

# Innovations

## Field Trips and Their Effect on Learning Outcome of Students in Social Studies

Atubi, Onamrewho Favour and Ogheneakoke, E. Clifford

Department of Social Science Education

Faculty of Education

Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

Corresponding author & Email : **Atubi, Onamrewho Favour** , [favouratubi20@gmail.com](mailto:favouratubi20@gmail.com),  
[ofatubi@delsu.edu.ng](mailto:ofatubi@delsu.edu.ng)

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### Abstract

*The study examined the difference between the post-test mean score of students taught with field trips and those taught without field trips. The difference between the post-test mean score of male and female students taught Social Studies with field trips was also investigated. The study employed quasi experimental post- test only control group with a factorial design of 2x2, the first two represent field trips and convectional teaching while the second two represents male and female students. An instrument titled "Social Studies Learning Outcome Test" (SSLOT), was used for data collection. The findings of the study showed considerable difference in post-test mean score of students taught Social Studies with field trip and those taught without field trips. Secondly, there was no significant difference between the post-test mean scores of male and female students who were taught Social Studies with field trip.*

**Keywords:**1. Field trips; 2. Instructional Innovation; 3. Effects; 4. Social Studies; 5. Learning Outcome ; 6.Students and Gender.

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### 1.1. Introduction

The primary aim of education at the basic and secondary school levels in Nigeria is to enunciate knowledge, character and skills of learners. Thus education as a process involves learning through assimilation of knowledge, attitude and skills nevertheless, education is not an activity restricted to the school classroom or textbooks alone. It is a versatile and flexible activity a major component of any society that wants to grow and develop to become a prosperous state (Salihu & Abubakar,2020). This is evident in the large number of educational institutions in Nigeria from the basic through secondary schools to higher education. Studies and research revealed that experiential learning in education offers a more valuable and substantive learning experiences to learners more than the convectional classroom teaching. In a similar vein, experiential learning also promotes learning in the three domains of education which are the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains (Kenna,2019). A good example of an experiential learning method that provides valuable and substantive learning by promoting learning outcome in the three major domains of education is educational field trips (Muse, Chaireloff & Davidman 1982; Tuckey 1992; Tofield, Coll, Vyle & Oistad, 2003 and Coughlin,2010).

Field trip is an outside the school learning exercise carried out by teachers and their learners in some areas of a subject that needs practical exposure. These trips expose learners to full knowledge of a topic and

help them see things the way they are in real life (Obeka,2010). Field trips can be to a zoo, farm, industry, airport, railway station, seaport, forest, a university and so many other places. Field trip resources situated in communities are veritable tools for the transformation and development of Social Studies education in Nigeria (Atubi, 2019a). Adani (2016) saw educational field trip as a journey carried out by a class to examine real life evidence of a particular object, place or people for educational purpose. A field trip is normally undertaken with the aim of investigating, reviewing and getting first-hand knowledge/information about concepts and themes in the curriculum of a subject. Farmer, Knapp and Benton (2007) put that field trips are presentation method of learning outside the school environment, by using the trips as learning resources for igniting the creative thinking and inquiry skills of students. By implication, educational field trips will help students to gain comprehensive information on topics and themes in some aspects of a subject.

The lecture method of teaching which is the convectional mode used by teachers' in Nigeria, have come under great criticism of recent because of its passive nature. Atubi (2021) argued that due to the constant use of lecture teaching method by Social Studies teachers in Nigeria, Social Studies is suffering from the disease of "narration approach". Thus made a call for pragmatic steps to be taken such as making use of field trips for Social Studies lessons to diversify the learning arrays of students. Social Studies is a practical study of the environment therefore there is need to apply activity based and practical methods of learning about the environment to meet the needs of students. Fieldtrips will actively engage Social Studies learners, give them field and environmental experiences through interaction with the environment. Besides the practical knowledge inculcated into Social Studies learners, field trips expedition is a major booster to the achievement of the broader goals, aims and objectives of the Social Studies education program in Nigeria.

