

# *An Evaluation of the Implementation of Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum in Rivers State, Nigeria*

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**Abstract** – The study investigated the evaluation of the implementation of Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum in Rivers State. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population was made up of 274 social studies teachers from the 262 public junior secondary schools in the state. The sample size was 120 social teachers selected through simple random sampling techniques (60 from urban and 60 from rural schools). The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test–retest method and a coefficient of 0.87 was attained. In analyzing the data collected, proportion (5) was used to interpret the research questions while z- test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the study showed that some proportions of social studies teachers do not make adequate use of instructional materials, poor method of teaching were adopted, evaluation techniques appropriate for social studies instruction were not employed and the prescribes syllabus for social studies were covered. Based on the above findings, it was recommended among others that qualified teachers be recruited, facilities and teaching materials be provided while teachers be re- trained to update their knowledge on the subject, so as to adopt appropriate method of teaching and evaluation techniques.

**Keywords** – Social Studies, Junior Secondary School, Curriculum implementation

## I. INTRODUCTION

To a large extent, the realization or attainment of quality education in a given country depends on the effectiveness of the curriculum. On the other hand, the in effectiveness of a particular curriculum may be caused by a change in the people’s way of thinking, attitude, environment as well as technological advancement in a particular society. To Mezieobi and Birabil (2017), all societies in the contemporary globalized village developed or developing are in a state of flux as a consequence of the rapidity of social change which any viable curriculum must at every point in time, be responsive to. They further added that the most significant quality or feature of any worthy social studies curriculum is its capacity to reflect contemporary trend and development via the instrumentality of near regular, if not regular curriculum evaluation and its accompaniment- curriculum revision, if need be, for enhanced curriculum efficacy.

The introduction of social studies as a subject on the Nigerian school curriculum was seen as a welcomed development. The subject was made compulsory at the basic education level for national development. In the words of Birabil (2020), this was

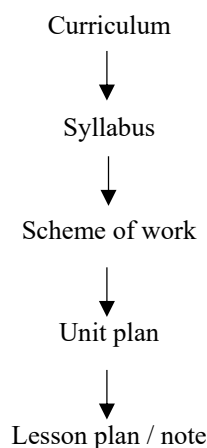
consciously done to develop problem –solving skill, attitude and values as well as knowledge that can enable the students socializes well into the society.

Mezieobi (2016) was apt to support the above view that, the introduction of social studies in schools were to make social studies to have the ability to investigate, analyze, criticize and understand the society they live in. ever since then a lot of efforts have been made to implement the subject in Nigerian schools. Although, there seems to be some implementation problems.

Obiefunayokoro and Iwumadi (2010) agreed that environmental factor, inadequate instructional materials and poor administration were some of the challenges of curriculum implementation. A study by Jekayinfa (2013) discovered that human and materials resources that were inadequate affects the successful implementation of social studies. Above all Mezieobi and Uzoagba (2009) identified some impediments to the effective implementation of social studies curriculum at the junior secondary schools in Nigeria to be:

1. Unqualified teaching personnel.
2. Ineffective classroom interactive session
3. Interference of social problems in the society
4. Poor methods of lesson delivery
5. Less emphasis on values
6. Lopsided evaluation techniques
7. Books out of the tune with social studies objectives
8. The negligence of the use of instructional materials by teachers.

The above-mentioned problems are not peculiar to Rivers Sate or Nigeria. globally, the curriculum in various countries of the world has undergone several radical innovations of changes dice to the nature of the society, to address various issues. New ideas and current issues in the education process are often introduced to render existing system obsolete and new goals are been set up to meet up the present knowledge explosion. Ibebuike, cited in Obili, Oparah & Ajeka (2017) could not relent any effort to support that “for these changes to be noticed in these learners, the implementation process must be duly adhered to, thus:”



The above illustration put the social studies teacher at the center stage in any curriculum implementation process. As Gbamanja (1997) rightly point out, “without meaningful instructional process, learning will not take place and he objectives of the curriculum will not be achieved. Then, the advice put forward by Ezewu in Mezieobi, Mezieobi and Uzoagba (2009) become relevance”. He illustrated that social studies teachers needed in the new millennium are those well informed and have inert ability to adjust to new approaches, others are problem- solving capacity, creative potentials and infusing creative spirit in the learner, including social studies teachers sufficiently provided with the tools of learning and ability to keep the changes in the scientific world.

Uchechucwu and Nwosu (2016) observed that the successful implementation of the curriculum depends greatly on the teacher since he is one in charge of communicating the curriculum to the learner through his pedagogical skills, classroom motivational function, apt understanding of the learner and the learning process without meaningful instructional practices, learning will not take place, and the objective of the curriculum will not be achieved (Gbamanja 1997). Therefore, the success or failure of the curriculum, other things being equal, depends to a large extent, on what the teacher does in the instructional process, which is the implementation stage of the curriculum.

