

Effects of Community Resources on Retention of Social Studies Concept and Students Academic Achievement in Upper Basic Schools in North Central, Nigeria

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Abstract- *This study investigates the effect of community resources on the academic achievement and retention of Social Studies concepts among Upper Basic School students in North Central Nigeria. Utilizing a quasi-experimental design with pre-test, post-test, and retention-test phases, 206 students from urban and rural schools were sampled and divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group received instruction supplemented with community resources, while the control group was taught through conventional methods. Findings revealed that students taught with community resources exhibited significantly higher post-test achievement scores and better retention of concepts compared to those without such resources. The results underscore the importance of leveraging community assets like cultural artifacts, local sites, and community leaders to enhance Social Studies education. Recommendations include increased government support for resource provision, teacher training, and fostering school-community partnerships to improve educational outcomes.*

Keywords: *Community Resources, Social Studies, Academic Achievement, Concept Retention, Experiential Learning, Nigeria Education, Rural-Urban Disparities*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a vital driver of societal progress and individual empowerment, playing a key role in fostering economic growth, cultural development, and civic engagement globally and within Nigeria. In the Nigerian context, Social Studies is a core subject designed to develop critical thinking, civic responsibility, and understanding of societal issues, especially in the diverse North Central Zone. The achievement and retention of Social Studies concepts among Upper Basic School students serve as important indicators of educational quality and effectiveness, influenced by various factors including community resources such as infrastructure, human capital, and technological tools (Adebayo & Yusuf, 2018; Okobiah, 2019). The region faces disparities in resource distribution, with urban areas generally better equipped than rural

schools, impacting students' academic performance and retention rates. Effective utilization of community assets like cultural artifacts, historical sites, and local leaders—can make Social Studies more relevant and engaging, thereby improving learning outcomes and retention (Adeoye et al., 2019). However, challenges such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and limited teacher training hinder optimal resource use, especially in rural settings. Integrating technology offers promise for enhancing learning experiences, but the digital divide remains a significant obstacle in parts of North Central Nigeria (Ogunlade & Akintunde, 2021).

To address these challenges, continuous teacher professional development and strong school-community partnerships are essential. Experiential learning activities like field trips and community projects help students apply knowledge in real-world situations, improving retention and civic skills (Ololobou, 2018). This study aims to explore how community resources influence students' academic achievement and retention of Social Studies concepts in Upper Basic Schools in North Central Nigeria, considering moderating factors such as gender and location. The findings are expected to provide insights for policy formulation and practices that can improve educational outcomes and support sustainable development through education (Nwachukwu & Ezeonu, 2018; Adekeye & Balogun, 2019).

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The poor academic achievement and retention of Social Studies concepts among students in Upper Basic Schools in North Central Nigeria remain a pressing concern, despite ongoing educational reforms, as evidenced by consistent underperformance in BECE results (2021-2025). A key factor contributing to this issue is the

underutilization of community resources such as libraries, museums, and local cultural assets, which have the potential to enrich learning and improve retention. However, challenges like inadequate infrastructure, limited teacher training, and socio-economic disparities hinder effective integration of these resources, leading to student disengagement and low understanding of civic and national values. This study seeks to examine the impact of community resources on students' academic success and retention, aiming to provide actionable insights to enhance Social Studies education in the region.

III. AIM AND OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of community resources on retention of Social Studies concept and the academic achievement of students in upper basic schools in North Central Zone of Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- i. find out if there is any effect in the Pre-test and Post-test mean scores of academic achievement scores of experiment group taught Social Studies students using community resources and control group of students taught without it in Upper Basic schools in North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the difference in the Pre-test and Post-test mean scores academic achievement of experimental group scores of Social Studies students taught using community resources and control group taught without community resources in Upper Basic schools in North and those taught without Central Zone of Nigeria?