Researchers and experts in the discipline of Social Studies have emphasized the need for educators of the subject to allow learners explore and inquire facts by themselves under the tutelage of the teacher. The teacher should be the guide and initiator of field trip procedure, by identifying places of interest to the lesson. Most importantly, the teacher should understand that field trip technique encourages creativity and gives students opportunities to explore their own initiatives in drawing conclusions.

In the process of preparing Social Studies students adequately to understand their immediate environments, adopt good values, skills and attitudes to become good citizens. It is essential for teachers to incorporate creative, active and innovative pedagogical methods and strategies for teaching (Atubi,2018) hence the field trip method come highly recommended. Mustafa, Oluwaseun & Aydin (2020) sought to determine the importance of educational field trips in enhancing interactive learning, they discovered that not only does field trips enhances interactive learning, they also give an enjoyable and fun filled learning experience. Presently in Nigeria, many Social Studies teachers avoid the use of field trips irrespective of the immeasurable benefits they offer. Reasons may not be farfetched as this decline may be attributed to logistical concerns, teacher's skills, school administrations, time consumption and poor resources (Kenna,2009). These obstacles have become surmountable as technologies can help in providing virtual field trips for Social Studies lessons (Stoddard,2009).

Abaiboo (2018) described learning outcome as a common term normally used for both academic performance, academic attitude or academic achievement, therefore learning outcome measures both learning attitude, academic performance and achievement. Learning outcome also measures specific actions that are the result of change acquired due to learning, it is a comprehensive and integrated construct (Yusuf,2002). Therefore, the study wants to look at how the exposure of Social Studies students to field trips will impact on their learning outcome, the study will also look at the effect of gender on learning outcome of students taught with field trip experience.

## 1.2. Problem of the Study

The performance of Social Studies students in upper basic schools of Delta State in the last two decades is disheartening. Aina (2019) observed that Social Studies educators generally in Nigeria have always concentrated on the lecture teaching method which absorbs the students from achieving better learning outcomes. The lecture teaching method seem not to build the imaginative, intuitive and creative thinking skills of students. This explains why researchers in the field of Social Studies are concern on how to strategize and improve the learning outcome of students. The continuous usage of the traditional lecture method for teaching Social Studies can be tied to some of the challenges of cognitive performance faced by Nigerian students, this is because the method is teacher centered. It gives no room for students input nor cognitive reasoning during the learning process, hence this researcher is of the opinion that the use of lecture teaching method alone is not adequate for teaching Social Studies. As Social Studies is a practical and environmental based subject. The researcher believe that this problem can be solved through innovative utilization of field trips as a supplementary approach to boost students learning outcome in Social Studies across Nigeria's upper basic schools. The problem which this study intends to solve therefore is what is the effect of field trip method on the learning outcome of upper basic Social Studies students?

The main purpose of this study was to determine the Effects of Field Trips on Social Studies Students' learning outcome in Upper Basic Schools. The study's specific purposes are to

- 1) Examine the difference between the post-test mean scores of students taught Social Studies with field trip and those taught without field trips.
- 2) Investigate the difference between the post-test mean scores of male and female students taught Social Studies with field trips.

## 1.3 Research Questions

RQ1: What is the difference between the post-test mean scores of students taught Social Studies with field trips and those taught without field trips?

RQ2: What is the difference between the post-test mean scores of male and female students taught Social Studies with field trips method of teaching?

## 1.4 Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the post –test mean scores of students taught Social Studies with field trips and those taught without field trips.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between the post-test mean scores of male and female students taught Social Studies with field trips.

## 2.1. Theoretical Support

The theoretical support for the study is the Engagement Theory whose exponents are Kearsley and Shneiderman (1999), the theory postulates that engagement of students in learning activities elicits engaged learning. The underlying principle of the theory is that meaningful learning can be achieved by learners when they are actively involved and engaged in learning, through interaction and performance of valuable tasks. The theory went further to state that engaged learning happens when inquiry is made part of the cognitive process for the learners by making them problem solvers and decision takers in learning. This help them to construct knowledge through experiential learning, therefore the engagement theory is a representation of knowledge development. Individualize and interactive instructions are the center of the engagement theory through the provision of a typical learning setting. This study is concern with the application of field trips in

teaching Social Studies therefore the engagement theory is applicable to this study. Since during field trips students are actively engaged in inquiry, problem solving, evaluation and experiential learning.

