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**IMPROVING SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHING  
THROUGH STUDENTS'  
LEARNING STRATEGIES: A PATHWAY TO  
NATION BUILDING**

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**Abstract**

*The paper examined improving Social Studies teaching using students' learning strategies to develop the nation. The study adopted a pre-test, post-test control, and quasi-experimental design with a 3x2 factorial matrix. The sample consisted of one hundred and fifty (150) students in three 'intact' classes drawn from three selected government secondary schools in Ekiti State. The target population is SS1 students. Each class was randomly allocated to one treatment, namely active learning strategy, peer- tutoring and conventional method. Four contact sessions of 40 minutes per lesson in each of the three schools were used to carry out the experiment, which lasted for six weeks. The data collection instrument was 30 multiple choice questions titled Improving Social studies teaching using Instructional Strategies (ISSTIS) to elicit information on how the teaching strategies could improve students' academic performance and bring about national development. The population was one hundred and fifty (150) students randomly selected from three senior secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The finding from*

*the survey revealed a significant effect of instructional strategies on students' academic performance. Furthermore, the study concluded that active learning, peer-tutoring, and conventional methods could promote achievement and students' attitudes toward nation-building. Therefore, the government should encourage teachers to use students centred learning strategies in addition to traditional methods of teaching students for effective nation-building.*

**Keywords:** *Active learning, Peer tutoring, Conventional, Nation building*

### **Introduction**

Before Nigeria came into existence in 1914, civic training was part of the traditional education in the different localities of the nation. Training for civic responsibility and effective citizenship were essential aspects of conventional education in various parts of Nigeria. Social studies were introduced into the Nigerian school system on an experimental basis at the Aiyetoro comprehensive high school, Ogun State, in 1963 with the financial and technical assistance of the United States American Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ford Foundation. The primary purpose of teaching Social Studies is to help young people to make informed and reasoned decisions for public growth as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an independent world (Falade, 2008).

Social Studies promotes knowledge, skills, values and other learning forms that prepare individuals for the democratic process. Jennifer (2016) asserted that Social Studies Education involves civic knowledge, skills and disposition, while Utulu (2011) argued that Social Studies Education deals with developing values and norms. The goal of Social Studies Education is the development of responsible citizenship.

Learning strategies refer to various educational programs and instructional approaches to address students' learning needs, interests or aspirations. Two student learners techniques used in

the study are active learning and peer-tutoring, a conventional strategy, to serve as a control. According to the Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching, an active learning strategy is a process whereby students engage in activities such as reading, writing, discussion or problem-solving to promote analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of class content. Eze (2005) stated that in an active learning strategy, students learn what they care about and remember what they understand Erickson (1984). Adler (1982) noted that all genuine learning is active, not passive. It is a process of discovery in which the student is the primary agent, not the teacher. Barbara (2012) defined think-pair-share as a structured approach to classroom discourse that aims to get all students actively involved in a discussion, a strategy designed to provide students with food for thought on a given topic enabling them to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas, with another student. This method encourages a high degree of pupil response and can keep students on task. Johnson and Johnson (1999) defined think pair-share as a collaborative learning strategy belonging to inquiry-based learning strategies.

Peer tutoring links high-achieving students with lower-achieving students for structured learning. Brittany and Jennifer (2012) defined peer tutoring as a flexible, peer-mediated strategy involving students serving as academic tutors and tutees. One variant of the peer-tutoring strategy is *class-wide peer-tutoring*, which involves dividing the entire class into groups of two to five students with differing ability levels. Brittany and Jennifer (2012) opined that students act as tutors, tutees or both. This involves highly structured procedures, direct rehearsal competitions, and the entire class participating in structured peer tutoring activities. There is also *Cross-age peer tutoring* which involves older students paired with younger students to teach a concept. Paul and Vanesa (2006) asserted that cross-age tutoring actively engages tutors and tutees with disabilities. Paul(2014) opined that cross-age tutoring involves pairing older and younger students to learn. *Peer-assisted hearing strategy*, as another peer-tutoring model, consists of a teacher pairing students who need additional instruction with a peer who can help, and according to Thomas

(2010), this strategy is applied under different circumstances at the classroom level, depending on the situation at hand and the skills of the concerned teachers. The student-centred approach in teaching and learning increases students' participation, encourages teamwork, and creates meaningful learning environments where students are inspired to explore what they are most curious about. Social Studies teach and inculcate good citizenship to build learners who understand their legal and civic duties and obligations to their nation, as the development of any country depends on its citizens. However, more importantly, Social Studies Education has contributed immensely to Nation Building as seen in the goals of Social Studies Education of building sound minds as a foundation for functional social education directed towards the development of responsible, dependable citizens capable of thinking logically for effective nation building.

