Instructional Strategy and Students’ Performance in Religious Studies in Public Secondary Schools in Calabar South Local Government Area in Cross River State

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Abstract
The study investigates the influence of instructional strategy on students’ performance in religious studies in secondary schools. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The instrument used in gathering data was Religious Studies Performance Test (RSPT). The instrument was subject to face and content validation by the experts and the reliability coefficient of 0.95 was obtained through test-retest method. The research design adopted was a quasi-experimental pre-test post-test design. The study used the population of 1300 junior secondary three students and a sample of 165 students; the sample was selected from the population through purposive sampling techniques. Analysis of Covariance was used for testing the hypotheses. From the result obtained students taught using photographic series performed significantly better than students taught with expository strategy. Based on these findings, it was recommended that photographic series be used frequently in teaching religious studies in Junior Secondary Schools.

Keywords: Expository, Instructional, Performance, Photographic, Strategies.

Introduction
In Nigeria today there is much need for highly creative and innovative teaching strategies because of poor performance of students in schools. Photographic series are some of such highly creative and innovative teaching strategies. Photographs do more than just simply representing the world. They act on the world by connecting people to form and shape relationships in order to create communities. The photographic series approach to teaching and learning emphasizes the role of the learner as an active participant in the learning process. This is more than simply allowing students to observe or participate in the activity but encourages them to become self-directed learner.

These are series of photographs taken by teachers according to the contents to be used in the class to improve academic performance. A picture is worth a thousand words. This bit of popular wisdom suggests that photographs contain more information than mere text and that such information can be more easily processed and understood by observer. What is taught is not as important as how it is presented (Akama 2004).

Udo-Usoro (2001) observed that students’ academic performance in arts in general and religious studies in particular have been very poor. Teague (2004) observed that poor methods were used in teaching religious studies during the National Conference of the National association of Religious Studies Teachers of Nigeria (NARSTN) held at Bauchi State Polytechnic in 2001; it was revealed that there had been serious reduction in the enrollment of students in the subject in secondary school and tertiary level of learning.

For students performance to be improved, available instructional materials and the technology behind them are indispensable. The ability to effectively utilize available instructional facilities varied with their level of media education, this mean, teachers who are well equipped with
media technology would be assets to the system thereby improving the academic performance of students than it could be done through valued expository strategies.

Copper (2002) made a comparison of the effectiveness of photographic series versus expository strategies. The researcher examined the means scores and he pointed out that the photographic series approach had better effect on students than expository strategies. Isangedighi (2007) supported this position by concluding that when learning/teaching process is deficient in stimulation student development in intellectual ability would be retarded. Therefore in the situation where students are left with the traditional teaching strategies like that of the expository strategy, they become dull, backward or poor in academic performance.

In traditional or expository teaching strategy, which embellishes, collaborative learning, study habits and so on, students are assigned a passive role. They listen to the teacher, absorb what the teacher says and reproduce what the teacher has said at the later time. The teacher is the presenter of the information and serves as repertoire of knowledge thereby making the lesson teacher-centered. There is a boundary between the teacher and the students, and the interaction between them is highly limited (Allen, 1992). The expository teaching strategy is concerned with the teacher being the controller of the learning environment, power and responsibility are held by them and the play the role of instructors. They regard students as having ‘knowledge holes’ that need to be filled with information (Ahmani, 2007).

Blair (1986) maintained this position by stating that visual aids equally help the instructor to improve his own knowledge and ability and prepare him for effective lesson’s delivery which in turn affect performance of students. Coppersmith (2006) in his experiment found out similar result under certain circumstance which resulted in low academic performance by students. From the above opinions one could see the need to select and use instructional materials because they stimulate students and lead them to higher academic achievement.

It is obvious that males and females perform different roles in society. The two groups have different experiences, bodies of knowledge, needs’ and access to and control over resources. Gender gaps in academic performance are smaller than gender gaps in field of study. To Blair, a study conducted on gender disparity revealed that gender differences in academic performance appeared to relate to students motivation, interest in studying a particular subject than the teaching strategies used.