## 2.2. Review of Related Literature

Sivakumar, (2018) defined teaching resources as anything human or non- human that can be useful in promoting Social Studies education. Sitali-Mubanga, Lukonga and Denuga (2018) posited that when field trips are utilized as innovations in teaching and learning Social Studies, proficiently learning is achieved, by conducting a qualitative investigation on sixteen students. Coughlin (2020) argued that the use of field trips method for teaching Social Studies isn't new, in fact it has been a practice among teachers of the subject from time immemorial. Also, Muse Chairaloff and Davidman (1982) supported the view that educational field trips were an extensive practice among teachers during the early progressive era of the teaching profession. Paez and Rubio (2015) explained that field trips are concise ways of teaching huge quantity of learning materials within a short time, when learners have no prior knowledge on the topic. Pope (2009) opined that Social Studies learners gain from continuous usage of field trips as they promote first- hand knowledge and information. Mahgoub (2014) established the relationship between educational field trips and the ability of art students to perform art tasks. Raines (2014) examined virtual and interactive field trip on learning and revealed that virtual field trip can help students explore places, objects and situations without being physically present. Also, Obadiora (2015) argued that there is overwhelming difference between the effectiveness of real and virtual field trips with the virtual field trip being more effective.

Tal (2004) discussed the importance of using field trips as a method of enhancing understanding of pre-service chemistry teachers on environmental education. Stoddard (2019) submitted that field trips are valuable means of teaching history classes through visits to historical monuments and sites. Atubi (2019b) pointed out that community resources when visited through field trips can be effective in Social Studies delivery. Also Atubi and Dania (2020) reported positive results from integrating Art galleries into upper basic Social Studies through visiting art galleries. Kenna (2019) revealed that 51% of teachers in Florida utilized educational field trips as teaching strategy in 2018. In a similar vein, Omeodu & Abara (2018) and Taneo (2017) found out that teachers perceived many benefits from educational field trips, these benefits include giving students concrete experiences, motivation of learners in a subject, hands on learning and provision of quality education. Morris (2010) asserted that field trips make Social Studies lessons to be real, meaningful and full of excitement. However, Newmann and Wehlage (1993) opined that for genuine learning to happen during a field trip, the following must occur;

- 1) Students should be able to build meaning and replicate knowledge gained from field trips.
- 2) Inquiry method should be adopted by the teacher and students.
- 3) Learning should promote lifelong education that should go beyond passing class tests and examinations.

On the effect of gender on learning outcomes in relationship to field trip usage, Tete and Omokhua (2020) reported no indicative difference in the learning outcomes of male and female students who were taught with field trip. Again, Ukor and Abdulbajar also reported no significant difference in gender as far as learning outcomes of field trip is concern. However, Estawul, Sababa and Filgona (2016) found out in their study on field trip and academic achievement in Geography that there is considerable difference in the academic achievement of both gender as male students performed far better than their female counterpart. Whether other factors influenced this difference is yet to be determined. This study is set out to either accept or refute the findings in these studies consulted during literature reviewed.

### 3.1. Research Methodology and Sampling Technique

The design for the study was quasi experiment post- test only control group, with a 2x2 factorial design. The design for the study is summarized below:

O1	X1
O2	X

Where:

O1= Post-test for experimental group

O2= Post- test for control group

X1 = Treatment for Experimental group

X= Control group

This study was carried out in the third term of the 2020/2021 academic session. The population of the study comprise of three thousand one hundred and twelve (3112) upper basic three students in Delta Central senatorial district in Delta State Nigeria. A sample of eighty (80) students were randomly sampled for the study while purposive sampling technique was used to choose four schools. The schools choose were Abraka Grammer School Abraka, Army Day Secondary School Effurun, Government College Ughelli and Osubi Secondary School Osubi all in Delta central senatorial zone of Delta State. Twenty upper basic three students each from Abraka Grammer School and Osubi Secondary school were selected through a simple random sampling technique as the experimental group. Likewise, twenty students each from Army day school and Government college Ughelli were also selected through a simple random sampling technique as the control group. This gave a total of forty participants for the experimental group and forty for the control group. The researcher ensured that for the experimental group, twenty (20) students were male and twenty (20) were females by using a random sampling technique in such a way that gave equal chances for both gender, bearing in mind that gender is a variable under study. The researcher used 80 students for the study considering the fact that it is a quasi-experimental study and therefore do not need too many participants in other to be able to control the experiment and prevent extraneous variables from contaminating the study.

