



# An Investigation of Evaluation Techniques Used by Social Studies Teachers in Junior Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria

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*Received 28 Feb 2015, Revised 15 May 2015, Accepted 13 June 2015, Published 01 July 2015*

**Abstract:** This study is designed to assess evaluation techniques used by Social Studies teachers in classrooms. The study adopted a survey research design utilizing questionnaire and observation of actual classroom teaching. Three hypotheses were addressed in this study. A sample of 173 teachers were randomly selected from 150 junior secondary schools in ten local government areas of Edo state. Out of the 173 teachers, 50 teachers were randomly selected for classroom observation. Data was collected and analyzed using Z- test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics. The result revealed that majority of the social studies teachers were not using the appropriate evaluation techniques in social studies classrooms. Findings from the classroom observation revealed that evaluation of students were predominantly in the area of cognitive domain which requires students to regurgitate memorized knowledge. It also revealed that teachers' experience did not influence their use of appropriate evaluation techniques. Recommendations were made including the need for prospective teachers to have thorough understanding of evaluation procedures in order to facilitate students' learning and improve instruction in social studies.

**Keywords:** Social studies, evaluation techniques, secondary schools, Nigeria

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Many countries are getting concerned with the improvement of the quality of education. Evaluation in the classroom has become a vital focus in recent times especially in the light of renewed demand for greater productivity and increased accountability for educational output. Evaluation is the process of determining the extent to which objectives have been achieved. Guba and Lincoln (2001) see evaluation as a process of delineating, obtaining, reporting and applying descriptive and judgmental information about some objects, its merit, worth, probity and significance, in order to guide decision making, support accountability, disseminate effective practices and increase understanding of the involved phenomena. Evaluation is the process of ascertaining whether or not the learning experiences presented to the learners produced desired changes in them due to learning. It facilitates student learning, improves instruction and provides information about students' progress. To determine how well students are learning, how much knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes are acquired, evaluation strategies have to be designed to systematically gather information on the achievement of the curriculum outcomes. The evaluation

of students' progress is a very complex process and good teachers build a wide repertoire of approaches in collecting information.

There are two major types of evaluation; formative and summative evaluation. The purpose of formative evaluation is to provide teacher and students with feedback that can direct future teaching and learning. Variations exist in the definitions of formative evaluation proposed by various well-known educational researchers (Harlen & James, 1997; Sadler, 1998; and Shepard, 2008). Wiliam (2010) summarized some of these definitions and suggested that the most comprehensive definition is that adopted by Black and Wiliam (2009). In their view, practice in a classroom is formative to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited. Evidence accumulated from substantial research reviews spanning the past quarter century (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1986; Bangert-Drowns, Kulik, Kulik & Morgan, 1991; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Brookhart, 2004; Boud & Falckikov, 2006; Brookhart,



2007; Wiliam, 2007; Shute, 2008; Wiliam, 2010; Wiliam, 2011a; Wiliam, 2013) suggest that formative assessment is a powerful lever for improving outcomes for learners. Summative evaluation provides an account of students' progress at a particular point in time. It is normally a measurement that describes where the student stands in regard to some sort of standard such as curriculum outcomes. At the classroom level, an assessment is summative when it is given to determine how much students have learned at a particular point in time, for the purpose of communicating achievement status to others. At the program level, an assessment is summative when the results are used to make judgments such as determining how many students are and are not meeting standards in a certain subject for purposes of accountability. The data may be reported to educators within the school system, and the community.

According to Okam (2001), social studies is submerged in immense interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary commitment. As an affective based subject, social studies teachings are meant to develop appropriate attitudes and values in the learner that could make them effective citizens. This expanded view of the purpose of social studies education required a much more sophisticated approach to evaluation. Classroom assessment has evolved more complex processes requiring teachers' professional judgment and clear understanding of the various dimensions and themes of social studies. Social studies present some unique challenges for assessment and evaluation. Many key social studies outcomes such as critical thinking, social responsibility, informed decision making and so on, are hard to define compared to outcomes from other subjects (Meyers, 2004).

Therefore evaluation should be based on sound objectives which have been clearly selected from the content taught. Educational researchers have always emphasized the three domains of educational objectives (Bloom, Engelhart, Hill & Krathwohl, 1956; Krathwohl, Masia & Bloom 1973; Friedman, 2008; Simpson, 1972; Martin, 2006). These are cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. It is important that social studies teachers understand the details of these three domains of educational objectives as a guide to proper lesson planning, teaching, and application of the relevant evaluation techniques to achieve the desired objectives in all three domains of learning. The classifications of Bloom (1956), Krathwohl (1956) and Taba (1962) remain the standard references detailing the relevant components of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

The cognitive domain mainly emphasizes remembering or reproducing information, which has been learnt. This domain is knowledge or mind based. The cognitive domain deals with all mental processes including perception, memory and information processing by which the learner or the individual acquires knowledge, solves problems and plans for the future.