Hypotheses

There is no significant difference between the mean academic achievement scores of Social Studies students taught using community resources and those taught without them in Upper Basic schools in North Central Zone of Nigeria

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Impact of Community Resources on Academic Achievement

Research indicates that the integration of community resources positively impacts students' academic achievement. Olaleye (2021) found that

students exposed to community-based learning activities demonstrated significantly higher post-test scores in Social Studies compared to those who relied solely on traditional classroom instruction. This enhancement is attributed to increased engagement, relevance of learning content, and opportunities for experiential learning, which reinforce theoretical knowledge (Eze & Nwachukwu, 2019).

Similarly, studies in Nigerian schools have shown that utilization of local cultural artifacts and historical sites enriches students' understanding of civic responsibilities and national values, leading to improved academic performance (Adebayo & Yusuf, 2018). For example, a study by Adeoye et al. (2020) revealed that field trips to local museums and cultural centers significantly boosted students' achievement in understanding Nigerian history and civic duties.

Community Resources and Retention of Concepts
Retention of Social Studies concepts is crucial for fostering active citizenship and lifelong learning. Community-based learning experiences have been associated with better retention rates among students. Oloolobou (2018) emphasized that experiential activities, such as community projects and field visits, enable students to internalize civic values and societal issues, leading to longer-lasting knowledge retention.

Furthermore, the involvement of community resources in instruction encourages active participation and personal connection to the subject matter, which are key factors in retention (Okafor & Chukwu, 2020). The use of local cultural festivals and community leaders as educational resources helps students relate learning to their immediate environment, thus fostering a sense of identity and civic pride that supports long-term retention.

Challenges in Utilizing Community Resources

Despite the potential benefits, several challenges hinder the effective utilization of community resources. Inadequate infrastructure, limited funding, and lack of trained personnel restrict access and integration (Ogunlade & Akintunde, 2021). Additionally, socio-economic disparities between urban and rural areas influence the availability and quality of community resources, often resulting in

unequal educational outcomes across regions (Nwachukwu & Ezeonu, 2018).

The digital divide also poses a significant barrier, as reliance on technological tools for resource access is limited in rural settings. Consequently, efforts to incorporate community resources must address infrastructural deficits and promote community-school partnerships to maximize their educational impact.

Theoretical Perspectives

Constructivist learning theory underpins the use of community resources, emphasizing active, experiential, and context-based learning (Vygotsky, 1978). According to this perspective, students construct knowledge through interactions with their environment, making community resources critical for meaningful learning in Social Studies.

V. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design with pre-test, post-test, and retention-test phases to investigate the effect of community resources on students' academic achievement and retention of Social Studies concepts in Upper Basic Schools within North Central Nigeria. Intact classes were assigned to experimental and control groups, with the experimental group receiving instruction supplemented with community resources, while the control group was taught through conventional methods.

The population comprised all Upper Basic School students in the region, totaling 35,879 students (BECE 2025). A sample of 206 students was selected using multi-stage sampling, including systematic, simple random, stratified, and purposive procedures, ensuring representation from both urban and rural schools.

Data were collected using the Social Studies Achievement Test (SAT), developed based on a detailed specification table covering topics such as national symbols, courts, hospitals, and rivers. The instrument's validity was confirmed through expert review, and its reliability was established via pilot testing, yielding a coefficient of 0.90.

The treatment involved administering pre-tests, applying the intervention, then conducting post-tests and retention tests four weeks later. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 27, employing descriptive statistics and independent t-tests at a 0.05 significance level to test hypotheses regarding differences in achievement and retention scores.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Presentation of Data

The data presented and analyzed in this section are the demographic data, and test of hypotheses.

Demographic Data

The characteristics of the subjects that constituted the sample in respect of groups and gender were presented

Table 1: Distribution of Sample According to Groups and Gender.

Group	Frequency	Percent	Gender		No of Students
			Male	Female	
Experimental	112	54.4	60	52	112
Control	94	45.6	46	48	94
Total	206	100.0	106	100	206

Table 1 presents the demographic distribution of the 206 students involved in the study. Of these, 112 students were assigned to the experimental group, making it the larger group, while 94 students were in the control group. Regarding gender, 106 students were male and 100 were female, with females constituting the slight majority of the overall sample.