### 3.2. Data Collection and Instrumentation

The two groups of students were taught "Transportation" a topic in their third term Social Studies scheme of work, the students in the control group were taught without any field trips but with normal lecture mode of teaching, while those in the experimental group were taught with field trip as an instructional innovation. A post-test was administered to both groups with the instrument for the study which is a "Social Studies Learning Outcome Test (SSLOT)". The content validity and construct reliability of the SSLOT was ascertained and a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.79 obtained. Data was analyzed with descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and hypotheses tested with t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

### 3.3. Treatment Procedure

The procedure for the study was carried out in three stages, the first stage was the preliminary stage where the researcher met with the administrators of the four schools and management of the places visited for permission to make use of the upper basic 3 students for the study. The consent of the Social Studies teachers who were research assistants was sought, the teachers were given tutorials and lesson plans for the study. Transportation and logistical arrangements were also made in the preliminary stage.

In the second stage, the four Social Studies teachers (research assistants) taught the control group "Transportation" during the normal Social Studies period in the school time table. The control group did not

receive any form of treatment from the research assistants but the experimental group was treated. However, after much preparations, the researcher and two (2) research assistants after due permission from the school principal, took three (3) trips with the experimental group to Osubi Airport, Ujewvu Railway station at Ujewvu and Warri seaport at Warri all in Delta Central district in one day. They visited these places one after the other to have first-hand and concrete experience on the chosen topic. They were taught "Transportation" with the various modes of transport, the students saw for themselves these modes and entered the airplane, trains and ship. After which the students were given a post field lecture, they took down notes, asked questions and were also asked questions.

In the third stage, a post-test was administered after three days of returning from the fieldtrips to both the experimental and control groups. The test items carried 2 marks each and the fifty items were marked over 100%. The post- test scores for the control and experimental groups, were collated and compared. The outcomes of the post-test were subjected to appropriate statistical analysis with mean, standard deviation and t-test, which were used to answer research questions and test hypotheses.

#### 4.1 Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the difference between the post-test mean scores of students taught Social Studies with field trips and those taught without field trips?

**Table 1: Post-test mean scores of students taught Social Studies with field trips and those taught without field trips.**

Post-test	N	Mean	STD	Mean Difference
Control group	40	29.1	2.38	31.7
Experimental group	40	60.8	1.41	

Table 1 showed that the mean score of control group was 29.1, while that of the experimental group was 60.8. The mean difference here is 31.7 in favor of the experimental group, therefore there was a substantial difference between the post-test mean scores of upper basic three students taught with field trips and those taught without field trips.

Research Question 2: What is the difference between the post-test mean scores of male and female students taught Social Studies with field trips method of teaching?

**Table 2: What is the difference between the post-test mean scores of male and female students taught Social Studies with field trips?**

Sex	N	Mean	STD	Mean Difference
Female	20	30.80	2.18	0.8
Male	20	30.00	2.21	

Table 2 revealed a post-test mean score of 30.80 for female students and a post-test mean score of 30.00 for male students. The mean difference between the post-test mean scores of female and male students taught social studies with field-trips was 0.08. Therefore, there was no considerable difference in the two mean scores, however, hypothesis two was tested to ascertain this result.

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference in the post –test mean scores of students taught Social Studies with field trips and those taught without field trips.

**Table 3: The t-test results on the significant difference in the post –test mean scores of students taught Social Studies with field trip and those taught without field trips.**

Post-test	N	Mean	SD	t-calculated	df	t-critical	Sig. level	Decision
Control	40	29.10	2.38	8.60	78	1.67	0.05	Reject
Experimental	40	60.80	1.41					Ho1

Calculated  $p > 0.05$ .

