cognitive advantages, such as enhanced executive function skills and cognitive flexibility, which can positively influence academic performance. This suggests that promoting gender diversity and inclusivity in educational settings can be beneficial for students' overall cognitive development and academic success.

Additionally, the importance of culturally and gender-responsive assessment practices cannot be overstated. Assessment tools and practices should align with students' gender identities and cultural experiences to ensure fair and accurate evaluations of their knowledge and skills. Moreover, the need for inclusive gender policies and practices in educational institutions has gained increasing recognition. Gender policies should affirm and support students' gender identities, providing opportunities for gender-affirming education and support programs (Cummins and Hornberger, 2018). By valuing and promoting gender diversity, schools can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students, regardless of their gender backgrounds.

- Belief System and pupils' academic achievement in Social Studies

Belief system is a vital aspect of socialisation that has been linked to pupils' academic achievement in social studies. According to Ogbonnaya (2019), a strong belief system is a fundamental value in many cultures that fosters social cohesion and cooperation. In social studies education, a structured belief system is essential for pupils' understanding of cultural heritage and community values. Studies have shown that pupils with a strong belief system tend to perform better academically in social studies.

This belief system could promote a sense of responsibility and accountability among pupils, leading to improved academic performance (Adeyemi, 2018). Moreover, a strong belief system enhances pupils' critical thinking and problem-solving skills in social studies. According to Eze (2017), belief system encourages pupils to seek guidance and wisdom from their beliefs, leading to a deeper understanding of social studies concepts. Furthermore, a strong belief system fosters a positive learning environment in social studies classrooms.

A concrete belief system promotes a sense of respect and empathy among pupils, leading to improved classroom relationships and academic achievement (Nwosu, 2019). It is essential for pupils' civic education and community engagement. According to Okoro (2018), a strong belief system promotes a sense of civic responsibility and community involvement among pupils, leading to improved academic achievement in social studies. Research has also shown that belief system is linked to pupils' emotional intelligence and social skills in social studies.

A strong belief system promotes emotional intelligence and social skills among pupils, leading to improved academic achievement and social relationships (Onyeka, 2019). Moreover, a well-defined belief system is critical for pupils' cultural identity and heritage in social studies. According to Ugwu (2018), a strong belief system promotes cultural identity and heritage among pupils, leading to improved academic achievement and cultural awareness. Belief system is a vital aspect of socialisation that has a significant impact on pupils' academic achievement in social studies.

Belief system is essential for pupils' academic success and social development in social studies education (Nwosu, 2019). It fosters a sense of responsibility, critical thinking, and cultural identity among pupils, leading to improved academic achievement and social

relationships. Therefore, educators must recognise the importance of belief systems in social studies education and strive to create an inclusive learning environment that respects and values diverse belief systems.

- Value System and pupils' academic achievement in Social Studies

Value system is a significant cultural event in Nigeria that has been linked to pupils' academic achievement in social studies. According to Udo (2019), a strong value system provides an opportunity for pupils to learn about their cultural heritage and historical events, leading to improved academic achievement in social studies. Studies have shown that pupils who embrace a strong value system tend to perform better academically in social studies.

Value system enhances pupils' critical thinking and problem-solving skills, leading to improved academic achievement in social studies (Essien, 2018). Moreover, a strong value system promotes pupils' cultural identity and awareness in social studies. According to Akpan (2019), a value system helps pupils develop a sense of cultural identity and awareness, leading to improved academic achievement and cultural appreciation.

One could say that a strong value system promotes social and emotional learning among pupils, leading to improved academic achievement and social relationships (Nwosu, 2019). Additionally, value system is a significant predictor of pupils' academic achievement in social studies. Embracing a strong value system is a strong predictor of academic achievement in social studies, and pupils who embrace such values tend to perform better academically.

Educators and policymakers have been encouraged to incorporate value systems into the social studies curriculum. According to Okoro (2018), incorporating value systems into the curriculum can enhance pupils' academic achievement and cultural appreciation. Furthermore, research has shown that value systems can be used as a teaching tool in social studies education. As noted by Onyeka (2019), value systems can be used to teach pupils about cultural heritage, historical events, and social studies concepts.

