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EFFECTS OF GENDER ON UPPER BASIC SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the Effects of Gender on Upper Basic Social Studies Students' Academic Achievement in Educational Field Trips Learning Environment in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The design of the study was the non-equivalent pre-test post-test control group type of quasi experiment. The population of the study consisted of junior secondary school students in Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria numbering 26,322. Also, 60 students consisting of 30 males and 30 females were purposively sampled from JSSII in the following schools which were tagged "experimental group": Government Junior Secondary School, Aba and Government Junior Secondary School Muchiya, Sabon-Gari. The data collection instrument was Social Studies Achievement Test (SOSAT). The content and construct validity was ascertained by experts in Social Studies, language and test and measurement. The reliability coefficient index power of the instrument stood at 0.81 determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The data analysis tools were mean and standard deviation used in answering the question posed while t-test independent samples was used in testing the null hypothesis postulated at 0.05 alpha. The study found no significant difference between the mean academic achievement scores of male and female students taught Social Studies using educational field trip. In the light of the foregoing, the study recommended that the use of educational field trip instructional strategy should be adopted in co-educational system as the strategy has proven to be gender-friendly in enhancing upper basic students' academic achievement in Social Studies teaching in Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria.

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Introduction

Many classroom teachers agree that experiential learning outside of the traditional classroom offers a valuable addition to the student's learning experience, even if the gains made by students are more effective than content-related (Melber, 2008).One type of informal learning experience, more commonly known as educational field trip, is valued by many educators for its ability to increase interest and enhance the information that is being taught inside the classroom. Research has indicated that field trip can be educationally effective from both a cognitive and affective standpoint (Falk, 1983; Koran, 1989; Tuckey, 1992; Marshdoyle 1982; Tofield 2003). Educational field trip according to Shakil, Faizi and Hafeez (2011), is a progressive method of learning by which the students goes through the necessary learning experiences under the leadership and guidance of the teacher. There are various types of educational field trip which are conducted by the institution accordingly such as: Local trip, Community trip, Tour or Journey, Imaginary tour, inter-school visit and individual trip (Sampath, Panneerselvam & Santhanam, 2006). However, Aggarwal (2003) describes that educational field trip is also helpful for the teachers to clarify, establish, co-relate and coordinate accurate concepts, interpretations and appreciations and enable him to make learning more concrete, effective, interesting, inspirational, meaningful and vivid. Thus it can be said that educational field trip is helpful in completing the triangular process of learning that is motivation, clarification and stimulation (Salihu, 2015).

For most of human history, it is an established fact that children have learned by being with their parents or placed in apprentice situations with employers. In this regard, field trip was the norm, until the invention of formal education (Salihu, 2015). In the ancient time before crest, the Greeks take their children to the different places where children participated in different activities to develop their physical fitness. The state name "Sparta" was famous for their physical training. The same is the case with "Athens" where children are trained physically very toughly. Buttressing the above statement, Aggarwal (2008) describes that over the years, educators and philosophers like Comenius (1592-1670), Rousseau (1782-1852), Pestalozzi (1746- 1827), Herbart (1746-1841), Froebel (1782-1852), Spencer (1820-1903), and Dewey (1859- 1952) have pointed out the need for reinforcing abstract learning with concrete experiences. In western countries "England" is a good example for training physically their children. Apart from England other European countries like France, Germany, Canada and Italy also organized educational field trip at every educational level (Salihu, 2015).

Previous writings and studies on educational field trip (Farmer, Knapp and Benton, 2007; Flexer and Borun, 1984; Lisowski and Disinger, 1991; Mackenzie and White, 1982; Salihu, 2015 have indicated that when effectively organised and coined toward attaining a particular lesson objectives it would have enormous potential to positively affect students' learning. It would also provide real world settings in which students are challenged to apply knowledge learned in the classroom. During filed trip session, students enjoy the less formal setting in which the learning takes place (Braund and Reiss, 2006; Falk, 1983; Flexer and Borun, 1984).

In this regard, students may become highly motivated about their school subjects (Michie, 1998; Storsdieck, 2001; Salihu, 2015). Additionally, Farmer, Knapp and Benton, 2007; Mackenzie and White, 1982 assert that the effects of this trip on students may continue for many months to years after the outing. Field trip gives students the plenty of opportunities to make observations which is a big source of enhancing learners' mental development (Shakil, Faizi & Hafeez, 2011). It is helpful in developing the complete personality of the students like their physical, mental, social and emotional development. Educational field trip gives students the opportunity to have first-hand experiences and to explore world. It helps students to interact with what they are learning (Salihu, 2015).