The paired post-tests and p statistics in table 3 shows that there was a significant difference between the control and experimental group. This is because calculated p was greater than critical t value of 1.67 at a degree of freedom of 78. This shows that there was substantial increase in learning outcome of the experimental group. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, thus there is significant difference in the post-test mean score of students taught Social Studies using field trip and those taught without field trips. This means that the use of field trips has a positive effect on students learning outcome in Social Studies.

**Ho2:** There is no significant difference between the post-test mean scores of male and female students taught Social Studies with field trips teaching method.

**Table 4: The t-test results on significant difference between the post-test mean scores of male and female students taught Social Studies with field trips**

Sex	N	Mean	SD	t-calculated	df	t-critical	siglevel	Decision
Female	20	30.80	2.18	1.18	38	1.68	0.05	Accept
Male	20	30.00	2.21					

The result of individual t-test analysis revealed that there was no significant difference between the post-test mean scores of male and female students taught Social Studies with field. As the calculated t of 1.18 was lesser than critical t of 1.68 at 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that the male students were at par with their female counterparts, hence gender did not moderate the effect of field trips on learning outcome of students in Social Studies.

#### 4.2 Findings

The study discovered a substantial difference between the post-test mean scores of students taught Social Studies with field trips and those not taken to field trips. Also the study found out that there was no significant difference between post-test mean scores of male and female students exposed to field trips. This means that Social Studies students taught with field trips performed far better than those taught without field trips. Also there was no significant difference in the learning outcome of both male and female students taught using field trips as an instructional innovation.

#### 4.3 Discussion of Findings

The study discovered that Social Studies students that were taught “Transportation” with field trips performed better than their fellow students who were taught without them. This may be attributable to the innovative nature of field trips introduced to the students. As field trips have been found to diversify the learning abilities of students because they expose the students to real and practical knowledge which promotes retention and easy remembering. These finding is in agreement with Paez, D & Rubio, L., A. (2015); Sitali-Mubanga, Lukonga and Denuga (2018); Ukor & Abdulbajar (2019) and Tete & Omokhua (2020). These studies discovered considerable difference in the performance/learning outcome of students that were

taught utilizing field trips and those who weren't exposed to field trip as a teaching method. These studies therefore revealed that field trips are good to be used as learning innovation for the teaching of Social Studies to boost easy conceptualization, students' perception, motivation, retention and learning aspirations.

On the other hand, the study found no considerable difference in the performance of male and female students taught with field trips as an innovation. This result can be as a result of exposing both gender to this teaching strategy at the same time therefore the students were all eager. This eagerness gave a level playing field for motivation which eventually culminated into a brilliant performance on both sides. This is in nexus with Tete & Omokhua (2020) and Ukor & Abdulbajar (2019). The studies reported no substantial difference in the performance of male and female students exposed to field trips as a teaching strategy. On the contrary, this finding is in disagreement with Estawul et al (2016) who reported that male students outdone their female colleagues when taught with field trip strategy.

### **5.1 Conclusion**

From the findings in this study, it is evident that field trips adoption as instructional innovation to complement the traditional teaching method produced a better result in the learning outcome of Social Studies students. This is because they enhance students' cognition, understanding, motivation and interest. As students taught Social Studies in this research with field trips recorded a significant increase in learning outcome when compared with their counterparts who were not exposed to any field trip. This strategy has also shown to be non-discriminatory in gender as indicated by the second finding. Field trips therefore can be adopted as instructional innovation by Social Studies teachers for teaching the subject in primary, secondary tertiary educational institutions.

### **5.2 Implication of Field Trips for Learning Outcomes in Social Studies**

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher would like to make the following suggestions.

- 1) Field trips should be adopted as an instructional innovation at all levels of Social Studies education.
- 2) School administrators and Social Studies teachers should make adequate and effective preparations for field trips in schools
- 3) Social Studies curriculum planners should incorporate field trips as instructional innovation into the curriculum at all levels
- 4) The Federal and State governments should motivate Social Studies teachers through the various education stakeholders by ways of training, providing financial assistance and logistics to support the use of field trips in Social Studies as well as other subjects that may require field trips to boost learning outcome.

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### Conflict of interest

The researcher would want to categorically state that there exists no conflict of interest as far as this study is concern

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