Female students engaged in different field of study that place less involvement on students than boys. They were under-represented in fields like mathematics, technology, engineering and science because of the practical involvement. Gender stereotyping as it had been observed posed a great threat to women educational pursuits. Yet women are equally endowed as man with intellectual resource (Culptip, 1991).

The issue of gender academic performance has however, today attracted many comments and concerns. While some proposed that males perform better than females academically, others argue the reverse to be the case. This study was aimed at providing research evidence on the potency of photographic series instructional strategy in correcting gender inequity in religious studies.

Statement of the Problem

In an ideal school environment where religious studies is taught by professionally instructional strategies and materials, students would be encouraged to perform well in the subject. Presently, in most secondary schools in Calabar South Local Government Area teachers with poor teaching method were assigned the responsiblity to teach the subject, so they teach without employing relevant instructional strategies and materials. Secondary school students hardly offer the subject at the senior secondary level and those who offer it perform poorly in both internal and
external examination. The task of this study is therefore to investigate the role of instructional strategies in improving students’ performance in religious studies when taught using photographic series.

**Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to determine the effect of photographic series and expository instructional strategies in facilitating students’ performance in religious studies in public secondary schools in Calabar South Local Government Area. Specifically the study seeks to:

1. Determine the difference in academic performance of students in religious studies when taught using photographic series and expository strategies.
2. Determine the difference in academic performance of students in religious studies when taught using photographic series and expository strategies based on gender.

**Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 significance level.

1. There is no significant difference in academic performance of students in religious studies when taught using photographic series and expository instructional strategies.
2. There is no significant difference in academic performance of students in religious when taught using photographic series and expository instructional strategies based on gender.

**Methodology**

This research adopted the quasi-experiment design using pre-test, post-test design. The population of the study consisted of all the 4305 junior secondary three students. This was made up of 2145 males and 2160 females offering religious studies in public secondary school in Calabar South Local Government Area. The sample sizes of 165 students comprising 93 females and 72 males in junior secondary three were selected from the population for the study. This was done through purposive sampling techniques in order to meet the purposive sampling procedure rule some criteria were set out:

i. A school that had at least a graduate religious teacher with the qualification of a B.Ed. in religious studies.
ii. The school must use the same religious studies syllabus with other government schools. Six schools met the aforementioned condition, four schools among those that met the criteria were selected through simple random sampling techniques. Two schools were used as experimental while other two were used as control groups.

**Table 1: Sampling Frame**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>L.G.A Treatment</th>
<th>Total Screen</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Gender Sample Total</th>
<th>Gender Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>School A</td>
<td>Calabar South</td>
<td>Experimental 1 group</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>120-m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>School B</td>
<td>Calabar Experimental</td>
<td>90-m</td>
<td>15-m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The instruments used for the study was Religious Studies Performance Test (RSPT) used to measure students’ performance. Religious Studies Performance Test (RSPT) was a researcher-developed instrument design to measure students’ performance. The instrument was administered on a pilot group of 40 students who did not participate in the study. The data collected from both groups were subjected to analysis using mean and standard deviation. After assigning samples to experimental and control groups, a pre-test was administered on both groups. Analysis of covariance was used to test the hypotheses. The pre-test scores served as covariates. The teaching was carried out for four (4) weeks of two periods (40 minutes per period) each per class. The religious studies performance test (RSPT) had twenty five items and four answer options each. Each correct answer was scored (2) marks, making a total score of fifty (50) for each test.

