

**THE PERCEPTION OF KWARA STATE
YOUTHS ON THE NEED FOR CULTURAL STUDIES
IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The study investigated the perception of youths in Kwara state on the need for cultural studies in Nigeria. The sample consisted of two hundred and thirty young male and female students randomly sampled. The instrument was a questionnaire consisting of fifteen item questions that enabled the research to obtain information on the perception of the young undergraduates on the need to introduce cultural studies in Nigeria. Three hypotheses were generated and the result was tested at 0.05 significance level. The findings showed that the youths desire that cultural values be introduced to the youths and children in Nigerian schools. Based on the findings, it is recommended that Nigeria cultural values be introduced to schools in Nigeria.

Introduction

The term culture is generally referred to as the sum total of the way which a group of people live. Amonoo, Obebe, Oyorbaire, Osoro and Booteng (2006) explained that culture includes the method which the

people use in producing food and other basic needs of the people, the rules and regulations that govern people's behaviour in a society such as the belief, relationships, moral principles governing their behaviour and the whole body of knowledge and technology of people. They however, regretted that most Nigerian copy new forms of dressing, writing, speaking, eating and so on, from the Europeans.

There are many aspects of culture. These can be grouped into two: the material and non-material aspects. Material culture consists those things which a people have learned to make used to satisfy their basic needs, the art and industry of the society such as bridge, bows and arrow sun hats, shoes and sandals etc. while the non-material culture consist of what we cannot see physically but are learned from the elders in the society. Such include language, morals, religion, value, as well as the technology of the people, their music, dance folklore, literature, and method thinking (Amonoo et al, 2004)

In Nigeria, People, old and young joyfully welcome imported things. Imported goods and services such as: cloth, food, plates belts, shoes, indeed, the large percentage of all the things that are used domestically are imported. The desire for imports does not stop on materials alone Nigerian's prefer the services of foreign teachers, engineers, physicians, architects and so on to the indigenous ones: as a result of this high taste for imports, our industries, culture, tradition and values crumbled.

According to Fafunwa (2004), the pillars of African culture are seven in number. These include "physical training, intellectual training, respect for elders and people in authority, vocational, social, and emotional training of the young. When the core values of African culture were religiously observed, everything went on well in our society (Fafunwa, 2004). With the introduction of foreign cultures and civilization however, things changed. Our traditional was thrown to the dogs and foreign civilization became the vogue. Then, many things started to go wrong. According to Omoyajowo (2003), it was a taboo for unmarried people to have sex in the traditional African society. It was not known that a lady became pregnant while she was yet unmarried. A lady must be "Virgo intacta" until her wedding is concluded. It was a disgrace for the parents of a newly married wife not to be met virgin by her husband.

Respect for elders and constituted authority was known to be much valued in the traditional Nigerian society. The children had to prostrate or kneel down, if it were a boy or girl respectively, while greeting their parents and elders. Today, young people shake hands with elders. They find it convenient to sit in a public bus while elders are standing. Our culture has been forsaken. The abandonment of the cultural wears by the youths and adults alike was of major concern to Adalumo and Adalumo (1999). They posited that Nigerian youths wear scanty, too tight, skinny and semi-naked dresses. While writing on the unwholesome attitudes of Nigerians in the Oderinde (2009) listed examination malpractice, fornication, prostitution, cultism, robbery, fraud, drug abuse, and murder as common social vices in Nigeria today.

Fadeiye (2001) believed that the colonization of Africa and the resultant long association with Britain has encouraged cultural diffusion between Europeans and Africans. Indeed, it is not only the culture of the west but also that of the Eastern societies that are now prominently seen in Nigeria today. Fadeiye (2001) further declared that "today many Nigerians prefer European diet, dressing, language, music and dance" to their native ones.

Prominent among the vital roles being played by culture in a society according to Fadieye (2004) are that culture guides the behaviour of the member of the society by serving as an agent of social control and molding the personalities in the society. If this is true, then there is no wonder why our youths and the generality of the society lost their societal values and morals. Thuggery, cultism, drug and human being trafficking, kidnapping and all such vices have been reported common in Nigeria today (Maduewesi, 2000). The youths are unemployed and hungry, individuals do not enjoy much peace, the society is worried, the government is not at ease about the consequences of abandoning our cultural values.

Maduewesi (2000) explained further that unhealthy attitudes of Nigerians include lack of respect for law and constituted authority, indiscipline, fraud, and cheating, sexual immorality, forgery, examination malpractices and above all, bribery and corruption. He lamented that some Nigerians do not only engage in the unhealthy practices listed above within the four walls of Nigeria, but also they exhibit them abroad, thus destroying the existing good image of the

country in foreign lands. Considering all these, it therefore becomes necessary to sample the opinion of the youths on their desire for or otherwise, the need for cultural education in Nigerian schools. Maduewesi (2000) explained further that the unhealthy attitudes of Nigerians include lack of respect for law and constituted authority, indiscipline, fraud, and cheating, sexual morality, forgery, examination malpractices and above all, bribery and corruption. He further lamented that some Nigerians do not only engage in the unhealthy practices listed above within the four walls of Nigeria, but also they exhibit them abroad, thus destroying the existing good image of the country in foreign lands. Considering all these, it therefore becomes necessary to sample the opinion of the youths on their desire for or otherwise, the need for cultural education in Nigerian schools.

The term perception refers to the way a person views and understands a thing. (Hornby,1979). The youth according to the Piaget's theory of cognitive development are capable of thinking and reasoning like adults. So they are expected to be able to make intellectual contribution to the issues that concern. It is however worthy of note that the perception of youths like adult may differ, young people differ in many respects. These include differences in genetic predispositions and background and environment so, it is difficult if not impossible to predict their perception correctly.