Ideally, if the teacher is not involved in the decision-making process in the initial stages of curriculum planning, his commitment at the implementation stage could be low. The low commitment could arise from ignorance of the actual philosophy and objectives of the curriculum and sometimes due to non-conformity or lack of support for the content which he is completed to implement (Gbamanja 1997). Therefore, social studies teachers should be involved in the entire process for maximum productivity.

## **II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The introduction of social studies as a core subject at the junior secondary school in Nigeria was seen as a welcomed development because of its lofty goals as objectives. Unfortunately, a lot of social upheavals which social studies was intended to eradicate continue to persist in the Nigerian society. For instance, election rigging, corruption, command clashes, disunity, religious intolerance, youth restiveness, political thuggery etc. could it be that social studies curriculum lack implementation strategies or what could be held responsible?

Again, there has been a lot of public outcries over the dearth of curriculum implementation and evaluation studies in Nigeria. perhaps, it was on this note that Ali (1992) observed that “curriculum evaluation and its antecedents are yet to receive considerable research focus in Nigeria”. a bulk of the studies which Ali points to as dealing with curriculum evaluation issues in Nigeria focus on science curriculum. Thus, this study is therefore, driven by the need to evaluate the implementation of social studies curriculum in Rivers State, Nigeria.

## **III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The main purpose of the study was to evaluate the implementation of social studies curriculum in Rivers State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. To find out if qualified social studies teachers are teaching the subject.
2. To determine whether the teaching methods adopted by social studies teachers are appropriate.
3. To ascertain if social studies teachers in the urban and rural schools make adequate use of instructional materials teaching the subject.
4. Can we say that social studies teachers in urban school strictly cover the proposed syllabus for the subject?
5. Do social studies teachers in the urban and rural schools uses appropriate curriculum evaluation devices.

## **IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the following research questions were drawn up.

1. Do we have enough qualified teachers teaching social studies in schools?
2. Are the teaching methods adopted by social studies teachers appropriate?
3. Do social studies teachers in the urban and rural schools make adequate use of instructional materials?
4. Can we say that social studies teacher in rural and urban schools cover the proposed syllabus for the subject than those in rural schools
5. Do social studies teachers in the urban and rural schools make use of appropriate curriculum evaluation devices?

## **V. HYPOTHESIS**

The following null hypothesis were formulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the qualification of social studies teachers teaching in urban and rural schools.
2. There is not significant difference between social studies teachers in the urban and rural schools on the appropriate use of teaching methods.
3. There is no significant difference in the usage of instructional materials for the teaching of social studies between the teachers in urban and rural schools.
4. There is no significant difference between social studies teacher in the urban and rural schools as to whether they strictly cover their proposed syllabus.
5. There is no significant difference between social studies teacher in the urban and rural schools in the use of appropriate curriculum evaluation devices.

## VI. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design is a method that involves collections and analysis of data from a large sample from a firm population, designing certain features of the sample as they are at the same time of the study which are of interest to the researchers, without manipulating independent variables of the study (Nwankwo, 2016). The population of the study consisted of all the 274 social studies teachers of the 262 public junior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size of the study was made up of 120 social studies teachers selected through simple random sampling techniques (60 teachers from urban and 60 teachers from rural schools). The instrument for the study was a questionnaire developed by the researchers. The questionnaire has two sections: A and B section. A contains demographic information of the respondent while section B is a close-ended questionnaire designed along the modified Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4 point), Agree (3 point), Strongly Disagree (2 point) and Disagree (1 point).

The face and content validity were carried out by two experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test-retest method and correlation coefficient of 0.87 was attained with Pearson Product Moment Correlation. In analyzing the data collected, proportion (%) was used to interpret the research questions while z-test of proportions was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

## VII. RESULTS

The results of the analysis are presented in tables according to the research question and hypothesis that guided the study.

**Research Question One:** Do we have qualified social studies teachers teaching in urban and rural schools?

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference between the qualification of social studies teachers teaching in urban and rural schools.

Table 1: Differences in the proportion of teachers' qualification in urban and rural

Location	Proportion	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Urban Teachers	6.38 (0.51)	2.00	1.96	Significant
Rural Teachers	6.74 (0.59)			

Results on table 1 shows a computed z-cal value of 2.00 and a z-crit value of 1.96. Since the z-calculated exceeds the z-critical value, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the proportion of the qualification of teachers in urban and rural schools.

**Research Question Two:** Are the teaching methods adopted by social studies teachers in the urban and rural schools appropriate?

**Hypothesis two:** There is no significant difference between social studies teacher in the urban and rural schools on the use of teaching methods.

Table 2: Differences in the proportion of teachers on the appropriate use of teaching methods.

Location	Proportion	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Urban Teachers	4.77 (0.43)	7.00	1.96	Significant
Rural Teachers	806 (0.36)			

From the above table 2, the computed z-cal value is 7.00 while a z-crit value of 1.96 was attained. Since the z-calculated value is more than the z-critical value, the null hypothesis was rejected. So, we can therefore, conclude that there is a significant difference in the proportion of urban teachers make use of appropriate teaching methods than their counterparts in the rural schools in Rivers State.

