

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION ON BUSINESS/ ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND ECONOMIC RECESSION IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of Social Studies instruction on business/economic conditions and economic recession in Kwara State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to examine awareness, effects and influence of Social Studies instruction on business/economic activities in Kwara State. The study adopted descriptive design. The sample for the study was one hundred fifty (150) teachers selected using simple random sampling technique in selected schools. A questionnaire titled "Influence of Social Studies Instruction on Business/Economic Activities and Economic Recession Questionnaire (ISSIBEAERQ)" was used for the collection of data. The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and rank order. The findings of the study revealed that Social Studies instruction made people to be aware of economic recession because through Social Studies both students and parents were informed about economic recession facing the country. The effects of economic recession on teaching and learning of Social Studies include lowered morale of Social Studies teachers, students' inability to purchase textbooks and hindrance of effective teaching and learning of Social Studies in upper basic schools. Social Studies teachers teach and train individuals on how to cope with business/economic activities during economic recession; parents are encouraged through Social Studies instruction to be economically active and productive during the recession and making judicious use of economic opportunities and empowerment programme available in the society. Based on the findings, recommendations were made among others that Social Studies teachers should continue to encourage parents and other stakeholders to simplify the economic situations of the people through creation of awareness and sensitization.

Keyword: Impacts, Social Studies instruction, Business/economic activities,
Economic recession

Introduction

Education is the greatest tool for the development of any nation, the major objectives of sending children to schools is to learn some basic skills. Knowledge and beliefs necessary for the development of some specific goals and experiences that enable them to cope with economic situation in the society. Observations have shown that in even level of schooling whether at the primary, secondary or tertiary of education, there are basic facilities which make it possible for the school to attain her desired goal. Among these basic facilities are purchasing power, better business/economic activities of individuals and financial aspect of schools of children. Education refers to all those experiences of the individual through which knowledge is acquired. It therefore can be regarded as a social process whose purpose is to bring about development of the individuals in all aspects of life particularly it has been seen as the main vehicle for rapid development and survival of individuals in economic situations.

Social Studies is concerned with human behaviour such as how people earn their living and make a rational decision purposely to improve their standard of living. It is a discipline that studies human interaction with social and physical environment. Social environment are social institutions in which economic institutions are inclusive while physical environment are available renewable and non-renewable resources in society that are utilised by human to improve their well-being. Social Studies is a social science that enables learners to make rational decision on effective use of available resources in order to drive maximum satisfaction in their social and physical environment and like any science subject, the reasoning procedure in Social Studies is methodological, its analysis is systematic and the validity of its assumption can be tested. Thus, an attempt has been made to integrate the theoretical foundation of the subject with their practical application for effective internalization of its content in human life.

Social Studies are one of the core subjects studied at the upper basic school level under the new National Policy on Education (2013). This curriculum had been designed by the Comparative Education Study and Adaptation Centre (CESAC) to meet the requirement of socio-economic and political life of Nigerians on the contemporary issues and global best practices. The guiding principle of this curriculum is to equip learners with the basic knowledge and skills that will enable them to better appreciate the nature of economic institutions in any society. In the light of this philosophy, the following are the set objectives for the Social Studies curriculum according to FME (2013).

Social Studies as a discipline creates and sensitises public about social, political and economic issues in Nigeria and develop in learners appropriate skills that enable them cope with the situations. Consequently, the purpose and content of the subject change in accordance with changes in social, economic and political situations in Nigeria. The content of Social Studies are continuously redesigned to include contemporary issues such as National Economy, Economic Sectors, Corruption, Economic Institutions, Financial Institutions, Socio-economic problems and Effective utilization of resources among others in

upper basic Social Studies Curriculum (Ukamaka & Mezieobi).

Learners will be making social science courses choices all their lives as consumers and citizens and voters and they will need some capacity for critical judgment. Thus it is of great importance that upper basic Social Studies curriculum is very interesting, enlightening, revealing and addresses important contemporary issues in the country for students to gain meaningfully from the experiences, knowledge and skills for real life activities. Whether students have gained meaningfully or not from the experience, knowledge and skills provided through Social Studies curriculum can only be determined through the character building and personality development of students in the society.

Gibson and Paulley (2018) reported that in coping with recession, economic downturns and education facilities formulate the criteria for setting tuition fees especially private schools were early victims of recession and the steepest tuition increases in the public sector occurred during recessions as stated seek to shift their cost to users including students and their families. Callan believes that higher education absorbs larger cuts when revenue short falls are allocated among states, services and their costs are shafted by school to the students. The main goal of teaching and learning is to bring about the desired behavioural change in learner. Given the high value placed on economic in the Nigeria secondary school curriculum, the need to teach it effectively through effective method is indispensable as a result of recession.

