

KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER-TRAINEES IN OYO STATE ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

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Abstract

Environmental education is a fundamental issue in existence. The training of teachers is part of the programmed implementation of environmental education. Despite the importance of environmental education in the Social Studies curriculum, and more importantly to Social Studies teacher-trainees, the aspect of the knowledge of the teacher-trainees' on environmental education has not been adequately researched into; hence the need for this study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Two College of Education in Oyo State were selected for the study. From each of the colleges, one hundred respondents in 300 level Social Studies department were selected. Questionnaire was the data collection instrument used. Three research questions guided the study and the data collected were analysed using descriptive inferential statistics. The result revealed that the general level of knowledge of teacher – trainees was a little below average with a wide variation between the poorest and the best candidates. It was recommended, among others that students who are above average should be admitted to study Social Studies.

Key words: Social studies; Teacher trainees; Environmental education; Knowledge.

Background to the study

The United Nation Education and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the United Nation Environmental Programme (UNEP) declared the 1990s as the decade of environmental education and training. In implementing this, on the June 1990, Nigeria joined other countries of the world to mark the 18th World Environmental Day. The theme of that year's message was "children to be informed about the causes and effects of environmental degradation so that they can live in a sustainable habit (Ajiboye and Oyetade, 2005).

The issue of environmental education becomes necessary because the interference of human with or within the earth ecosystem, according to Okorodudu-fubara (1998) is obviously fundamental to human existence. It is therefore, a must for the humans to live in harmony within the earth's ecosystem because the components of the earth's ecosystem cannot function in disunity. Okorodudu-fubara (1998) further stated that in the works of science and technology, human's advancement has greatly intruded on the supporting web of the environment. This has continued to threaten the very existence of the human. The environment must therefore be if the survival of humans is to be secured and there must be a regulation of human's activities regarding the abuse of the natural environment in order to ensure reasonable, harmonious and healthy relationship with the

environment. Environmental education is one of the fundamental issues of our existence that should be promoted among all and sundry. Environmental awareness and actions will go a long way to minimizing the problems of environmental degradation and enhancing people's quality of life in Nigeria. Through, environmental education, the individuals and community will gain better awareness of their environment and acquire knowledge, values, skills, and experience that will spur them to act individually and collectively to solve present and future environmental problems (Ogunyemi, 1994 and Tiamiyu, 2009).

The training of teachers is part of the programmed implementation of environmental education. The in-service teacher-training is to ensure the teaching of environmental education is not interrupted as new teachers enter the teaching profession. Environmental education, which essentially constitutes part of the curriculum in Social Studies, is therefore imperative for Social Studies teachers, including the trainee-teachers, in the context of globalization. Despite the importance of environmental education in the Social Studies curriculum, and more importantly to Social Studies teacher-trainees, the aspect of the knowledge of the teacher-trainees on environmental education has not been adequately researched into. This study therefore researches into this aspect in the NCE Social Studies curriculum.

Objectives of the study

- i. to find out the extent to which teacher-trainees differ based on home locations and the colleges attended to acquire knowledge about environmental education.
- ii. to find out the contribution of students' academic abilities to their knowledge of environmental education.

Research questions

- i. Is there any significant difference in the acquired knowledge of environmental education among teacher trainees according to the college attended?
- ii. Is there any significance in the acquired knowledge of environmental among teacher trainees' according to home location?
- iii. Do students' academic abilities (expressed in their G.P.A) significantly contribute to their knowledge of environmental education?

Research design

This is a descriptive research of the survey type. This is because the researcher did not manipulate any of the independent variables. The students have been taught different environmental courses in the different levels.

Population

The population for the study is some selected Social Studies teacher-trainees' from two selected Colleges of Education in Oyo State. Emmanuel Alayande College of Education and Federal College of Education (special) Oyo, who were in the 300 level in the Social Studies department.

Data analysis

The data collected were analysed by means of inferential statistics and descriptive statistics.

Presentation of findings

Table 1: What is the general level of teacher-trainees' knowledge about environmental education?

COLLEGE	N	MEAN	SD	MIN SCORE	MAX. SCORE	%OF MEAN
EAC*	100	20.06	6.54	5	37	40.1
FCS**	100	26.61	7.60	10	44	53.2
EAC*						
+	200	23.34	7.80	5	44	46.7
FCS**						

* Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo.

** Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo

Sample and sampling technique

From the two Colleges of Education in Oyo State, one hundred students were randomly selected from each of the colleges with the stratified sampling technique to include both the male and female sexes. In all, two hundreds (200) students from the two colleges constituted the sample. Forty-seven (47) were from commercial area of origin, thirty (30) were from industrial area of origin and twenty-three (23) were from agricultural area in Federal College of Education (special) Oyo. From Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, thirty-nine (39) were from commercial area of origin, twenty-three (23) were from industrial area of origin, while thirty-eight (38) were from agricultural area of origin.