**Research Question Three:** Do social teachers in the urban areas make adequate use of instructional materials than those in the rural schools?

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference in the adequate use of instructional materials by social studies teachers in the urban areas than those in the rural schools.

Table 3: Differences in the proportion of teachers on adequate use of instructional materials.

Location	Proportion	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Urban Teachers	624 (0.68)	0.38	1.96	Significant
Rural Teachers	628 (0.65)			

On the table 3, the computed z-cal is 0.38 and that of z- crit was 1.96. since the z-calculated value is below the z-critical value, the null hypothesis the accepted ad we can conclude that there is significant difference in the proportion in the use of instructional materials between teachers in urban and rural schools in Rivers State.

**Research Question Four:** Can we say that social studies teachers in urban school strictly cover the proposed syllabus for the subject?

**Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant difference between social studies teachers in the urban and rural schools on coverage of the proposed syllabus for the subject.

Table 4. Differences in the proportion of teachers on adequate coverage of the proposed syllabus.

Location	Proportion	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Urban Teachers	144 (0.51)	3.00	1.96	Significant
Rural Teachers	194 (0.59)			

Table 4. reveals that the computed z-cal value was 3.00 while that of z-crit value was 1.96. since the z-calculated value is more that the z- critical value, the null hypothesis is therefore, rejected and we can conclude that there is significant difference in the proportion of social studies teachers on the level of coverage of the proposed syllabus for the subject.

**Research Question Five:** Do social studies teachers in the urban and rural schools uses appropriate curriculum evaluation devices?

**Hypotheses Five:** There is no significant differences between social studies teachers in the urban and rural schools on the use of appropriate method or techniques of evaluation.

Table 5: Differences in the proportion of teachers on the use of appropriate curriculum evaluation devices.

Location	Proportion	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Urban Teachers	6524 (0.57)	2.50	1.96	Significant
Rural Teachers	3000 (0.59)			

Table 5 above shows that the computed z-cal value was 250 and the z-crit value was 1.96. since the z-calculated value is more than the z-critical value. The null hypothesis is rejected and we can conclude that there is significate difference in the proportion or urban and rural teachers on the method and techniques of evaluation.

### **VIII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The result of this study revealed no significant difference in the proportion of social studies teachers in the urban and rural school based on their qualifications.

This finding is in line with view of Uchechukwu and Nwosu (2016) who observed that the successful implementation of curriculum depends greatly on the teacher. Although, a study conducted by Apedende (2017) shows that teacher qualification does not influence or impede the use of project method in instruction.

Similarly, the study also revealed a significant difference in the proportion of social studies teachers on the use of appropriate methods for teaching in favour of teachers in the urban schools.

This finding is in agreement with the idea of Uchechukwu and Nwosu (2016) that observed that the successful implantation of the curriculum depends greatly on the teacher since he is in charge of communicating the curriculum to the learner through his pedagogical skills. Also, an interesting observation from the data shows a significant difference in the proportion of teachers on the appropriate use of instructional materials for social studies teaching in favour of teachers in the urban schools.

This discovery is in line with the observations of Obilo, Oparah and Ajeka (2017) that “environmental factor, inadequate instructional materials or poor administration are challenges of curriculum implementation”.

Furthermore, the study revealed a significant difference in the proportion of social studies teachers on the extent of coverage of the proposed syllabus of the subject. The findings of this study is consistent with the observation of Nuri and Edy (2020). Also, Ichoma (2020), established that “it is the interaction of the learner and the curriculum contents under the guidance of the teacher in order to acquire desired knowledge, attitudes, abilities and skills”.

Finally, the result of the study shows a significant difference in the proportion of social studies teachers on the use of appropriate curriculum evaluation devices on the subject. The findings are in support by Naglea and Salma (2017) and Mezieobi and Mezieobi (2019) who reported that reliability of curriculum evaluation results in social studies are obtained by using the instrument and procedures Wile Ukuiji in Williams and Olele (2015) noted that a good curriculum evaluation device must be valid, reliable, objective, useable and a continue process.

### **IX. CONCLUSION**

The study has shown the proportion of teachers faced with some fundamental challenges in implementing social studies curriculum in Rivers State. And these challenges have significant impact on the teaching and learning of the subject as well as the society at large. However, it is pertinent that social studies teachers rise to their feet and provide an enabling environment through their wealth of knowledge to do all the needful that are capable of promoting a hitch free implementation process.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Sequel to the findings of the study the following recommendations are posited.

1. Qualified teachers of social studies should be engaged in the teaching of the subject.
2. Government and other stakeholder should assist in the provision of facilities and instructional materials for the teaching of social studies.
3. Workshop, conference and refresher courses be organized to update the knowledge of social studies teachers.
4. Social studies curriculum should be expanded and the subject extent to senior secondary level of education in Nigeria.
5. Social studies teachers should be trained and exposed to modern method and techniques of curriculum implementation and evaluation.

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