

ASSESSMENT OF HISTORY CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study assessed History curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised all History teachers in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. The sample consisted of 49 History teachers selected using total enumeration sampling technique. Multistage sampling technique was used for this study. Four states were selected out of the six states in Southwestern Nigeria using simple random sampling technique. Secondary schools where History is being offered were selected using the purposive sampling technique. From each school, all teachers of History were selected using total enumeration sampling technique. One research instrument, History Teachers' Observation Schedule and Checklist (HTOSC) was used for data collection. Data collected were subjected to analysis using frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The results revealed that the lecture and presentation methods are observed to be the most commonly used instructional strategies by the History teachers in Southwestern Nigeria. Furthermore, the instructional materials available to all selected History teachers in Southwestern, Nigeria are Textbooks, Chalkboards, Maps, Charts, and Computer with only Chalkboard /Whiteboard being adequate and others not adequate. It is concluded from the study that after its reintroduction into the Nigerian educational system, History curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria requires urgent attention as there still exists inadequacy in the quantity and quality of instructional materials and most History teachers do not make use of appropriate teaching strategies in the implementation of the curriculum.

Keywords: *History, Curriculum implementation, Assessment and Secondary schools*

Introduction

History is an academic field that studies the past, using the knowledge of the present to project productively into the future. History has been recognized all over the world as a source of enlightenment and development. As a collective memory of the past of a nation, History attempts to bring to the fore the salient and significant part of events that occurred in the past, which could be utilized in building a prosperous national future (Atkinson & Walmsley, 2010). This is why in every human society, no matter the level of advancement, priority has been placed on optimum bequeathing of a "useable past" from generation to generation (Giese, 2000). For instance, in ancient cultures, every kingdom had its own History laureate whose task it was to remember the past. Modernity has also been influenced greatly by the enhanced production of History. This is assisting nations (who have placed the needed emphasis on historical studies) in their tasks of nation building, promoting national consciousness, the flowering of moral leadership and ensuring overall national development (Osuntokun, 2012).

History education plays an important role in all-round development of an individual. As a collective memory of the past of a nation, History attempts to bring to the fore the salient and significant part of events that occurred in the past, which could be utilized in building a prosperous national future (Osuntokun, 2012). As Dwarko (2007) puts it, History helps nations to understand the positions they belong and the hopes of the future based on the past. European Christian missionaries who introduced western formal education from around 1842 through 1846 understood the essence of History education and consequently integrated History curriculum alongside Arithmetic, Reading, Writing and Religious education into the learning curriculum. By 1861, when the European colonial masters became more interested in education within their colonies, they established several ordinances and commissions to regulate education within these colonies. In Nigeria, in particular, different

ordinances and commissions from the 1882 Education Ordinance till the 1959 Ashby Commission on education, the History curriculum was integrated into the Nigerian educational system. At the 1969 National Conference on curriculum, which was the first indigenous curriculum conference in Nigeria, the History curriculum was integrated as such, the History subject was made a core subject to be taught in schools. On the move to enshrine History as a subject into its educational system, the Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (Omoruyi & Epelle, 2004), included it as one of the core subjects to be taught at the secondary school level. It is a part of the Arts and Humanities subject whose aim is inculcating historical knowledge and values in learners.

History teaching has had a long been established all over the world as an important subject which is designed to furnish the student with the skills and dispositions to enable him/her fit well into society. History according to Oppong (2009) must be taught in a way which will stimulate the patriotic tendencies, critical and analytical thinking skills, and deep national awareness of the learner. And the only way such can be accentuated is through the use of diverse methods. In ensuring that History is taught properly in schools, different methods that have been evolved by different people to make History teaching and learning a life-changing and rewarding experience. The methods include inquiry methods, discussion methods, lecture methods, demonstration method, discovery or deductive method, group method, simulation games and dramatization method.