Research instrument

A questionnaire was developed by the researcher to gather the needed information. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section focuses on demographic information of the students in terms of name of college attended, sex, age and home location. The second section consisted of 11 -20 statements which the respondents are to supply the answer.

Reliability and validity of instrument

The instrument was subjected to colleagues' and experts' constructive criticisms, corrections and modifications for the purpose of face and contents validity. The instrument was trial-tested among the sandwich NCE Social Studies. Split half method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument, which yielded 0.88 coefficients.

Procedure for data collection

The researcher visited the two colleges with the help of two assistants to administer the questionnaire. All the questionnaires were returned.

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of students' performance on environmental education with mean score, standard deviation, minimum score, maximum score and percentage of mean score. College 1 EAC has a mean score of 20.06, which amounts to 40.1% since the maximum obtainable mark is 50. College 2 FCS has a mean score of 26.1 which amounts to 53.2%. The two colleges combined have a mean score of 23.34, which is equal to 46.7%.

In the college, one the minimum score is 5 while the maximum score is 37 giving us a range of 32. In the college, two the minimum score is 5 while the maximum score is 44 with a range of 30. The two

COLLEGE	N	MENA	STD DEVIATION	STD ERROR MEAN	T	DF	SIG
EAC*	100	20.06	6.535	0.653	6.538	198	0.00
FCS**	100	26.61	7.593	0.759			

* Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo.

** Federal College of Education (special), Oyo.

The mean score of college one EAC is 20.06 while that of FCE is 26.61. Calculated t-test is 6.538, which is significant below 0.05 alpha that is required for the level of significance. Therefore, the two college performed significantly different from one another with (FCS) performing higher than (EAC).

colleges combined have a range of 39. In general, therefore, the performances of students in environmental education is a little below average with a wide variation between the poorest and the best candidates.

Research Questions 2: Is there any significant difference in the knowledge of environmental education among the teacher-trainees according to the college attended t – test analysis of performance on knowledge on environmental education by college attended?

Research Question 3: Is there any significant difference in the knowledge of environmental education among teacher – trainees according to home location?

Anova of students' knowledge of environmental education according to home location.

KNOWLEDGE		SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG
	Between groups	8.313	2	4.156	0.068	0.934
	Within groups	12080.555	197	61.28		
	TOTAL	12080.555	199			

Table 3 above shows that calculated F-ratio is 0.068, which is not significant at 0.05 probability. Therefore, there is no significant difference on the knowledge of students on the environment, based on home location. Performance is uniform across commercial, industrial and agriculture areas of origin.

Discussion of findings

The general knowledge of teacher – trainees about environmental education is a little below average, and with a wide variation between the poorest and the best

candidates. This may be as a result of teacher-trainees' abilities and some other factors of the school, such as the location and the existing environmental syllabus which may not be rich enough for the knowledge of teacher-trainees. The result of these findings is in line with the research carried out by Mansaray, Ajiboye and Audu (1998), which show that less than 30% of students have adequate knowledge of and positive attitudes to environmental education.

On the performance on knowledge of environmental education by the college attended, the two colleges

performed significantly differently with FCS performing higher than EAC. This difference in performance may be because of their classroom exposure, school location and even some of the country. This is similar to the finding in a study conducted by Oyewale, Oladiti and Raji (2007) with a sample of M.Ed., B. A, B.Sc., B. ED, HND and NCE graduates who teach social studies and environmental concepts. They were found to have performed differently in the teaching environmental concepts in social studies.

There is no significant difference on students' knowledge of the environment based on home location. Performance is uniform across commercial, industrial and agriculture areas of origin. This shows that environmental problems are found everywhere. Ogunsanya (2007) referenced that there was no significant difference in the assessment of respondents based on their educational qualification to environmental practices.

Conclusion

From the findings of this research, it could be concluded that Social Studies teacher-trainees' knowledge is little below average. The two colleges performed significantly differently with FCS higher than EAC. This difference may be probably because of their classroom experiences such as school location and some other agents of socialization. The students' performance is uniform across commercial, industrials and agriculture areas of origin about the knowledge of environmental education based on home location and this may likely show that environmental problems are found everywhere.

Recommendations

From the foregoing, the following suggestions were point forward

- Students who are above average should be considered for admission to study Social Studies in the college of Education.
- Examples should be drawn from students' localities while teaching some environmental concepts.
- Environmental studies should be introduced, as General Studies in order to educate non-social Studies teacher-trainees about environmental education as this will further improve people's quality of life.

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