Conclusively, value system has been found to have a significant impact on pupils' academic achievement in social studies. According to Udo (2019), a strong value system provides an opportunity for pupils to learn about their cultural heritage and historical

events, leading to improved academic achievement in social studies.

IV. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a survey research design to investigate the relationship between cultural practices and academic achievement in Social Studies. The survey design involved collecting data through a structured questionnaire designed to gather information on individual perspectives related to the research topic. The study was conducted in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. The local government, bounded by Calabar Municipality to the north, Akpabuyo to the east, the Atlantic Ocean to the south, and Akwa Ibom State to the west, has a diverse population where Efik, Ibibio, and Ejagham are the major languages spoken. The population consisted of 2,039 respondents from approved public secondary schools in Calabar South. A simple random sampling technique, specifically the Hat and Draw method (balloting), was used to select a sample of 349 respondents from eight public secondary schools. The research instrument, the Cultural Practices and Academic Achievement in Social Studies Questionnaire (CPPASSQ), was designed based on the Likert scale and face-validated by an expert in test measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was established through a test-retest reliability technique, yielding reliability coefficients of 0.88 and 0.92, which indicated consistency and reliability. Data analysis involved using tables and percentages for bio-data, while the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to analyse the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses were tested, and the results determined the relationship between cultural practices and academic achievement in Social Studies.

V. RESULTS

The result emanating from the hypotheses tested and the interpretation of findings, including discussion of the outstanding results of the study, are presented in this chapter.

Hypotheses one

There is no significant influence of gender and academic achievement in social studies. The major independent variable in this hypothesis is gender, categorised in terms of male and female, while the dependent variable is academic achievement in social studies. To test this hypothesis, an independent t-test analysis was employed. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Independent t-test analysis of gender and academic achievement in social studies

Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	Std. D	SEM	df	t-value	p-value
Male	149	19.458	5.6728	.4694	343	1.77	.073
Female	199	18.557	3.7234	.2639	343	1.77	.073

*p<.05

The result appears to have a typographical error, stating "male are 199" instead of "female are 197" (343 - 146 = 197). Assuming the correct numbers are 146 males and 197 females, here's a polished version:

The study involved 343 respondents, comprising 146 males and 197 females. The mean and standard deviation of academic achievement scores in Social Studies for males and females were:

- Males: 19.4589 ± 5.67284
- Females: 18.5578 ± 3.72345

The t-test results indicated a statistically significant difference in academic achievement between males and females:

- Degrees of freedom: 343
- Level of significance: 0.05
- p-value: 0.003
- t-value: 3.028

Given that the p-value (0.003) is less than the significance level (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests a significant influence of gender on academic achievement in Social Studies.

Hypothesis two

The relationship between belief systems and academic performance in Social Studies was investigated. Belief system was the independent variable, while academic achievement in Social Studies was the dependent variable. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to analyze the relationship, with results presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Relationship between belief system and academic performance in social studies (n=345)

Variable	$\bar{X}$	Std. D	LS	r-value	p-value
Belief system	19.0	4.78			
	522	098			

			34	0.	.95	.00
			3	05	3	0
Academ	18.8	4.34				
ic	870	172				
perform						
ance in						
social						
studies						
(y)						

* $p < .05$

The study analyzed data from 345 respondents, examining the relationship between belief systems and academic achievement in Social Studies. The results are as follows:

- Belief System: Mean = 19.0522, Standard Deviation = 4.78098
- Academic Achievement in Social Studies: Mean = 18.8870, Standard Deviation of = 4.34172

The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis revealed:

- Degrees of Freedom: 343
- p-value: 0.000
- R-squared value: 0.953

Given the p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (typically 0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that belief system significantly influences academic achievement in Social Studies, with a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.953$) between the two variables.

Hypothesis three

Values system does not significantly influence academic performance in social studies. The major independent variable in this hypothesis is Values system while the dependent variable is academic performance in social studies. To successfully execute this statistical test, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was employed with values system as (x) while the dependent variable is academic achievement in social studies, as Y. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Relationship between belief system and academic performance in social studies (n=345)

Variable	$\bar{X}$	Std. D	LS	r-	p-
			df	val	val
				ue	ue
Values	18.2	4.27			
system	957	059			

			34	0.	.79	.00
			3	05	4	0
Academ	18.8	4.34				
ic	870	172				
perform						
ance in						
social						
studies						
(y)						

* $p < .05$

The study found a significant positive correlation between belief system and academic achievement in Social Studies, with a correlation coefficient of 0.794 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating that belief system significantly influences academic achievement..