From the foregoing, it could be said that many Nigerian youths and adults alike have abandoned their culture for the foreign (Western and Eastern) ones (Fafunwa,2004). The problem of this study can therefore be put as: What is the perception of the youths on the need for cultural education in Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The central purpose of this study is to investigate the perception of youths on the need to introduce cultural studies in Nigerian schools. The specific objectives of the study are to

- i. investigate the perceptions of Kwara State youths on the need for cultural studies in Nigeria;
- ii. determine the difference in the perception of male and female students on the need to introduce cultural studies in Nigeria;

- iii. examine the difference in the perception of married and unmarried students on the need to introduce cultural studies in Nigeria; and
- iv. determine difference in the perception of university undergraduates and other undergraduates on the need to introduce cultural studies in Nigeria.

Research questions

In order to obtain solution to the problem under investigation, the following research questions were raised.

1. What is the perception of Kwara State youths on the need for cultural studies in Nigeria.?
2. Is there a significant difference in the perception of male and female students on the need to introduce cultural studies in Nigeria?
3. Is there a significant difference in the perception of married and unmarried students on the need to introduce cultural studies in Nigeria?
4. Is there a significant difference in the perception of university undergraduates and other undergraduates on the need to introduce cultural studies in Nigeria?

Research methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. It entails surveying the perception of a reasonably large sample population's response to a set of questionnaire items. The data was analyzed using chi-square and the result obtained was interpreted. The target population for this study comprised all the students in tertiary institutions of learning in Kwara State while the sample consisted 260 students randomly selected from six tertiary institutions in Kwara State. The major instrument used in obtaining the data required for this study is a questionnaire on the perception of youths (QPY) on the need for cultural studies in Nigeria

Having explained the purpose of visiting the institution, the researchers sought the assistance of the lecturers and non-academic staff members in administrating the questionnaires. After completing

the filling, they were promptly collected.

Data Analysis

The first research question was answered with the use of frequency and percentages while the Research hypotheses one to three were analyzed using chi-square (χ^2) so as to determine the relationship that exist in the perception of the various group of youths. The research hypotheses 1 – 3 were analyzed using the chi-square (χ^2) data analysis in order to determine the position of the youths on the need for cultural studies at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 1

What is the perception of Kwara State youths on the need for cultural studies in Nigeria?

Table 1 provides answer to this question.

Table 1: The general perception of youths on the need for introducing cultural education into schools in Nigeria.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	186	71.5%
Disagree	74	28.5%
Total	260	100%

Table 1 showed that 186 representing 71.5% of the total respondents agreed that there is the need to introduce cultural studies into schools in Nigeria 74 respondents representing 28.5% disagreed. They believe that there is no need to introduce cultural studies in Nigerian schools.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant difference in the perception of male and female youths on the need for cultural studies in Nigerian schools.

Table 2 provides answer to this question.

Table 2: Chi-square statistic showing the perception of the male and female youths on the need for cultural studies in Nigerian schools.

Variables	N	x	DF	Calculated. χ^2 Value	Critical χ^2	Decision
Male	152	78.33	258	0.04	3.00	Ho ₁ reject
Female	108	79.15	258	0.04	3.00	

The result on the chi-square table showed that the value of chi-square (χ^2) is 3.00 while the calculated value is 0.04. The chi-square (χ^2) value which is 0.04 is less than 3.00 (i.e. $0.04 < 3.00$). Therefore, there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female youths on the need for cultural studies in Nigerian schools.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in the perception of married and unmarried youth on the need for cultural studies in Nigerian schools.

Answer to this question is provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Chi-square statistic showing the perception of married and unmarried youths on the need for cultural studies in Nigerian schools. The result on the chi-square table shows that the value of chi-square (χ^2) is 3.00 while the calculated value is 0.34. That is chi-square (χ^2) value which is 3.00 is less than 0.24. There is therefore a significant difference in the perception of married and unmarried youths on the need for cultural studies in the Nigerian school.

Research Question 4: Is there a significant difference in the perception

Variables	N	x	S.D	DF	Calculated. χ^2 Value	Critical χ^2	Decision
Male	14	88.66	8.06	258	0.34	3.00	Ho ₂ reject
Female	146	82.32	10.82	258	0.34	3.00	

of university youth and undergraduates NCE undergraduates on the need for cultural studies in Nigeria schools.

Table 4 provides answer to this question

Table 4: Chi-square statistic showing the perception of married and unmarried youths on the need for cultural studies in Nigerian schools.

The result on the chi-square table above showed that the value of chi-square (χ^2) is 3.000 while the calculated value is 0.89. Again the chi-square value 3.00 is less than the calculated value of 0.29. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is no significant

Variables	N	x	S.D	DF	Calculated. χ^2 Value	Critical χ^2	Decision
Male	80	86.23	9.27	258	0.89	3.00	Ho ₀ reject
Female	60	4.16	8.65	258	0.89		

Conclusion

The study concluded that cultural education can be provided to the Nigerian citizens irrespective of level of education, age, gender or marital status.

Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained from this study, it is recommended that appropriate curriculum formulation bodies in Nigeria should be commissioned to reform the Social Studies curriculum to include adequate culture content which is not only to teach the Nigerian children and youths the cultural values so as to appreciating our culture heritage. Public enlightenment should be done to sensitize the society on our desire to return to our traditional culture. Workshops, conferences and seminars should be organized periodically on our material and non-material culture, so that the teachers who are to teach the culture curriculum would be adequately equipped to do. Also the textbook publishing houses should be mobilized to

encourage and organize experts in Nigerian culture to write textbooks relevant to all stages of our education in Nigeria.

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