

EFFECTS OF FIELD TRIP TECHNIQUE ON ATTITUDE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF UPPER BASIC STUDENTS IN SOCIAL STUDIES IN PANKSHIN, PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

PHILIP PETER DASUN
Postgraduate Student
Department of Social Science Education
Faculty of Education
University of Jos, Nigeria

DAUDA A. ARIYA (PhD)
Department of Social Science Education
Faculty of Education
University of Jos, Nigeria

&
NDAMPON P. KAZI (PhD)
Department of Social Science Education
Faculty of Education
University of Jos, Nigeria

Abstract

This study investigated the effects of field trip technique of teaching on the attitude and academic achievement of Upper Basic Education students in Social Studies in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State. The quasi experimental research design was adopted for the study. Two objectives and two research questions guided the study. The population was made up of 1,202 Upper Basic two students in Pankshin local government area of Plateau State. Purposive sampling technique was used to select two schools for the study; the sample used was 90 students from two intact classes. The two instruments used for the study are the Social Studies Field Trip Test (SOSFTT) and Social Studies Attitudes Questionnaire Test (SOSAQ). The reliability of the instruments was established using test-retest and Cronbach Alpha methods of reliability which yielded reliability indexes of 0.81 and 0.925 for the SOSFTT and SOSAQ respectively. The statistical tools used in answering the research questions were percentage, mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that field trip technique enhances students' understanding of the process of learning and improved students' attitudes towards social studies. It was discovered that field trip technique is effective in improving students' attitude and achievement. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that efforts must be made by educational stakeholders to utilize the use of field trip technique in teaching social studies in secondary schools, because the technique will enhance students' high achievement in the subject.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Attitude, Field Trip Technique, Upper Basic Education Students, Social Studies.

Introduction

The education policy and curriculum of every nation is designed to meet the national goals and objectives of each country. For instance, the education goals in Nigeria are to be achieved through the curriculum that is designed by the Nigeria Educational Research and Development Centre (NERDC) to cover the different subject areas and disciplines and within the disciplines some are considered core which every student offers, as enshrined in the National Policy on Education (NPE) document of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013). The core disciplines at the 9 year Basic Education Curriculum include; English Language, Arithmetic and Social Studies education among others. Social Studies Education is considered core among these subjects because its contents constitute the values, morals, beliefs and the desired way of behavior of the society the students are expected to acquire. The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2007) designed the curriculum to be taught from JSS 1 to JSS 3. Different teaching techniques are used to teach the subject at the secondary school level.

The field trip technique is one of the techniques used in Social Studies that encourage firsthand knowledge of the students about the subject contents. It involves visits to places outside the regular classroom and allows students to discover things themselves. It is in line of this thought that Ganiyu (2016) revealed that the field trip technique is comprehensive, systematic, tasking and expensive. Thus, most teachers of secondary schools are lazy and not creative to put forward a plan for the field trip. Ogunlade (2017) observes that teachers have lukewarm attitude towards using field trip and that most teachers in all fields including Social Studies do not use the technique as required, this could be due to their attitude towards the technique.

Attitude is the tendency to think, feel or act positively, negatively or neutral towards objects in the environment. Attitude is learned from society through experience and most often, it is affected by group norms. For instance, studies have shown that students' attitudes have a significant negative, positive or neutral effect on their achievement in Social Studies (Veloo, Nor & Khalid, 2015).

In spite of the relevance of Social Studies, students' academic achievement in the subject shows a growing decline. There is a continuous fluctuation in students' achievement in both internal and external examinations in Social Studies. The situation is evident in Plateau State where there is a continuous fluctuation in students' achievement in both standardized and teacher made examinations in Social Studies. For instance, the Social Studies Basic Education Certificate in Examination (BECE) 2016 results in Social Studies indicated that only 58% passed at distinction and credit levels leaving the remaining 42% with ordinary pass and fail while in the 2017 BECE, 51% had passes at distinction and credit levels and 49 ordinary pass and fail. Again, the 2018 result shows that 60% passed at distinction and credit level while the remaining 40% with ordinary passes and fail, though there is a significant increase in the students achievement but in 2019, the achievement reduced drastically with 50% pass at distinction and credit level and the remaining 50% fail (BECE, 2019). This result may not be unconnected to the attitude or technique adopted by teachers and the approaches used in teaching of the subject at Upper Basic level.