Nation-building refers to structuring the national identity, using the state's power to unify the people. Nation Building also refers to the process of unification of the people within the state to remain politically stable and viable in the long run. Falade (2012) opined that nation-building involves bringing together the diverse sub-nations within a harmonious political unit into a diverse political team. The problem of nation-building is well-established as an essential societal concern with significant ramifications for the affected youth, families and society at large. There are cases of unemployment, poverty, kidnapping, yahoo boys and different forms of criminality. Despite different ways of engaging students during the teaching-learning process, criminal ways of living in society are increasing. Also, various scholars have dealt extensively with teaching strategies; still, there needs to be an improvement in the lives of the youth after schooling. Therefore, this study determined the efficacy of two innovative strategies, active learning and peer tutoring, as against the conventional method in enhancing the achievements and attitude of students in productive engagement after schooling for effective nation-building.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The principal aim of the study was to explore the potency of active learning strategy, peer tutoring and conventional method as effective instructional strategies for students to improve nation-building. Specifically, the study:

- i. examined instructional design would most effectively teach nation-building; and
- ii. determined which of the students' gender levels (male and female) will record higher mean gain in the achievement of instructional strategies in teaching nation-building.

### **Research Questions**

Two research questions were raised to guide the study.

- i. Which instructional strategies will lead to a higher mean gain in students' knowledge of nation-building?
- ii. Which of the students' gender levels (male and female) will record higher mean gain in the achievement of instructional strategies in teaching nation-building?

### **Methods**

The design for the study is a pre-test, post-test, quasi-experimental design using a 3 x 2 factorial matrix. Two classes were the experimental groups, while the third was the control group. The moderating variable used was gender. The target population for the study consisted of students in all the public senior secondary schools (SSS 1) in Ekiti State. The sample for the study comprised one hundred and fifty (150) from three senior secondary schools selected through a multi-stage sampling technique.

The instrument used to collect data was an Improving Social Studies Teaching using Instructional Strategies (ISSTIS) questionnaire. The tool contained two sections, A and B. The first section sorted the personal data of the respondents, while the B aspect included items related to information on strategies and nation-building. Although experts ensured face and content validity in the test and measurement, the reliability of the study was guaranteed by the test re-test method at the interval of two

weeks on the sample. In addition, Pearson product-moment correlation formula was used to analyse the result. As a result, a reliability coefficient of 0.65 was obtained. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics; mean and standard deviation scores are descriptive statistics used to estimate the Pre-test and Post-test scores.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** Which instructional strategy will lead to a higher mean gain in students' knowledge of Nation Building?

**Table 4.1: Students' Pre and Post-test Achievement Scores According to Instructional Strategies**

Instructional Strategy		N	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max	Mean-Gain
<b>Active Learning (ALS)</b>	Pre-test	50	25.98	6.95	12	43	1.64
	Post-test		27.62	10.01	12	44	
<b>Peer-Tutoring (PTS)</b>	Pre-test	50	26.02	5.36	17	39	5.16
	Post-test		31.18	5.50	20	41	
<b>Conventional Method (CMT)</b>	Pre-test	50	22.00	2.50	18	31	7.57
	Post-test		29.45	7.09	20	39	
<b>Total</b>	Pre-test	150	24.67	5.56	12	43	4.78
	Post-test		29.45	7.09	12	44	