**Null Hypothesis I**: There is no significant difference in academic performance of students in religious studies when taught using photographic series and expository instructional strategies

**Table 2**: Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) for students’ performance scores in religious studies when taught using photographic and expository strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>f-cal</th>
<th>f-cal</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected model</td>
<td>53763.205a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26887.6.0</td>
<td>278.72</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>34364.283</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34364.2.8</td>
<td>356.31</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test-performance</td>
<td>7470.256</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7470.2.5</td>
<td>77.45</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment-groups</td>
<td>38857.853</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38857.8.5</td>
<td>402.90</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>15624.044</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>96.4.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>685428.000</td>
<td>165</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected total</td>
<td>69387.248</td>
<td>164</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Entries in Table 2 reveals that the main effect is significant at .05 levels. This is due to the fact that, the calculate f-value of 402.90 is greater than the critical f-value of 3.06 with 2 and 162 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated no significant difference in students’ performance in religious studies when taught using photographic and expository strategies is rejected in favour of the alternate one.
Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in academic performance of students in religious when taught using photographic series and expository instructional strategies based on gender.

Table 3: Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) for students’ performance in religious studies when taught using photographic and expository strategies based on gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>f-cal</th>
<th>f-crit</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected model</td>
<td>56002.380</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14000.59</td>
<td>167.36</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>36334.042</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36334.04</td>
<td>434.33</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test-performance</td>
<td>3785.017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3785.02</td>
<td>45.26</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment groups</td>
<td>39431.885</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39431.89</td>
<td>471.36</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>2058.760</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>280.95</td>
<td>24.61</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment-groups</td>
<td>280.949</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.358</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>13384.869</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>83.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>685428.000</td>
<td>165</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected total</td>
<td>69387.248</td>
<td>164</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. $R^2 = .807$ (Adjusted $R^2 = .802$)

The result from Table 3 shows the main effect is significant of .05 level, because the calculated $f$-value of 3.358 is greater than the critical $f$-value of 2.43 at 4 and 160 degree of freedom. This result implies that photographic series instructional strategies are gender sensitive as males and females perform differently despite treatment. This is as a result of variation in student’s interests in choice of stream and natural ability.

Discussion of the Findings

The result of the study shows that a significant difference in performance exist among student taught using photographic series and expository instructional strategies. Students exposed to photographic series instructional strategies out performed students exposed to expository instructional strategies. This implied that when the teaching methods and strategies are right and appropriate, almost all students would benefit according to their aptitude.

The significance of the result is in agreement with the opinion of Ajewole (1990) who stated that students who are taught with visual materials perform better academically than those who are taught with expository instructional strategies. It was in agreement with the opinion of Clark (2012) that it is an instructional method that assists in the development of both academic and social skills among students with learning disabilities. It is also in agreement with the views of Onyeka (1984) that physics students taught with cooperative learning strategy performed significantly better than those taught with competitive learning strategy.

The result of Table 2 reveals that a significance difference exits between female and male students in religious studies when taught using photographic series instructional strategy and expository strategies. This result implies that photographic series instructional strategies are gender sensitive as males and females performed differently despite the treatment. This result contradicts Okeke (1975) opinion that male subjects performed better than female subjects in academic work. It also contradicts the opinion of Emeh (2004) that there is accumulated evidence from large number of studies in mathematics which has largely demonstrated that male students are superior to the female counterparts in education. The result is in agreement with Okoye (1987) who maintained that females tended to do better than boys in Language Arts and Music while male out performed females in mathematics and sciences.

Conclusion
Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that there exists a significant difference in the academic performance of students in religious studies when taught using photographic series and expository instructional strategies. Also the study revealed that there exists a significant difference between the performance of male and female students in religious studies when taught using photographic series and expository instructional strategies. The female subjects performed better than the male in religious studies when taught using photographic series instructional strategies.

**Recommendations**

Based on the result of the study the following recommendations are made:

1. Photographic series instructional strategies enhance academic performance of students in religious studies. Therefore the use of photography in teaching especially religious studies should be encouraged.
2. Photographic series instructional strategy should be incorporated into teachers’ training programme in order to improve their teaching performance and gender output.

**References**