The affective domain emphasizes feelings and emotion. It also deals with behavioral aspects and beliefs. Affective domain is the much more desired of the objectives achievable in social studies education (Okafor & Arinze, 2011; Friedman, 2008; Picard et al. 2004). It is important because it is the only area that touches the mind and helps to train and develop the humanistic aspects of the students.

The psychomotor domain deals with manipulation of materials and objectives (Krathwohl & Bloom, 1993). In the words of Simpson (1972), psychomotor domain refers to the use of basic motor skills, coordination and physical movement.

## 2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Evaluation as carried out today in Nigerian schools has been faulted in the area of social studies. Researchers including Onuoha and Nwafor (2005), Otete (2004) and Okobia (2009) have examined evaluation in Nigerian schools. Their studies revealed that evaluation in social studies largely focus on the extent to which students retained factual content and material memorized. The emphasis is usually on the cognitive achievements of learners. As a result, assessment of the non- cognitive learning outcomes has remained one of the neglected aspects of teaching and learning in Nigerian schools. It is against this background that this study attempt to assess evaluation techniques used by social studies teachers in social studies classroom in Junior Secondary Schools (7th to 9th grade; age group 12-15 years) in Edo State of Nigeria. While both formative and summative evaluations have their strengths and weaknesses in the evaluation of educational objectives, formative evaluation has been shown to have dominant impact in influencing learning outcomes in the classroom. Unlike summative assessment, the first priority of formative assessment in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning. It is the assessment that provides information that teachers and their students can use as feedback in assessing themselves and one another and in modifying the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. This study is therefore focused on formative evaluation in the social studies classroom given its established benefits in improving learning outcomes in all domains of educational objectives.



### 3. HYPOTHESES

This study was guided by the following hypotheses.

1. The proportion of social studies teachers who reported use of the appropriate evaluation techniques to acceptable level based on questionnaire data will not be significantly different from 50%.
2. The proportion of social studies teachers who use the appropriate evaluation techniques to acceptable level based on classroom observation and rating scale will not be significantly different from 50%.
3. Teaching experience will not significantly influence their use of evaluation techniques during social studies classroom teaching.

### 4. METHODOLOGY

This study employed descriptive survey design and observation of teachers. The sample population consists of one hundred and seventy three social studies teachers randomly selected from ten local government area of Edo state using multi-stage stratified sampling. These teachers responded to the questionnaire. Out of this number, 50 teachers were selected for observation. The questionnaire comprised of two sections; the first section contained items on teachers' personal data while the second section contained nine items on appropriate evaluation techniques suitable for evaluating social studies students in social studies classrooms. It is a Likert-type rating scale with three levels on each item (Often=1, sometimes=2, not at all=3). The instrument for classroom observation was adapted from the second section of the questionnaire instrument with nine items; each of the items is also graded using the Likert-type rating scale with Often=1, sometimes=2 and not at all=3). The teachers were observed for twelve weeks at different occasions teaching social studies and types of evaluation techniques used in the classroom were rated.

To determine the acceptable level of reported use of the appropriate evaluation techniques, the number of options in the second section of the questionnaire and observation schedule and the number of items in each section were used. There were three options (often, sometimes, and not at all). The acceptable boundary is the exact boundary between "not at all" and "sometimes" which is 1.5. This number was used to multiply the number of items (nine in this case); therefore the acceptable (criterion) score for the instrument was 13.5.

The validity of the instrument was determined by two experts in Social Studies and one expert in measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined by pilot testing the questionnaire. Twenty five social studies teachers who were not involved in the main study were used. The data collected was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha technique and a reliability co-efficient of  $r = 0.78$  was obtained. Then, an observational schedule and rating scale developed for this purpose was used for classroom observation. Evaluation techniques used in social studies were itemized and rated. Various statistics including the Z-test statistics was used to test hypotheses 1 and 2 while ANOVA statistics was utilized for hypothesis 3. All data were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

### 5. RESULTS

This study sought to investigate evaluation techniques used by social studies teachers in Junior Secondary Schools in Edo State of Nigeria. The information gathered from the questionnaire data and direct observation of teachers during actual social studies classroom instruction revealed heavy emphasis on the evaluation of the cognitive domain to the neglect of the affective and psychomotor domains of learning. In both the questionnaire and direct observation data, "oral questioning", "continuous assessment" in the form of written tests requiring the mental recall of memorized facts dominated the evaluation landscape.

Evaluation techniques that seek to explore the psychomotor domain including such activities as engaging students in project works were never utilized by the teachers during actual classroom teaching. It was also found that the evaluation of the affective domain of learning objectives were completely neglected. Direct observation for behavioral changes in the students, use of peer group observations, checklists, anecdotal records and sociometric techniques were never utilized.