There is none or little research where field trip learning technique was employed particularly in Plateau State to improve Upper Basic students' achievement in Social Studies. It is still not

clear, which of the attitudes is responsible for the poor achievement in Social Studies. Therefore, whether the use of field trip learning technique will motivate students to learn and thereby helping to improve students' attitude and achievement in Social Studies is an issue the present study addressed. This present study therefore sets to determine the effects of field trip technique on attitude and academic achievement of Upper Basic School students in Social Studies in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Find out the nature of attitude of Upper Basic School Students towards Social Studies in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State.
2. Determine the achievement of Upper Basic School Students taught Social Studies using field trip technique and those taught with lecture method in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the Study:

1. What is the nature of Upper Basic School Students attitude towards Social Studies in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State before and after intervention?
2. What is the nature of academic achievement of Upper Basic School Students in Social Studies before and after intervention?

Theoretical Framework

The theory that formed the basis for this study is the Theory of Motivation also known as Operant Conditioning that was propounded by B. F. Skinner in 1953. The theorist used reinforcement and motivation to explain behaviour and why human beings and animals behave the way they do (Skinner, 1953). Skinner believed that learning is a deliberate action made by an animal or a person in order to survive. The theorist posited that the organism must first make the desired response and then reward is provided. The reward reinforces the response that makes it more likely to occur. However, any behaviour that is not rewarded tends not to be repeated. The theory focuses completely on the observed behaviour of an individual but overlooks the internal state.

This theory is relevant to this research in that the students' active involvement in the field trip planning, execution and the knowledge of learning exposure and fun will increase their attitude towards Social Studies content thus pay more attention to what is being taught in the subject. This will also motivate them to learn more especially when they are taken to beautiful and attractive places of good interest. Students are often excited at any learning activity taking place outside the classroom. Such activities will motivate the students to learn and not being conscious that they are learning.

The theory has direct relationship and connection to the study area because the field trip technique practically exposes learners to a new environment that stimulates their interest towards learning and thus facilitates their attitude towards learning. Students can learn faster during the field trip because they see practically what they are being taught and therefore develop good attitude towards learning.

Literature Review

Social Studies has no universally accepted meaning or definition. As a discipline, it has been conceptualized by so many scholars in different ways. Ololobou (2010) defines Social Studies as the integrated study of man as he battles for survival in both physical and social environments. Social Studies is also defined as a spiral ecological study which starts from the self, to the family, hamlet, village, town, district, LGA, State, Continent and world (Kazi, 2017). From the above various concepts and definitions of Social Studies, Social Studies can be seen as a discipline or area of study, centered on man and everything that occurs around him. It seeks to address man's common societal problems. Several methods of teaching can be used to teach Social studies in secondary schools. The Field trip technique is one of the methods that can be adopted to teach the subject.

Field trip is an excursion taken outside the classroom for the purpose of making relevant observation and also for obtaining some specific information (Buhari, 2017). Field trip is therefore a very valuable technique of teaching as it provides the most realistic means for studying real things and practical processes (Abdullahi, 2012). Field trip is an important method of teaching in Social Studies education; it involves taking the learners or students out of the classroom to a place or location of education importance or to a place related to the topic or aspect of the curriculum to be taught.

Attitude is generally seen as a disposition or state of mind or the reaction of an individual towards something. Attitude can alter every aspect of a person's life, including learning, students attitude on learning determine their ability and willingness to learn if negative attitudes are not altered, a student is unlikely to continue his education beyond what is required. Many variables affect students attitude towards learning, such could include technique adopted by the teacher, time of lesson, behaviour of teacher, among others. Attitude plays a crucial role in learning and achievement in Social Studies (Zan & Martino, 2007) hence it determines the students' performance in the subject. A study by Okon and Archibong (2015) revealed that students perform better in Social studies if their teachers have positive attitude towards the subject. It is worthy to note that the choice of technique used in relation to a particular topic affects students' performance. Thus achievement of students especially at the Upper Basic level in Social Studies is dependent on the method adopted.