Academic achievement entails students learning outcome over a given period of time. Academic performance by Scortt (2012) refers to how well students are attaining their tasks and studies. Also Okorie (2014) academic achievement is the ability to study and remember fact and being able to communicate one's knowledge verbally or written on paper. Grades are one of the indicators of students' academic achievement. There are complains that teachers of social studies are still accustomed to traditional methods of teaching especially the lecture and didactic techniques despite the availability of learner-centered and activity-based teaching techniques which encourages effective communications and transactions between teacher and the students (Salihu, 2015).

Various authors have expressed diverse opinions with regards to the effect of gender and location on students' academic achievement. One of the most topical issues in the current debate all over the world observes Abdu-Raheem (2012) has been that of gender differences and academic achievement among students in schools. Raju (2013) found that girl students performed academically better than their boys' counterparts in their mean scores in social studies. Peter (2014) found that gender (male/female) had no significant effect on students' achievement in Social Studies and finally, result showed that there was significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies. Research studies conducted at the secondary school level indicate that there exists a gender difference in science self-efficacy (Gafoor (2014).In addition, Gafoor (2014) asserts that constructivist approaches that influence classroom environment will help cognitive development in both male and female students to reduce gender differences in their academic achievement in all areas including Social Studies.

One of the most topical issues in the current debate all over the world observes Abdu-Raheem (2012) has been that of gender differences and academic achievement among students in schools. "Over the years, there has been a growing awareness of the role of women at home, in schools, and community in general. However worries have equally been expressed about the role of women in the political, social, cultural, psychological, economic, spiritual, scientific and technological development of the nations. A major area of concern has been the effects of gender differences on academic achievement and retention of students in secondary schools" (Abdu-Raheem 2012). In a related development, Shiaki (2005) in his study on attitude of students towards educational statistics revealed that, the anxiety level of males was marginally lower than that of the female students in educational statistics. However, Shiaki's study also revealed that male students scored higher than the female students. In another development Abdu-Raheem, (2012) findings indicated that there was no significant differences between the achievements mean scores of male and female students in the

experimental and control groups. The study also revealed no significant difference between the retention mean score of male and female students in the experimental and control groups. It was concluded in the study that gender does not play any significant role on students' achievement and retention in social studies. Similarly, Raju (2013) in his study titled "Impact of gender and locality on academic achievement of secondary school students in social studies" revealed that girl students performed academically better than their boys' counterparts in their mean scores in social studies.

However, despite the level playing ground given to Nigerians by the constitution and policy statements in the national policy on education, gender and geographical locations of students to certain extent has continued to affect the academic success of students especially in social studies. In most cases female folk are at the receiving end because of culture and stereotype attached in some quotas to their education or their attempt to compete with their male counterparts. The male folk are always the most favoured; and their bid to succeed academically is always supported by all and sundry. Hence in most cases, male students performed academically well compared with their female counterparts. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the Effects of Gender on Upper Basic Social Studies Students' Academic Achievement in Educational Field Trips Learning Environment in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to examine the effects of gender on upper basic Social Studies students' academic achievement in educational field trips learning environment in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study's specific objective is to:

i. Find out the mean post-test academic achievement scores of upper basic students taught Social Studies using educational field trip in relation to gender;

Research Question

The study answered the following question:

i. What is the difference between the mean post-test academic achievement scores of upper basic male and female students taught Social Studies using educational field trip?

Null Hypothesis

From the research question raised, the following null hypothesis is stated at 0.05 level of significance:

$H0_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean post-test academic achievement scores of male and female upper basic students taught Social Studies using educational field trip;

Methodology

Research design as opined by William (2006) provides the glue that holds the research work together. It is used to structure the research, to show how all of the major parts of the research work-the samples or groups, measures, treatments or programs, and methods of assignment-work together to try to address the central research questions. The design of

the study was the non-equivalent pre-test post-test control group type of quasi experiment. The population of the study consisted of upper basic students in Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria numbering 26,322. Also, 60 students were purposively sampled from JSSII in the following experimental schools: Government Junior Secondary School, Aba and Government Junior Secondary School Muchiya, Sabon-Gari. However, Olayiwola (2007) stated that 30 participants of each group (experimental and control) are considered adequate for this kind of study.

The data collection instrument was Social Studies Achievement Test (SOSAT). The content and construct validity was ascertained by experts in Social Studies, language and test and measurement. The reliability coefficient index power of the instrument stood at 0.81 determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The data analysis tools were mean and standard deviation used in answering the question posed while t-test independent samples was used in testing the null hypothesis postulated at 0.05 alpha. According to Ekeh (2003), t-test is used for determining the significant difference between two mean.