During recession news about companies closing down, unemployment figure takes center stage while the families dealing with recession suffer often quietly. Parents as well as educational institutions work hard just to stay afloat. Inadequate facilities and human resources in the school as a result of recession contribute immensely to the learners' poor performance and makes teachers not to cover the syllabus adequately. Ukamaka and Mezieobi (2018) submitted that non-coverage of prescribed syllabus due to unstable economic situation in the country affects not only the attainment of learning outcomes but also effective teachers' implementation of the curriculum.

Inadequate of teachers in the schools especially private schools as a result of recession will affect large number of students in a classroom with a teacher that is to say more than eighty (80) students in the classroom with a teacher which will have a serious problem for the learners to assimilate whatever the teacher is teaching them. Many schools are still expected to lay off teachers to core subjects' areas such as English, Mathematics and Social Studies as one of the social science. And not only are fewer teachers teaching more students in Social Studies but they are doing it with less help. More than half of private schools will be expecting to lay off teachers in 2022. The recession leads to unemployment this affect some homes that cannot take good care of their children in feeding and providing stationary that facilitate and enhance effective teaching and learning in schools (Christian, 2020). This affects the purchasing of parents to provide basic needs of students. Consequently, it declines performance of students in Social Studies.

Economic recession is a significant decline in economic activity spread across the economy, lasting more than a few months, normally visible in a real Gross Domestic

Product (GDP), real income, employment, industrial production and whole sale-retail sales. Recession is a general down turn in an economy. It is associated with high unemployment, slowing Gross Domestic Product and high inflation. According to Egwaikhide (2016) recession is when the economy declines significantly for at least six months. Economic recession can be defined as a negative real GDP growth rate for two consecutive quarters (say first and second quarters) judging by the above definition Nigeria is experiencing economic recession currently. Since her first and second quarters growth in 2021 are 0.36% and -1.5%.

Obviously, Nigeria's economy has gradually shifted from the level of economic buoyancy to the level of economic recession due to the totality of certain factors and if care is not taken. It will gradually shift from economic recession to total economic melt-down which can be catastrophic heartbreaking and deadly in nature Nigeria. Moreover, things turned particularly austere in 2021. When the long impregnated recession was given birth to. Accordingly, its unemployment rate has drastically risen and looks relatively worse to the extent of underemployment most especially for Nigerian youths (Elsby, et al. 2019). Obviously prices of goods and services continually increase by over 100% meanwhile the purchasing power (Naira) was devalued.

Recession may be a new story to many young Nigerians, but it is not a new thing to the old men in Nigeria and the world. During recession, news about companies closing down, unemployment figures take centre stage while the families dealing with the recession suffer, often quietly. People and firms work hard just to stay afloat. While many families do their best to carry on as if nothing is wrong with the economy, recessions can have a profound effect on day-to-day lives and children education is not left alone schools (Christian, 2020). In Nigeria, Education is feeling this sharply whether students, teachers, lecturers, researcher, library worker, admin clerk, canteen worker, or proprietors, they all have their share in recession.

The recession is on Nigeria and federal government was promising that it would technically end in 2021. Education budgets are persistent decreased every year as government gradually reduces the national budget for the sector. For instance, national budget for education sector in 2020 was 6.7% of the total budget while in 2021, 5.68% was budgeted for the sector. The persistent declining in the budget will eventually have a great impact on not only the curriculum implementers but also other stakeholders like parents and students at least in the short term. Consequently, regulation of school activities will be likely more to minimize the influence of recession on schools by shifting the burden on parents or students especially in private schools.

The last quarter of 2021 indexes showed that the rate of inflation is increasing at an increasing rate. Job losses are at a high rate, couple with federal government policies and 2021 budget. In Nigeria, more than 90% of school revenue comes directly from government in public schools and parents and guardians in private schools. The school revenue is not enough and may not be sufficient in the implementation of the curriculum.

Teachers are curriculum implementers and agents of social change. Teacher is a

human resource who imparts in learners not only the knowledge but also inspiration to live. Much of what students learn from their teachers is not only detailed in a syllabus but also expatiate the content of Social Studies with live experiences for better internalization of the knowledge gained and experiences. This will help the learners grow as individuals and responsible for imparting some of life's most important knowledge and skills that enable them contribute positively to the development of their society.