Lesley and Gallo (2015) conducted a research on field trips and their effects on students' achievements and attitudes in Texas USA. The study adopted the survey research design with a population of 200 high school students. The findings indicated that there is no significant effect of field trip on students' achievement and attitudes. The outcome of Lesley and Gallo's study is related to the present study but it differed from the reviewed study because the reviewed study adopted survey research design while the present study adopted experimental research design.

Similarly, Zubairu (2017) conducted a research on the effects of field trip technique of teaching on the academic performance of Junior Secondary 2 students on their performance in Basic technology in Kaduna State. A posttest only experimental research design was used with a sample population of 50 control group and 50 experimental groups of two-intact classes that were used. Findings revealed that there is a significant effect of field trip technique of teaching on the academic performance of JSS 2 students as the control group did not perform as good

as the treatment group. This study differs from the current study because it used posttest only control group design and JSS 2 students while the current study used pre-test posttest control group design and Upper Basic 3 Students.

Another study conducted by Ogbuluijah (2019) on the impact of students' field trips on their academic performance in agricultural science in selected secondary schools in Rivers State adopted an Ex-Post Facto Design; while a sample size of 300 respondents was used. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics and Chi-square at 0.05. The result of the study revealed among others that Field trip enhances knowledge on agricultural processing methods. The reviewed study did not state the statistical tool used for analyzing the data collected in the study. The present study addressed that gap.

Methodology

The quasi experimental research type was adopted for the study, specifically, the non-equivalent pre-test, post-test, control group design. The design is suitable for a study where from the onset, full experimental control is lacking (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2017). The authors further explained that Quasi-experimental design employs at least two groups of research participants, one of which is the control group who receives either no treatment or alternative treatment, while treatment is given to the experimental group, in order to determine the effect of treatment on participants' post-test achievement. It is used when a study intends to make use of intact groups without interrupting the normal school setting.

The population of the study consisted of all the 1,202 Upper Basic 2 students from the 25 public schools in Pankshin Local Government Area. The population comprised 665 boys and 537 girls. The sample of the study consisted of 90 students from 2 intact classes from 2 public schools in Pankshin Local Government Area. Out of the 2 schools, one was used as experimental group and the other school as the control group.

Purposive sampling technique was used to obtain 2 public schools with comparable characteristics in Pankshin Local Government Area. The 2 schools that were sampled were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. Being a quasi-experimental study, all the Upper Basic two students offering social studies in the two schools were used in the study. The intact class in school A was used as experimental group while the intact class in school B was used as the control group because each of the schools has only one arm of upper Basic 2 class offering social studies. Two instruments were used for collecting data for the study. These were Social Studies Field Trip Test (SOSFTT) and Social Studies Attitudes Questionnaire (SOSAQ).

To ensure the content validity of the instruments, the judgment of four experts in the areas of Social Studies Education, Research, Measurement and Evaluation units were sought using the University of Jos Faculty of Education expert evaluation form. In this study, the reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha method and a coefficient of 0.925 was obtained. Any coefficient between 0.7 and above is generally accepted as a sign of acceptable reliability. The study used both descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.5 software was used to analyze the data collected. Percentages, mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions.

Results

Research Question One: What is the nature of students' attitude towards Social Studies in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State before and after intervention? The result was computed and presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Pre-test Attitude of Students toward Social Studies in the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Attitude			Total
	Negative	Neutral	Positive	
Experimental	51(85%)	6(10)	3(5%)	60(100%)
Control	42(80.8%)	4(7.7%)	6(11.5%)	52(100%)