Summary of finding

The findings of the study can be summarized as follows

1. Male pupils do not differ significantly from female pupils in terms of their academic performance in social studies.
2. Belief systems do significantly influence academic performance in social studies.
3. Values system significantly influence academic performance in social studies.

Significance of the study to academic stakeholders

The realm of social sciences has profound implications for understanding societal development. By cultivating critical thinking and research acumen, individuals can effectively analyze and address complex societal issues. This expertise is vital for informed decision-making and problem-solving. Exploring the intricacies of human societies reveals the interplay between historical, cultural, and political factors that shape our world. This nuanced understanding is essential for tackling development challenges and identifying effective solutions. Social sciences also foster democratic values and social unity by introducing individuals to governance, law, and civic duties. This knowledge empowers citizens to engage in public discourse and contribute to the betterment of society. The field of social sciences equips individuals with investigative skills, enabling them to research and analyse societal problems. This expertise is crucial for developing innovative solutions to complex issues. By examining societal patterns and trends, researchers can gain valuable insights into development dynamics and identify areas for improvement. This knowledge informs strategies for sustainable development and social progress. Ultimately, social sciences play a vital role in shaping a better future by cultivating critical thinking, research skills, and civic engagement. By empowering individuals to contribute to informed decision-making,

social sciences help address the complex challenges facing modern societies. The study's significance is multifaceted, offering valuable contributions to various stakeholders and aspects of education and societal development. Key implications include:

- i. Culturally responsive teaching: Insights into the relationship between cultural practices and academic achievement can inform tailored teaching strategies, enhancing learning outcomes.
- ii. Curriculum development: Findings can guide the integration of culturally relevant content, promoting a deeper understanding and appreciation of local culture among students.
- iii. Inclusive policies: Policymakers can advocate for policies recognizing diverse cultural backgrounds, fostering equity and social cohesion.
- iv. Parental and community engagement: Understanding cultural impacts on academic achievement enables parents and families to support education through culturally relevant experiences.
- v. Broader social implications: The study contributes to understanding complex factors shaping educational outcomes, informing interventions for educational equity, cultural preservation, and social development.

By exploring these implications, the study has the potential to positively impact education and community development in Calabar South LGA and similar contexts.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, here are some recommendations:

- i. Educators and policymakers should consider incorporating cultural practices and values into the Social Studies curriculum to enhance students' engagement and academic achievement.
- ii. Teachers should receive training on cultural awareness and sensitivity to effectively integrate cultural practices into their teaching methods.
- iii. Parental involvement: Parents and guardians should be encouraged to participate in their children's education, sharing their cultural values and practices to reinforce learning.
- iv. Policymakers should consider the significance of cultural practices in shaping students' academic experiences and outcomes when developing education policies.

Implications for development sociology

Developmental sociology, as an aspect of the social sciences, has far-reaching implications for development sociology. It provides individuals with essential skills to analyse and understand societal issues, fostering critical thinking and research methodologies. These skills are crucial for sociologists to examine contemporary problems and contribute to informed decision-making. By exploring the intricacies of human societies, social sciences promote a nuanced understanding of the historical, cultural, and political forces that shape our world. This understanding is vital for addressing the complexities of societal development and identifying effective solutions to pressing problems.

Social sciences also play a significant role in promoting democratic values and social cohesion. By introducing concepts of government, rule of law, and civic responsibilities, individuals are equipped with the knowledge necessary to engage in public affairs and contribute to the betterment of society. The field of social sciences is instrumental in equipping individuals with the ability to investigate, inquire, and discover information. These skills are essential for sociological research into societal problems and effective problem-solving, enabling individuals to develop innovative solutions to complex issues. Furthermore, social sciences provide a framework for understanding how societies are organized and function. By examining patterns of change and continuity, sociologists can gain valuable insights into the dynamics of societal development and identify areas for improvement. Ultimately, the study of social sciences is crucial for promoting sustainable development and addressing the complex challenges facing modern societies. By fostering critical thinking, research skills, and civic engagement, social sciences empower individuals to contribute to informed decision-making and shape a better future for all.

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