Social Studies instruction show students, individual and society how to become independent and cope with economic situation. Teachers carefully guide and intervene when necessary since school is as much a place of social as well as academic learning that sensitise the society on contemporary issues and educate them on preventive measures. Teacher provides first information and knowledge on relevance of Social Studies to learners' lives, their careers and futures. Teachers do not only show children the best decision but they also show how they come to that conclusion. By so doing, the students will be able to apply that reasoning whenever they are in a similar situation. In time of recession life, students will be able to think about solutions to their life problems rather than running to parents or peers when confronted with life challenges. Knowledge and skills gained in Social Studies instruction help in the transformation process. For this consideration, Social Studies curriculum is made up of basic content that will improve learners' skills and experiences in preparation for their roles as agents of societal change. With the experiences gained in Social Studies, learners can also influence their parents and society positively on how to cope with economic situations. The significance of the teachers in curriculum implementation cannot be underestimated. Okunloye (2006) explained the curriculum taught at school bears the objective of transmitting knowledge and skills to students, who at the end could support change within their household and later at the societal level and role of teachers as curriculum implementers cannot be underestimated.

Teachers are exceedingly important in ensuring that students obtain the adequate skill and knowledge which will support their personal and social change". From the above, it becomes clear that teachers receive students from diverse home background who differ in knowledge, skills, and behaviour and mould them into educational people that contribute immensely in the development of the society. For any society to be transformed during recession, teacher must be prosperous in knowledge which can be accessed, sought and received through Social Studies instruction. Therefore, education is considered the first step for every human activity as it plays a vital role in the development of human capital as well as human capacity building.

Academic achievement or attainment is determined in larger society through internalization and application of ideas and experiences gained in Social Studies to solve human problems and to enhance effective and meaningful social interaction among individuals in any of social institutions in the society while in the school, students' success in learning specified curriculum content is revealed by continuous assessment and examination (Olokooba, 2020). The roles of parents, teachers and other stakeholders in education play on the attainment of educational goals are so important that without them students' achievement or academic performance is at stick. The business/economic

activities and purchasing power of the stakeholders on the provision of facilities are exceedingly important and teachers who serve as intermediary between schools and society play vital roles in ensure better well-being of the students. Therefore, this study investigated influence of Social Studies instruction on business/economic activities and economic recession in Kwara State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine influence of Social Studies instruction on business/economic activities and economic recession in Kwara State. Specifically, the study investigated:

- a. Roles of Social Studies instruction on the awareness of economic recession in the society;
- b. Effect of economic recession on teaching and learning of Social Studies in upper basic schools; and
- c. Influence of Social Studies instruction on business/economic activities of people during economic recession.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study:

1. What are the roles of Social Studies instruction on the awareness of economic recession?
2. What are the effects of economic recession on teaching and learning of Social Studies in upper basic schools?
3. What is the influence of Social Studies instruction on business/economic activities of people during economic recession?

Research Method

The study adopted descriptive research survey. The survey is a study where peculiar characters of a population are studied through sample, which is demand to be a representative of the population. This research design usually employs the use of questionnaire, or interview to gather information about the target population. However, for the purpose of this survey the researcher intends to employ the use of questionnaire as an instrument to gather information on the target population under study. The population of the study was all basic school teachers in Kwara State due to large population, a sample size of upper basic Social Studies teachers was target population. A sample of one hundred and fifty upper basic Social Studies teachers in public schools was selected using stratified sampling for the schools and purposive sampling techniques out of 1,564 Social Studies teachers and 317 public upper basic schools in the state.

The instrument used by the researcher was questionnaire; the questionnaire was titled "Influence of Social Studies Instruction on Business/economic Activities and Economic Recession Questionnaire (ISSIBEAERQ)". The questionnaire was designed to measure

some of the assumed roles of upper basic school Social Studies instruction on economic recession in Kwara State. The instrument used for the collecting of data in this study is a researcher-designed questionnaire that was divided into two sections: The first section contains personal data or demographic data of the respondents. The second section contains questionnaire on the roles of upper basic school Social Studies instruction on awareness of economic recession, effects of teaching and learning of Social Studies as well as influence of upper basic school Social Studies instruction on business/economic activities of people in Kwara State. The questionnaire was submitted to two experts in the test construction and measurement for construct validity. The corrections and suggestions are taken into accounts in preparing of the final questionnaire. Its reliability was determined using test-retest technique and a reliability index of 0.74 was obtained.