Results in Table 1 revealed the pretest attitude of Upper Basic students towards Social Studies in the experimental and control groups in Pankshin of Plateau State. The result shows that 51 (85%) students in the experimental group had a negative attitude, 6 (10%) had neutral attitude, while 3 (5%) had positive attitude towards Social Studies before exposure to treatment. Also, 42 (80.8%) students in the control group had negative attitude, 4 (7.7%) of the students had neutral attitude, while 6(11.5%) of them had positive attitude towards Social Studies. Table 1 shows that both the experimental and control groups had negative attitude towards Social Studies before treatment. It indicates that they were at the same level of attitude before exposure to treatment. The results were computed and presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Post-test Attitude of Students toward Social Studies in the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Attitude			Total
	Negative	Neutral	Positive	
Experimental	4(6.7%)	2(3.3%)	54(90%)	60(100%)
Control	45(86.5%)	4(7.7%)	3(5.8%)	52(100%)

Results in Table 2 revealed the posttest attitude of Upper Basic students towards Social Studies in the experimental and control groups in Pankshin of Plateau State. The result shows that 4 (6.7%) out of the 60 students in the experimental group had a negative attitude, 2 (3.3%) had neutral attitude, while 54 (90%) had positive attitude towards Social Studies after exposure to treatment. Also, 45(86.5%) out of the 52 students in the control group had negative attitude, 4 (7.7%) of the students had neutral attitude, while 3(5.8%) of them had positive attitude towards Social Studies. Table 2 shows that majority of the students in the experimental group had positive attitude in the posttest as against the control group who still recorded negative attitude toward Social Studies.

Research Question Two: What is the nature of academic achievement of students in Social Studies before and after intervention? Results were computed and presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Pretest and posttest achievement of Upper Basic Students in the experimental and Control Groups

Group	N	Before		After		Mean Gain	$\bar{x}$ - difference
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Experimental	60	42.87	10.28	70.52	19.07	27.65	19.37
Control	52	34.62	13.43	42.90	11.23	8.28	

Results in Table 3 revealed the pre-test and post-test mean score of Upper Basic students in the experimental and control groups. From the result, in the experimental group the post-test mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 70.52, SD = 19.07) is higher than the pre-test mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 42.87, SD = 10.28) with a mean gain of 27.65, indicating that there was improvement in the achievement of students after treatment. Also, for the control group the mean score was 34.62 and a standard deviation of 13.43 in the pretest. However, in the post-test the mean score of students rose to 42.90; SD = 11.23. The findings show that students in the experimental group had a higher mean score (70.52) after treatment using field trip technique than those in the control group (42.90) who were not given treatment with a mean difference of 19.37. This means that in the pre-test, the Upper Basic students in both groups had a poor performance, but after the intervention, the experimental group performed better than the control group. It can be deduced that field trip technique do improve students achievement in Social Studies.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from research question one which sought to find out the nature of students' attitude towards Social Studies in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State before and after intervention revealed that majority of the students in the experimental group had positive attitude towards Social Studies in the posttest as against the control group having majority of the respondents still having negative attitude towards Social Studies. It then means that field trip technique is effective in changing the attitude of Upper Basic school students positively. This is in line with the works of Lesley and Gallo (2015) and Okon and Archibong(2015), who found field trip experiences to enhance students' understanding of process of learning and improved students' attitudes towards different subjects.

Findings from research question two which sought to find out the achievement of students taught Social Studies using field trip technique and those taught with lecture method revealed that field trip technique was found to be effective in improving the achievement of Upper Basic school students in Social Studies as indicated in the Post-test result that there is significant difference between the achievements of students in the experimental and control groups in Social Studies in favour of the experimental group. The findings is in line with that of Zubairu (2017) who found out that field trip technique was effective in improving achievement in various subjects including social studies.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study which revealed that attitude affects academic achievement of Students and students perform better in Social studies with the use of field trip technique, it can be concluded that students and teachers attitude towards social studies should be encouraged. Furthermore, field trip technique should be used appropriately in the teaching

and learning of Social Studies. This implies that with the right attitude and teaching method, students will perform better in social studies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Social studies teachers should be motivated and trained by the relevant agencies. This will improve their attitude towards the subject, once teachers have a positive attitude towards Social Studies, students will also have a positive attitude towards the subject, which will ultimately improve academic achievement by students.
2. Efforts must be made by educational stakeholders to utilize the use of field trip technique in teaching social studies in secondary schools. This technique will enhance students' high achievement in the subject.

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