Research Question 1: What is the difference in the Pre-test and Post-test mean scores academic achievement of experimental group scores of Social Studies students taught using community resources and control group scores of Social Studies students taught without community resources in Upper Basic schools in North Central Zone of Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Achievement Scores of Students Taught Social Studies using community resources and those taught without community resources.

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD
Pretest	Experimental	112	13.78	1.84
	Control	94	13.31	1.80
Posttest	Experimental	112	23.64	3.75
	Control	94	22.52	2.17

Table 2 presents the achievement scores of students taught Social Studies with and without community resources. Pretest results show the experimental group had a mean score of 13.78 (SD = 1.84), while the control group scored 13.31 (SD = 1.80). Posttest results indicate the experimental group improved to a mean of 23.64 (SD = 3.75), compared to 22.52 (SD = 2.17) for the control group. However, students taught with community resources

performed better, suggesting a positive effect of using community resources on achievement.

Test of Hypothesis

H₀₁ There is no significant difference between the mean academic achievement scores of Social Studies student's taught using community resources and those taught without them in Upper Basic schools in North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Table 3: T-Test Achievement Test Result

Variables	Group	Number	Mean	S D	Df	t-cal	Sig	Decision
Pretest	Experimental	112	13.78	1.84	204	1.83	.860	Accepted
	Control	94	13.31	1.80				
Posttest	Experimental	112	23.64	3.75	204	2.56	.000	Rejected
	Control	94	22.52	2.17				

Sig. at $p \leq 0.05$

Table 3 presents the results of a test conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference in the academic achievement scores of students in the experimental group (taught with community resources) and the control group (taught without community resources). In the pretest, a significance value of .860 (which is greater than the 0.05 level) indicates that there is a significant difference between the two groups' scores; therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. This suggests that there was a significant difference in the pre-test scores of the experimental and control group students. Conversely, in the posttest, a significance value of .000 (which is less than 0.05) indicates that there is no significant difference between the groups' scores; thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, after the intervention, there is no significant difference in the post-test scores of students in the experimental and control groups.

VII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study indicate that the use of community resources positively influences the academic achievement of Social Studies students in

Upper Basic schools. Specifically, students taught with community resources showed a significant improvement in their post-test scores compared to their pre-test scores, and their post-test performance was slightly higher than that of students taught without such resources. This is in line with Akinbode (2020) who found that integrating community-based resources into teaching significantly enhances students' engagement and understanding of Social Studies topics. Similarly, Ogunleye and Oladipo (2021) reported that resource-rich learning environments foster active participation and improve learning outcomes, especially in subjects that benefit from experiential and contextual learning approaches.

Furthermore, the initial similarity in pre-test scores confirmed that both groups started with comparable levels of knowledge, strengthening the validity of the findings that the observed improvements are attributable to the intervention—use of community resources. The significant difference observed in the post-test scores aligns with the findings of Ojo (2019), who emphasized that resource-based

learning strategies promote better retention and comprehension among students.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that the integration of community resources into the teaching of Social Studies significantly enhances students' academic achievement and retention of societal concepts in Upper Basic Schools within North Central Nigeria. The findings revealed that students taught with community-based resources performed better academically and retained concepts more effectively than those taught through traditional methods.

The evidence supports the premise that experiential and resource-rich learning environments foster active engagement, deepen understanding, and promote long-term retention of civic and societal knowledge. Despite the challenges related to infrastructural deficits and socio-economic disparities, the positive impact of utilizing community resources underscores their importance in improving educational outcomes. Therefore, it is evidence that effectively leveraging community assets such as cultural artifacts, local history, and community leaders serves as a valuable strategy in enhancing Social Studies education, cultivating civic responsibility, and fostering lifelong learning among students in the region.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. The government should provide adequate community resources and improve school facilities to support effective Social Studies teaching.
- ii. Regular training for teachers and collaboration with local community leaders and organizations are essential to facilitate experiential and resource-based learning.
- iii. Incorporate community-based activities and leverage technology to make Social Studies instruction more engaging and memorable for students.

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