Treatment Procedure

The students were pre-tested before receiving any kind of treatment by the researchers. The post-test were administered after the experimental have undergone their separate treatment-Educational Field Trip. The outcomes of the various encounters in the form of test scores were then subjected to appropriate statistical analysis which assisted the study to answer its research question and test the study's null hypothesis.

The researcher and the research Assistant were allowed to use JSSII Social Studies lesson periods with the close collaboration of the subject teachers from the sampled schools. The students were pre-tested using the designed teacher-made tests. This was aimed as ascertaining the students' prior knowledge on the topics or the test items. Moreover, after adequate pre-trip preparations, the researcher with the permission of the school took the students participants to a nearby physical surrounding for an educational field trip to have first-hand information and concrete direct experience with natural resources available in the environment. This was aimed at giving the students first-hand information and practical experience on the topic chosen. Thereafter, a post-trip lecture follows and post-test was immediately administered to the students. It was a post-test for the experimental group. The test papers were marked over (100). The test scores for the pre and post tests for both groups were then collated for comparison sake using appropriate statistical procedure.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the difference between the mean post-test academic achievement scores of upper basic male and female students taught Social Studies using educational field trip?

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on the Mean Post-test Academic Achievement Scores of Upper Basic Students taught using Educational Field Trip

Gender	N	Mean	Std.Dev	Mean Diff
Male	30	67.83	7.79	-0.70
Female	30	68.53	7.71	

Details in Table 1 showed the mean post-test academic achievement scores of male and female students who were taught using educational field trip. The table showed that their mean academic achievement scores were 67.83 and 68.53 for male and female upper basic students respectively. The mean difference is -0.70 in favour of female students. This implied that there was no much difference on the basis of gender the academic achievement of upper basic students who were taught using educational field trip in Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria.

$H0_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean academic achievement scores of male and female upper basic students taught Social Studies using educational field trip method.

Table 2: Independent t-test Samples Statistics on the Mean Academic Achievement Scores Social Studies students taught using Educational Field Trip in relation to Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std.Dev	Df	t-cal.	Sig (p)	Decision
Academic Achievement	Male	30	67.83	7.79	58	0.35	0.73	H_{02} Retained
	Female	30	68.53	7.71				

Calculated p > 0.05, calculated t < 1.96 at Df58

The result emanating from Independent sample t-test statistics in Table 2 showed that there was no significant differences between the mean post-test academic achievement scores of male and female students who were taught with educational field trip instructional strategy. This was due to the fact that the calculated significance (p) value of 0.73 is higher than the 0.05 alpha level of significance while the calculated t value of 0.35 is lower than the 1.96 critical t value at Df 58. In addition, their calculated mean performances were 67.83 and 68.53 for male and female upper basic students respectively. Therefore, the null hypotheses are hereby retained.

Finding

The study found that there is no significant difference in the mean post-test academic achievement scores of upper basic students taught Social Studies using educational field trip in relation to gender. This implied that gender does not significantly affect the academic achievement scores of Social Studies students when taught using educational field trip in upper basic schools in Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Discussion

The study found that there is no significant difference in the mean academic achievement scores of upper basic students taught Social Studies using educational field trip in relation to gender. This implied that gender does not significantly affect the academic achievement scores of Social Studies students taught using educational field trip in upper basic schools in Zaria

Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria. The current finding corroborates those of Abdu-Raheem, (2012) which indicated that there was no significant differences between the achievements mean scores of male and female students in the experimental and control groups. The current finding also corresponded that of Peter (2014) which found that gender (male/female) had no significant effect on students' achievement in Social Studies. Also, on the contrary, Shiaki (2005) study shows that, male students scored higher than the female students. In addition, the current study also goes contrary to that of Raju (2013); which indicated that girl performed academically better than their boys' counterparts in their mean scores in Social Studies.

Conclusion

In the light of the foregoing, it is concluded that educational field trip instructional strategy is gender-friendly as it does not affect Social Studies students' academic achievement scores in upper basic schools in Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested as a result of the findings of the study:

i. Social studies teachers should be encouraged to adopt educational field trip in teaching Social Studies especially where the demand for such trips in unavoidable. This will assist in enhancing students' academic achievement in upper basic schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria;
ii. Kaduna State Government should provide all the necessary logistics for conducting regular educational field trip by teachers of Social Studies. This will greatly assist in enhancing students' academic achievement.
iii. The use of educational field trip instructional strategy should be adopted in co-educational system as the strategy has proven to be gender-friendly in enhancing upper basic students' academic achievement in Social Studies teaching in Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria.

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