Ndemba (2014) argues that there is a significant relationship between the availability and use of physical facilities and result oriented curriculum implementation. In the same vein, Emeh, Isangadighi, Asuquo, & Agba (2011) found out that lack of physical facilities impedes the potency of education as an instrument of sustainable development in Nigeria. Since poor physical facilities lead to low curriculum implementation, the National Education Research Development Council (NERDC) did not leave to chance the required minimum physical facilities for History education curriculum implementation in schools. Some of the recommended instructional materials for teaching History are adequate teachers, large classrooms, furniture for students/staff, buses for excursion, departmental and school libraries, boardroom, toilets for staff and students, health facilities, teaching aids, chairs, desks, tables, chalkboards, libraries, laboratories and the school buildings themselves etc. (NERDC, 2007). Given the growing emphasis on community-based education and the dwindling economic circumstances which have occasioned the inadequate supply of instructional materials and facilities to our schools, some of the curriculum resources most relevant to History teaching and learning in the Nigerian situation are Chalkboard, Graphic materials such as charts of all kinds (Flip charts, Strip charts, simple line charts, Tree charts, Time and Sequence charts, Stream charts and Time lines, graphs (simple bar graphs, subdivided bar graphs, pictorial graphs, pie graphs) maps, atlases, diagrams, cartoons, comics, posters and bill-boards), Reading Materials, Audio-Materials, Audio-Visual Materials .

Recent developments in the teaching and learning of History however shows that it is a dying subject and discipline in Nigeria. Traditionally, many secondary schools in Nigeria taught History as one of the subjects in the curriculum. However, in recent years, the subject is offered as an optional subject in many schools, and has been replaced by Government and Civic Education and in schools where it exists, it is on steady decline and the study of History has suffered a great deal of apathy in the Nigerian educational system (Olutayo, 2015). Similarly, despite the important place of History as part of secondary school subjects, History is still trying to find its feet among other school subjects. This is manifested by the unpleasant state of affairs of the subject in most schools and the growing irrelevance of the subject in Nigerian tertiary institutions (Maigida, 2016).

According to Clark (2011) challenges in History education relates mostly to the curriculum. It was found that it was a global phenomenon in relation to the arts. In an overview of economically developing countries, including Nigeria, if there is any subject that has suffered a great deal, it is History education. Oppong (2009) opines that part of the challenges facing History stems from the waning interest of students as a result of the perceptions which students, parents and the general public have about the nature of the subject and its importance. For example, “most people see History as a subject whose understanding is gained through the recall of facts rather than analyzing and critically sifting out information to really understand historical happenings”. In other words, History is a story with a predetermined plot to be memorized but not interpreted.” Shemilt (2000) concurs and notes that constructivist research into students’ historical thinking suggests that students perceive the learning of History to be the presentation of a uniform picture of the past. It is, therefore, worthy to re-echo the importance

of History as a way of strengthening its position in the school curriculum. Efforts to maintain and strengthen the place of History in the school curriculum require such a justification. Consequently, it can be asserted that the onus of effective teaching/learning of History falls on the curriculum and its level of implementation. Consequently, this research attempts to assess History curriculum implementation in selected secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

The Nigerian National Policy on Education (2004), recognizes the place of History education in the development of the learner. Historians have also expressed a continuous concern regarding the implementation of the curriculum and its contents in schools and are continually advocating for a turn around to use pragmatic and proactive approaches in ensuring that History as a subject is given a more appropriate place in the school curriculum. The reasons are not far-fetched; this is because History is a subject that promotes the development of the human mind as well as the society at large. It is a subject that has been used with other subjects to teach learners.

Studies have, however, revealed that History as a school subject continues to wane significantly, and the recent attitudes of pupils, students, schools and the general public toward the study of History is very appalling. The fallout from this reveals an advocacy for improved teaching and learning procedures and the need for an assessment of History curriculum implementation in secondary schools. The study sought to find out if it is tandem with national goals and aspirations and also to find out the reason for its declining state in affairs as a school subject despite the recognition it has been given by the Nigerian Federal Government which has enshrined it in its policy document the NPE.

Olutayo (2015) asserts that there has been a steady decline in the enrolment and performance of students in History in secondary schools. Research has ascribed the decline to inadequacy in quantity of human and material resources at the initial instance, but there have been no recent studies since it has been reintroduced into the learning curriculum in Nigeria. However, this study fills that gap. Therefore, this study assesses the implementation of History of curriculum in secondary schools in South-western Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

This study assesses History curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to;

- i. assess the instructional strategies used by History teachers in the implementation of History curriculum in secondary schools in the Southwestern Nigeria; and
- ii. ascertain the quantity and quality of instructional resources for teaching History in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of this study, these following research questions were asked;