The questionnaire was administered by the researchers themselves by going to the selected schools. The researcher sought permission from the Principal of the schools. The teachers' consent was sought on participation in the study. The completed questionnaires were returned on the spot. This process was repeated in other sampled schools. The data that were collected for the study were subjected to descriptive statistical technique. Research questions one to three were answered using mean, standard deviation and rank order.

Results

Research Question 1

What are the roles of Social Studies instruction on the awareness of economic recession?

Table 1: Roles of Social Studies Instruction on the Awareness of Economic Recession

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
1.	Many Social Studies teachers are actively involved in informing both students and parents about economic recession facing the country.	1.46	0.40	1 st
2.	Majority of the Social Studies teachers in secondary schools are unconcerned and passive about the economic recession going on in Nigeria.	1.06	0.24	3 rd
3	A large numbers of Social Studies teachers held village square meeting and seminars for the parents on principles of coping with economic recession.	1.02	0.14	4 th
4	Social Studies teachers did their best to equip their students with basic skills to cope with economic recession.	1.09	0.21	2 nd
5.	Social Studies teachers are well equipped with social skills to cope with economic recession.	1.01	0.32	5 th

Results on Table 1 showed five items on the roles of Social Studies instruction on the awareness of economic recession. Item 1 which stated that "Many Social Studies teachers are actively involved in informing both students and parents about economic recession facing the country" was ranked first (1st) with mean scores of 1.46 and standard deviation of 0.40. Item 4 which stated that "Social Studies teachers did their best to equip their students with basic skills to cope with economic recession" was ranked third (2nd) with mean score of 1.09 and standard deviation of 0.21. Items 2 which stated that "Majority of the Social Studies teachers in secondary schools are unconcerned and passive about the economic recession going on in Nigeria" was ranked first (3rd) with mean scores of 1.06 and standard deviation of 0.24.

However, the least of all the roles of Social Studies instruction on the awareness of economic recession is item 5 which stated that "Many Social Studies teachers are well equipped with social skills to cope with economic recession" was ranked fifth (5th) with mean score of 1.01 and standard deviation of 0.32. Therefore, the most important roles of Social studies instruction on the awareness of economic recession are items 1, 4 and 2 on table 1.

Research Question 2

What are the effects of economic recession on teaching and learning of Social Studies in upper basic schools?

Table 2: Effects of Recession on Teaching and Learning of Social Studies

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
1.	Economic recession has hindered effective teaching and learning of Social Studies in upper basic schools.	2.10	0.67	3 rd
2.	Non-availability of instructional materials for teaching content of Social Studies in upper basic schools is caused by recession.	2.07	0.72	4 th
3.	Economic recession does not boost the morale and enthusiasm of Social Studies teachers to effectively teach the subject in upper basic schools.	2.25	0.71	1 st
4.	The students' ability to understand, retain and apply social basic skills as taught by the teacher is negatively affected by economic recession.	2.06	0.74	5 th
5.	The students' inability to purchase textbooks, notebooks and other materials needed for Social Studies lesson in the classroom is caused by economic recession.	2.15	0.70	2 nd

Data on Table 2 showed that the mean of each item was ranked to determine the effects of economic recession on teaching and learning of Social Studies in the schools. Items 3 which stated that "Economic recession does not boost the morale and enthusiasm of Social Studies teachers to effectively teach the subject in upper basic schools" ranked

first (1st) with mean scores of 2.25 and standard deviation of 0.71. Item 5 which stated that "The students' inability to purchase textbooks, graph books and other materials needed for Social Studies lesson in the classroom is caused by recession" ranked third (2nd) with mean score of 2.15 and standard deviation of 0.70. Items 1 which stated that "Economic recession has hindered effective teaching and learning of Social Studies in upper basic schools" was ranked first (3rd) with mean scores of 2.10 and standard deviation of 0.67.

However, the least of all the effects of Economic recession on teaching and learning of Social Studies in the schools is item 4 which stated that "The students' ability to understand, retain and apply economic principles as taught by the teacher is negatively affected by economic recession" was ranked fifth (5th) with mean score of 2.06 and standard deviation of 0.74. Therefore, the most important effects of economic recession on teaching and learning of Social studies are items 3, 5 and 1 on table 2.

Research Question 3:

What is the influence of Social Studies instruction on the business/economic activities of people during economic recession?

