

Teachers' Professional Commitment and Students' Interest in Social Studies Education in Akwa Ibom State-Nigeria

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Abstract. This research was undertaken to study students' perception of teachers' characteristics and the influence on their interest in Social Studies Education in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. The aim of the study was to investigate teachers' commitment as it relates to students' interest in Social Studies Education in order to outline ways to improve on teachers' motivation and students' interest. The study population consisted of Social Studies Education students from University Of Uyo, Nigeria (A) and College Of Education Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria (B). The research method adopted for this study was the ex-post facto research design with the stratified random sampling technique. The main instrument used in collecting data for the study was The Perception of Teachers' Characteristics and Students' Interest Questionnaire (PTCSIQ). The reliability, understanding and clarity of the questions in the instrument was established in a trial test was carried out. Alpha croanbach coefficient was used to correlate the data obtained. The researcher hypothesized the students perception of teachers' professional commitment does not influence the students' interest in Social Studies Education. The method used in the analysis of the collected data was Anova. The hypothesis was calculated at F-value of 7.007 and was significant at 0.05 level with a critical value of 3.00. The Fishers' LSD Multiple Comparison Analysis was used to determine the group means that brought the significance. It showed that students with moderate and high level perception of teachers' characteristics experienced more interest in Social Studies Education than students with low level perception. This showed that teachers should be motivated to enable them show more professional commitment to their duties. Based on the above result conclusions were drawn and some recommendations made.

Keywords: Teachers, Professional Commitment and Students Interest

1. Introduction

In spite of the contemporary emphasis on learner centred education, the importance of the teacher in the teaching- learning process can never be over emphasized (Isangedighi,2007). To be able to perform his role effectively, the teacher must possess the characteristics that will put him at the level of the needs of the learner. Evidently from records(Obot,survey, 2012) there is a consistent decrease in Social Studies Education students' enrolment between 2007/2008, 2009/2010 and 2011/2012 academic sessions. This in many opinions is as a result of many factors including teachers' professional commitment as it influences the students' interest in Social Studies Education. According to attribution theory, learners will like to repeat behaviour that will continue to bring the achievement of their own goals. They will also like the behaviour of others that will bring about achievement of goals set. If the students perceive that their needs will be satisfied through the characteristics of their teachers, they are most likely to develop interest to continue in the study.

2. Method

1.1. Sample

A total of one thousand (1000) students were used for the study.

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Table 1. Population distribution sample from Social Studies Education Students

Distribution	Population	50%	Male	Female
A	1028	514	194	320
B	973	486	181	305
Total	2001	1000	375	625

Source: Field Survey, 2011.

1.2. Instrumentation

The reliability test of the instrument showed as follows:

Table 2. Alpha croanbach coefficient of the research instrument (N=50)

S/n	Variables	No Items	X	SD	ALPHA COEFF
	Students, perception of teachers' level of professional commitment	5	16.60	1.59	0.64
	Students' interest in Social Studies	5	17.74	1.63	0.75

The main dependent variable of the study is Students' Interest. The mean and standard deviation of these main variables of the study were calculated and presented as shown in table 3.

Table 3. General description of research variables

Variables	N	X	SD
Teachers' Professional commitment	1000	16.8	1.51
Students' Interest	1000	17.74	1.61

3. Result and Analysis of Data

Table 4. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the influence of students' perception of teachers' level of professional commitment on their interest in Social Studies Education (N=1000)

Group	N	X	SD	
Low perception of teachers' level of professional commitment	428	17.53	1.59	
Moderate perception of teachers' level of professional commitment	213	17.98	1.26	
High perception of teacher's level of professional commitment	359	17.85	1.78	
Total	1000	17.74	1.61	
Source of variation	Sums of squares	df	MS	F-ratio
Between groups	35.934	2	17.967	
Within groups	252256.466	997	2.564	7.007*
Total	2502.400	999		

*Significant at .05 level, critical $F = 2, 997 = 3.00$

Table 5. Fishers' multiple comparison analysis (LSD) of the significant influence of students' perception of teachers' level of professional commitment on their interest in Social Studies Education

Teachers' level of professional commitment (I)	Teachers' level of professional commitment (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Standard Error	Sig level
Low	Moderate	-.4532*	.13427	.001
	High	-.3215*	.11460	.005
Moderate	Low	.4532*	.13427	.001
	High	.1316	.13849	.342
High	Low	.3215*	.11460	.005
	Moderate	-.1316	.13849	.342

*Significant at .05 level

4. Discussion

Based on the above results of the study, the following were the summary of findings: Students' perception of teachers' level of professional commitment has a significant influence on their interest in Social Studies Education. The result of the analysis indicated that students' perception of teachers' level of professional commitment has a significant influence on their interest in Social Studies Education. Esu, Erukoha and Umoren (1998) maintain that teachers need should be met to enable them exhibit commitment to curriculum implementation. For them, functional curriculum implementation is the function of teachers' professional commitment, lack of involvement in decision making in curriculum planning and implementation, ignorance of the actual philosophy and objectives of the school curriculum and motivation. They are possible obstacles to teachers' commitment. These include regular payment of salaries and other fringe benefits. Teachers will always look for other means of job satisfaction, survival and this is a distraction.

In the context of looking at improvisation of instructional materials in the teaching of Social Studies, Alota and Esu (1999) put forward that the Social Studies teacher who is professionally committed will ensure effective teaching strives creating enabling learning environment and materials. These sustain learner's interest since the targets will be achieved.

5. Recommendations

Consequently, Management of schools should always develop effective monitoring strategies to ensure the professional commitment of all teachers and Social Studies teachers in particular. Participatory methods and techniques of teaching should be effectively enforced among teachers to ensure students interest and participation in Social Studies and other subjects. Teachers should be adequately motivated by the government by way of proper remuneration for teacher effectiveness.

6. References

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