**Hypothesis 1:** The proportion of social studies teachers who reported use of the appropriate evaluation techniques to acceptable level based on questionnaire data will not be significantly different from 50%.



**TABLE 1: Proportion of social studies teachers with acceptable scores on the use of evaluation techniques**  
Teachers (n=173)

Scores on Evaluation devices	N	Proportion	Criterion score	Z(cal)	Z(crit)	95% CI
Teachers with acceptable scores	15	0.09	.50	-10.88	±1.96	.04, .13
Teachers with below acceptable scores	158					
Total	173					

Of the 173 social studies teachers who participated in the questionnaire survey, the results showed that 15 teachers had acceptable score of 13.5 and above on the use of appropriate evaluation techniques while 158 teachers scored below 13.5 (Table 1). This gave a proportion of 0.09 (9%) for teachers who scored 13.5 and above. This figure is less than the criterion score of .50 (50%). The Z- calculated was found to be -10.88 while the table Z-value was ±1.96. Since the calculated Z-value is greater than the table Z-value, hypothesis 1 was rejected. This invalid hypothesis indicates that the proportion of social studies teachers who reported use of appropriate evaluation techniques to acceptable level based on questionnaire data was significantly different from 50%.

**Hypothesis 2:** The proportion of social studies teachers who use the appropriate evaluation techniques to acceptable level based on classroom observation and rating scale will not be significantly different from 50%.

**Table 2: Proportion of social studies teachers with acceptable scores on the use of evaluation techniques during classroom teaching**  
TEACHERS (N=50)

Scores on Evaluation devices	N	Proportion	Criterion score	Z(cal)	Z(crit)	95% CI
Teachers with acceptable scores	7	0.08	.50	-3.52	±1.96	0.04, 0.10
Teachers with below acceptable scores	43					
Total	50					

Hypothesis 2 sought to evaluate if the proportion of teachers who actually utilized the appropriate evaluation techniques during actual classroom teaching was significantly different from 0.50 (50%). This hypothesis was tested using data obtained by direct observation of teachers' use of the appropriate evaluation techniques during actual classroom teaching. Of the 50 teachers that participated in the observation study, seven teachers (14%) achieved up to the accepted score of 13.5. This figure of 14% was found to be significantly different from the criterion score of 50% (Table 2). The calculated Z-score was found to be -3.52 which is numerically greater than the Table Z-score of 1.96. The null-hypothesis was rejected, indicating that the proportion of social studies teachers who use appropriate evaluation techniques to acceptable level based on classroom evaluation and rating scale was significantly different from 50%.

**Hypothesis 3:** Teaching experience will not significantly influence teachers' use of the appropriate evaluation techniques during social studies classroom teaching.

**Table 3: Influence of teachers' experience on the use of evaluation techniques**

Teaching Experience	N	Mean score	Sd	F	P
1-3 years	9	3.00	.00	.19	.83
4-10 years	23	3.04	.37		
11 years and above	18	3.00	.00		

$\alpha=0.05$

Out of the 50 social studies teachers that participated, nine had experience between 1-3 years, 23 had experience between 4-10 years, and 18 had experience of 11 years and above. The mean score of teachers with 1-3 years of experience was 3.00 (sd = .00), mean score of those with 4-10 years was 3.04 (sd = .37), and mean score of those with 11 years and above was 3.00 (sd = .00). When the scores of these teachers with different experiences on the use of evaluation techniques were compared using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), the F-value was 0.19 (p = .83) (Table 3). This means teaching experience had no influence on teachers' use of appropriate evaluation techniques during social studies classroom teaching.

## 6. DISCUSSION

This study sought to investigate teachers' use of evaluation techniques in the implementation of the Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum in Edo State of Nigeria. Social studies as one of the major core curriculum subjects of the National Junior Secondary



School Social Studies Curriculum has a strategic and pivotal role to play towards achieving its lofty objectives in Nigeria.

The result of the study revealed that a number of teachers were not using the appropriate evaluation techniques in social studies. The results showed that out of the 173 social studies teachers that participated in the questionnaire study, only 15 teachers (9%) had acceptable scores of 13.5 on the use of evaluation techniques while 158 (91%) scored below acceptable scores. The results of the direct classroom observation component also showed similar abysmal low performance among social studies teachers in their use of appropriate evaluation techniques during classroom teaching. Only 7 of the 50 teachers achieved acceptable competence in the use of appropriate evaluation techniques. The predominant evaluation techniques employed by the teachers seem to be those assessing cognitive skills to the neglect of techniques designed to evaluate the affective and psychomotor skills. Both the questionnaire and classroom observation data showed that oral questioning and written tests requiring mental recall of memorized facts dominated the evaluation landscape during social studies classroom instruction.