The results in Table 4.1 shows the students' mean and standard deviationscores in the achievement scores before (Pre-test) and after (Post-test) exposure to the three levels of the instructional strategy used in this study. At the end of the interaction period, the 50 participants taught with a peer-tutoring approach recorded the highest mean post-test score of 31.18 (S.D. = 5.50) in the achievement of an instructional strategy used in teaching students about nation-building. This was followed by the 50 participants trained with the conventional instructional design method, who recorded the next mean post-test score of 29.56 (S.D. = 4.01). The 50 participants taught with the active learning instructional strategy recorded the lowest mean post-test score of 27.62 (S.D. =

10.01). The results in Table 1 also show positive mean gains in achievement scores across the three treatment groups the mean pre-test and mean post-test scores are compared. The students exposed to the conventional instructional strategy method recorded the highest mean-gain score in achievement (7.75). Hence, the traditional way of instructional strategy produced the highest mean gain in students' achievement of using instructional design in teaching students about nation-building.

**Research Question 2:** Which of the students' gender levels (male and female) will record higher mean gain in the achievement of instructional strategy in the teaching of Nation Building?

**Table 4.2: Students' Pre and Post-test Achievement Scores in Sexuality and HIV/AIDS Education According to Gender**

Students' Gender		N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max	Mean-Gain
<b>Male</b>	Pre-test	67	24.43	4.86	14	35	5.94
	Post-test		30.3	7.03	12	44	
<b>Female</b>	Pre-test	83	24.86	6.09	12	43	3.91
	Post-test		28.77	7.10	12	44	
<b>Total</b>	Pre-test	150	24.67	5.56	12	43	4.78
	Post-test		29.45	7.09	12	44	

Table 4.2 shows the participants' mean and standard deviation scores in the achievement of instructional strategy in teaching nation-building according to the student's gender before (pre-test) and after (post-test) exposure to the three levels of instructional strategies used in the study. The 67 male participants recorded a higher mean post-test achievement score (30.37 (S.D. = 7.03)) than the 83 female participants, whose mean post-test achievement score was 28.77 (S.D. = 7.10). The result in Table 3 also shows positive mean gains across the levels of gender when the mean pre-test and mean post-test achievement scores are compared. Male students recorded a higher mean gain in

achievement (5.94). Hence, the male students recorded a higher mean gain in the accomplishment of instructional strategy in teaching nation-building than the female students.

### **Discussions**

Result shows the students' mean and standard deviation scores in the achievement scores of the 150 participants using the learning strategies. The results show that 150 participants taught with the peer tutoring strategy recorded the highest mean post-test scores of 31.18. In comparison, 50 participants trained with the conventional approach recorded a post-test score of 29.56. Students taught with an active learning strategy recorded the lowest mean post-test score of 27.62. This implies that students' active learning strategy attracts students' attention more than the remaining strategy. The three instructional strategies are effective since the little margin is displayed in their usage.

Finding shows that one hundred and fifty participants' mean and standard deviation scores in the achievement of gender using the three instructional strategies in the teaching of nation building, 67 male participants recorded the highest mean post-test achievement score of 30.37, while 83 female participants recorded 28.77. This implies that 67 male participants have more knowledge of nation-building than female participants. From the study, the issue of nation-building as a concept using instructional strategies is more effective on boys than girls.

### **Conclusion**

Instructional strategies using teachers' and students centred techniques are germane in building a nation. However, there are significantly different results between the three institutional strategies. All the instructional strategies are effective in teaching Social Studies, and there are significant differences between the male and female students using techniques. This implies that male and female students react differently to the strategies and need urgent attention. Also, different scholars have dealt extensively with teaching strategies, and there needs to be an improvement in



the lives of the youth after schooling. Therefore, this study needs more investigation on the efficacy and effectiveness of using active learning, peer- tutoring and conventional innovative strategies in teaching and learning.

### **Recommendations**

The strength of all the instructional strategies is in the usage by the teachers, who are to intensify efforts to encourage students in their usage; therefore, teachers are to intensify efforts in ensuring that all the teaching strategies are used during the teaching-learning process. Seminars should be organized for all teachers on the use and peer tutoring. The conventional instructional strategies should also be encouraged in the teaching-learning process as they produced the highest mean gain in the first research question in the study. Teachers should encourage female students on the use instructional strategies during teaching. Further investigation should be carried out on student-centred methods and how they can be improved in Social Studies teaching formation-building.

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