- i. What are the instructional strategies used by History teachers in the implementation of History curriculum in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria?
- ii. how adequate are the instructional materials for the implementation of the History curriculum in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopts the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised all History teachers in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. Southwestern Nigeria is one of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria, consisting of the following six states of Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, and Osun. The teachers were selected from secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria where History is being taught. The sample for the study consisted of 49 History teachers from the selected secondary schools using total enumeration sampling technique. This study made use of the multistage sampling technique. Four states which are Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti were selected out of the six states in Southwestern Nigeria using simple random sampling technique. From each state, 14 secondary schools were selected using stratified random sampling technique using school ownership as stratum (two federal, six state and six private secondary schools). A total of 56 secondary schools where History is being offered was selected using the purposive sampling technique. From each school, all

teachers of History were selected using total enumeration sampling technique. Federal owned secondary schools were a total of 8 schools with 10 History teachers (20.41%), state owned secondary schools were a total of 24 schools with 15 History teachers (30.61%) and privately owned secondary schools were a total of 24 schools with 24 History teachers (48.98%).

One research instruments, History Teachers’ Observation Schedule and Checklist (HTOSC) was used for data collection. HTOSC was used to observe and assess instructional strategies used by History teachers in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria and also to observe and record quantity and quality of instructional resources for teaching History in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria. Face and content validity were used to ascertain the validity of the instrument. The instrument was validated by expert judgments of specialist in the field of curriculum development from the department of Arts and Social Science Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Furthermore, the research instrument was pilot tested among respondents outside the study area. The responses were subjected to reliability analysis. The Cronbach alpha obtained for the HTOSC is 0.764, thus, it was found to have internal consistency. The data collected was coded, scored, computed and analyzed using appropriate descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean, standard deviation to provide answers to the two research questions raised in this study. Specifically, research question one and two were answered using frequency counts and percentages as well as mean and standard deviation.

Results

Research Question One: What are the instructional strategies used by History teachers in the implementation of History curriculum in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria?

In answering research question one, the observed instructional strategies used by History teachers during classroom instructions were indicated on the observation checklist and subjected to descriptive statistics. The result showing the descriptive analysis of the observed instructional strategies used are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics showing instructional strategies used by History teachers in the implementation of History curriculum in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria

SN	OBSERVED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES USED FOR TEACHING HISTORY	YES		NO	
		F	%	F	%
1.	Lecture method	43	53.09	38	46.91
2.	Discussion method	38	46.91	43	53.09
3.	Cooperative learning group method	21	25.9	60	74.1
4.	Simulation method	23	28.4	58	71.6
5.	Discovery method	0	0.0	49	100
6.	Problem solving method	0	0.0	49	100
7.	Role play method	0	0.0	49	100
8.	Drama method	29	35.8	52	64.2
9.	Didactic verbal method	23	28.4	58	71.6
10.	Field trips	58	71.6	23	28.4
11.	Inquiry method	29	35.8	62	76.5
12.	Project method	41	50.62	40	49.38

From Table 1, the lecture and presentation methods are observed to be the most commonly used instructional strategies by the respondents (43, 53.09%). This is closely followed by project method (41, 50.62%). Furthermore, it was observed that the History teachers do not use the discovery, problem solving, and role play methods.

Research Question Two: How adequate are the instructional materials for the implementation of the History curriculum in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria?

In answering this question, the adequacy of instructional resources for the implementation of History curriculum in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria was measured. The responses were subjected to frequency counts and percentages and result of the presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics showing the quantity and quality (Availability and Adequacy) of instructional materials available to History teachers in Southwestern Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES CHECKLIST	A		AD		NAd		NA	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Text Books	49	100	30	76.5	19	23.5	0	0.0
2	Chalkboards/ White Boards	49	100	49	100	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	Models	36	71.6	32	58	17	42	13	28.4
4	Maps	49	100	72	88.9	9	11.1	0	0.0
5	Graphs	0	0.0	0	0.0	49	100	49	100
6	Pictures / Diagrams	46	96.3	36	84	13	16	3	3.7
7	Cartoons	0	0.0	0	0.0	49	100	49	100
8	Slide Projector	28	46.9	28	46.9	21	53.1	21	53.1
9	Charts	49	100	31	77.8	18	22.2	0	0.0
10	Globes	45	95.1	33	80.3	16	19.8	4	4.9
11	Audio recordings	0	0.0	0	0.0	49	100	49	100
12	Radio	36	71.6	35	63	14	37	13	28.4
13	Audio visual Recordings	0	0.0	0	0.0	49	100	49	100
14	Television	0	0.0	0	0.0	49	100	49	100
14	Computer	49	100	33	80.3	16	19.8	0	0.0
15	Real object	23	48.2	15	38.3	34	61.7	26	51.9
16	Community Resources	23	48.2	15	38.3	34	61.7	26	51.9