These findings corroborate the reports of other investigators both with and outside the developing countries of sub-Saharan Africa including Otote (2004), Jimoh (2005), Onuoha and Nwafor (2005) reporting from Nigeria; Eshun and Mensah (2013) writing from Ghana; Ajiboye (2009) reporting from Botswana and Rupani and Bhutto (2011) reporting from Pakistan. Otote (2004) in a study assessing the evaluation techniques utilized by social studies teachers in Junior Secondary Schools in Western Nigeria noted that social studies teachers lack competence in many areas of evaluation techniques. She noted that affective evaluation was always neglected by majority of the teachers during social studies classroom teaching. Similarly, Jimoh (2005) confirmed the neglect of affective domains in his study of social studies teachers' use of evaluation techniques during classroom instruction in North Central Nigeria. His study revealed that social studies objective test administered in secondary schools surveyed were basically assessing cognitive skills.

Ajiboye (2009) evaluated past questions in social studies primary school leaving examinations from 2001 to 2005 in Botswana. His findings revealed that 90% of the questions were in the cognitive domain. And even within this domain, it was observed that only knowledge of recall, comprehension and application were covered. In the analysis of the domain of educational objectives social studies teachers' questions emphasize in

Senior High Schools in Ghana, Eshun and Mensah (2013) noted that discrepancies exist between what teachers said they assessed and what they actually assessed in social studies. They observed that while teachers said that they set questions that enhance the development of students' conceptual understanding and problem solving skills, test items in the end of term examination in social studies were mainly those measuring cognitive outcomes. Rupani and Bhutto (2011) examined the prevailing teaching and learning processes in social studies in secondary schools in Mirpurkhas District in Pakistan. They reported that the teaching and learning processes in social studies classrooms emphasizes only the cognitive domain, centered essentially on knowledge and rote-learning, the first level of Blooms cognitive taxonomy. They noted that the affective and psychomotor domains were completely neglected.

The findings, however, contradict those in the report of Olukayode (2012) in his analysis of social studies evaluation in selected Secondary Schools in Ogun State, Nigeria. The results of his study revealed that the overall competence of teachers' evaluation of the affective domain was significantly higher than the hypothesized mean score although some teachers performed poorly in some selected competency areas of the affective domain.

Disturbed by these widespread failure in the evaluation of the relevant affective competencies of the affective domain, various investigators have sort explanations for this pervading scenario. Bisman (2004) noted that the affective domain in social studies is poorly conceptualized, and difficult to directly assess. In addition, the emphasis on standardized testing, mastery learning, limited research, the lack of a consistent vocabulary and available instrumentation to study affective learning has further contributed to its neglect (Kaplan, 1986).

The current consensus among social studies curriculum researchers is that higher order outcomes were not given the much attention they deserve in the teaching and evaluation of social studies in most secondary schools. Yildirim (1996) also noted that it is important to measure higher levels of thinking rather than just knowledge and comprehension of content. Mkpa (2001) noted that social studies instructions, without affective components are baseless, since affective learning is the focus of social studies. Research results from Nwalado (2007) indicated that teachers do not emphasize the value embedded in social studies; therefore, most teachers do not employ evaluation techniques that address this aspect in social studies classrooms.



Finally, this study revealed that teaching experience did not influence teachers' use of evaluation techniques. The result of this finding could be attributed to the fact that many teachers teaching social studies have not deemed it necessary to go for in-service training where they can update their skills.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Teachers' competence in assessing students' skill levels and monitoring their learning progress is essential for effective instruction in schools. The finding of this study shows that evaluation of students leaned heavily on the cognitive domain of learning outcomes. Teachers do not easily employ the formal observational methods. Techniques like anecdotal record, checklists, rating scales, diaries and logs, are just a few of the many methods teachers could use to meet the demands for greater productivity and increased accountability for educational output. The teachers of social studies must embrace evaluation techniques that guarantee achievement of learning goals. A broad range of techniques that comprehensively contribute to the development of the learners should be used to give students opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Through these measures, the social studies curriculum could be made to produce people whose behavioral patterns would substantially conform to the demands of the society.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Social studies teachers should be adequately empowered as well as exposed to various learning opportunities including evaluation procedures through seminars, workshops and conferences.

For effective teaching of social studies, teachers should receive formal pre-service and in-service training in social studies teaching skills and competencies that will guarantee improved instruction and students learning. Teachers should be provided with resources needed for designing test and other assessment tools for effective evaluation. Since social studies is an affective subject, the teachers require competencies especially in the affective evaluation of the subject in order to realize the laudable objectives of social studies in Nigeria.

Social Studies teachers should be encouraged to use a variety of evaluation techniques so as to derive information that are accurate, relevant and comprehensive for instruction and for taking decisions about students.

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