Table 3: Influence of Social Studies Instruction on the Business/economic activities of People during Economic Recession

S/ N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
1.	Most of the parents are encouraged by the Social Studies instruction to be economically active and productive during the economic recession.	2.23	0.76	2 nd
2.	Through the Social Studies teachers' resourcefulness and concern for the people conditions, many empowerment programmes were introduced to the parents and the society during economic recession.	1.91	0.74	5 th
3.	No single Social Studies instruction makes a positive economic influence on the economic welfare of the parent and the people during economic recession.	2.07	0.75	4 th
4.	Many Social Studies teachers prefer to relate and train women on economic opportunities and empowerment programme available in the society.	2.15	0.70	3 rd
5.	Majority of Social Studies teachers involve in community gathering to advise and encourage parents on business/economic activities during economic recession.	2.25	0.74	1 st

Results on Table 3 showed influence of Social Studies instruction on business/economic activities of people. Items 5 which stated that "Majority of Social Studies teachers involve in community gathering to advise and encourage parents on business/economic

activities during economic recession" ranked first (1st) with mean scores of 2.25 and standard deviation of 0.74. Item 1 which stated that "Most of the parents are impacted by the Social Studies instruction to be economically active and productive during the economic recession" ranked third (2nd) with mean score of 2.23 and standard deviation of 0.76. Items 4 which stated that "Many Social Studies teachers prefer to relate and train women on economic opportunities and empowerment programme available around rather than men" was ranked first (3rd) with mean scores of 2.15 and standard deviation of 0.70.

However, the least of all the influence of Social Studies instruction on the business/economic activities of people is item 2 which stated that "Through the Social Studies teachers' resourcefulness and concern for the people conditions, many empowerment programmes were introduced to the parents and the society during economic recession" was ranked fifth (5th) with mean score of 1.91 and standard deviation of 0.74. Therefore, the most impactful among the items are items 5, 1 and 4 on table 3.

Discussion

Findings of this study revealed that The Social Studies instruction made people aware of economic recession because through Social Studies instruction both students and parents were informed about economic recession facing the country. This finding concurred with finding of Eze and Mezieobi (2018) who reported that teachers are aware of the economic recession in the country and play important role in educating other stakeholders such parents and encouraging on cushioning the effect of recession in the society

This study also found out that the effects of economic recession on teaching and learning of Social Studies include lowered morale and enthusiasm of Social Studies teachers, students' inability to purchase textbooks and hindrance of effective teaching and learning of Social Studies in upper basic schools. This finding is in line with finding of Eze and Mezieobi (2018) discovered that non-coverage of prescribed syllabus due to unstable economic situation in the country affects not only the attainment of learning outcomes but also effective teachers' implementation of the curriculum. The finding is also consistent with finding of Okunloye (2004) who found out that good classroom environments are those with adequate equipment for teaching and learning, with motivated teachers whose standard teaching methodologies were encouraged and have adequate facilities in the classroom. In other words, schools that do not meet this standard may not be able to provide good learning environment for proper learning to take place.

In this study, the finding also showed that Social Studies teachers involve in community gathering to advise and encourage parents on business/economic activities during economic recession, parents are encouraged through Social Studies instruction to be economically active and productive during the economic recession and training women on economic opportunities and empowerment programme available around them. This finding is consistent with finding of Gibson and Paulley (2018) who reported that teachers do not only show students the best decision but they also show how they come to that conclusion. By so doing, the parents and students will be able to apply social skills to their basic needs and make rational decision on the daily challenges facing in coping with social

problems and economic situation in the Society. In time of economic recession, parents and students will be able to think about solutions to their life problems rather than running to parents or peers when confronted with life problems.

Conclusion

From the results of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. Social Studies instruction made people (students and parents) to be aware of economic recession because through Social Studies instruction they were informed about economic recession facing the country. The effects of economic recession on teaching and learning of Social Studies include lowered morale and enthusiasm of Social Studies teachers, students' inability to purchase textbooks and hindrance of effective teaching and learning of Social Studies in upper basic schools. Social Studies teachers involve in community gathering to advise and encourage parents on business/economic activities during economic recession, parents are encouraged by the Social Studies instruction to be economically active and productive during the economic recession and training women on economic opportunities and empowerment programme available in the society.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Social Studies teachers should be more encouraged to simplify the economic situations of the people through creation of awareness and sensitization.
2. Economic recession is a national economic problem that all stakeholders at the Federal, State, Local Governments as well as private sectors should contribute financially and materially to enhance teaching and learning in schools.
3. Regular workshops, seminars, and in-service training should be organized for Social Studies teachers to enable them acquire the necessary skills and update their knowledge on the economic situations, system and activities of Nigeria and this would give them more opportunities to impact on other stakeholders in education.

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