NB: A-Available, AD-Adequate, NAd-Not Adequate, NA-Not Available

From Table 2, the instructional materials available to all selected History teachers in Southwestern, Nigeria are Textbooks, Chalkboards, Maps, Charts, and Computer with only Chalkboard being adequate and others not adequate. However, the instructional materials that are not available and not adequate to all selected History teachers are Graphs, Cartoons, Audio recordings, Audio-Visual recordings and Television. Other instructional materials are available to some and not adequate for all.

Discussion of Findings

The results of research question one showed that the lecture and presentation methods are observed to be the most commonly used instructional strategies by the respondents and closely followed by project method, while it was observed that the History teachers do not use the discovery, problem solving, and role play methods. Although the lecture method has been described by Boadu (2016) as a bad teaching method, this is because it can cause students to be bored with History lessons; teachers still use the method maybe because of limited instructional time among other plausible reasons. Also, Cobbold and Oppong (2010) found that recommended methods were not used by History teachers in teaching the subject, and even those used were not used appropriately. It was also revealed that instructional resources were not frequently used in History lessons because such resources were either not available at all or were inadequate. It is also important to state that most of the secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria especially the state government owned schools do not have adequate qualified History teachers. Most of these schools have History on the time table and school syllabus but do not have adequate qualified History teachers to teach the subject. Instead, they have make shift teachers who have qualifications in similar Arts and Social sciences subjects like Political Science, Social Studies etc. who also teach subjects like Government, Social Studies, Civic Education etc. to teach History in these secondary schools.

The result of research question two indicated that the instructional materials available to all selected History teachers in Southwestern, Nigeria are Textbooks, Chalkboards/White boards, Maps, Charts, and Computer with only Chalkboard/white Board being adequate and others not adequate. Despite the fact that chalkboard was identified as being adequate, the poor quality of chalk used in our educational institutions result in inadequate utilization of the chalkboard for interactive activities in Social Studies classroom and related subjects such as

History (Mezieobi, 2008). The availability of textbooks is commendable because Adeyinka (1989) opined that when textbooks and other reading materials in History are appropriately utilized, it will hold immense potential for effective History education instruction and the outcome will be very beneficial. However, the instructional materials that are not available and not adequate to all selected History teachers are Graphs, Cartoons, Audio recordings, Audio-Visual recordings and Television. This is similar to the findings of Undie & Anake (2017). where they submitted that, in most schools today, even in private schools, these resources (facilities) are not adequate. Also, Wasagu (2006) noted that, the materials are lacking in Nigerian secondary schools. A consequence therefore, the teachers take to “chalk and talk” as they have no visual or audio-visual materials which the students can see, touch, smell and hear in the process of curriculum implementation. This tends to make students not to perform well. Boadu (2016) also noted that, instructional materials allocated to schools are not used at times because teachers see them as time consuming.

Conclusion

The study concludes that History teachers in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria also make use of the appropriate instructional strategies in the implementation of the History Curriculum. The lecture, presentation and project methods are observed to be the most commonly used instructional strategies by the teachers. However more instructional strategies like the discovery, problem solving, field trips and role play methods are also efficient instructional strategies in delivering History lessons. It is also important to state that most of the secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria especially the state government owned schools do not have adequate qualified History teachers. Most of these schools have History on the time table and school syllabus but do not have adequate qualified History teachers to teach the subject. Instead, they have make shift teachers who have qualifications in similar Arts and Social sciences subjects like Political Science, Social Studies etc. who also teach subjects like Government, Social Studies, Civic Education etc. to teach History in these secondary schools. It thus, can be concluded from the study that History teachers do not make use of appropriate instructional strategies, coupled with non-availability of instructional materials in the implementation of History curriculum in secondary schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion of this study, these recommendations are given:

- i. There should be regular in-service training organized to improve the level of content knowledge of History teachers as well as introduce them to advancements in pedagogy.
- ii. The relevant institutions should ensure the availability and provision of adequate instructional materials needed for the effective teaching of History curriculum.
- iii. The History teachers should endeavor to use variety of teaching or instructional strategies to allow for blended and comprehensive instructional delivery.

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