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Influence Of Teacher-Related Factors On The Implementation Of Social Studies Curriculum At Upper Basic Education Level In Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State

Dr. DANBURAM, Ibrahim Umar, TIJJANI Habu, & MUSA Haruna Sale

Department of Educational Foundation, Taraba state University, Jalingo, Nigeria
Correspondence emails: Tjhabu84@gmail.com;
Danburamibrahim78@gmail.com:
Musaharuna770@gmail.com:
Phones: 08034614242, 08032257537 & 08062761626

ABSTRACT
This study investigated the influence of teacher-related factors on the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria, with particular emphasis on teachers' qualification and teachers' use of instructional materials. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses tested at the 0.05 level of significance. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population of the study comprised 105 Social Studies teachers in public upper basic schools in Wukari and Ibi Local Government Areas of Taraba State. Since the population was manageable, a census sampling technique was adopted; however, only 101 respondents participated in the study due to the unavailability of four teachers during data collection. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire titled *Teachers' Influence on Related Factors in Social Studies Questionnaire (TIRFISQ)*. The instrument was validated by experts in Social Studies, Science Education, and Measurement and Evaluation, while a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.88 was obtained, indicating high internal consistency. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while Chi-square statistics were used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that teachers' qualification and teachers' use of instructional materials significantly influence the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone. The study concluded that professionally qualified teachers and the effective utilization of instructional materials are indispensable for successful curriculum implementation. It was therefore recommended that educational authorities should recruit professionally qualified Social Studies teachers, provide continuous professional development programmes, and ensure the adequate provision and effective utilization of instructional materials to improve the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in public upper basic schools.
Keywords: Social Studies curriculum, teacher, instructional materials

INTRODUCTION

Education remains one of the most important instruments for developing responsible, productive, and informed citizens capable of contributing meaningfully to national development. It serves as a catalyst for economic growth, social transformation, technological advancement, and cultural preservation. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2023), education

promotes sustainable development by equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, values, and competencies required to address contemporary societal challenges. UNESCO (2024) further emphasizes that quality education enhances human capital, reduces inequality, and fosters inclusive development. Similarly, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) recognizes education as an indispensable tool for national development and stresses the importance of ensuring quality teaching and learning at all levels of the educational system.

At the Upper Basic Education level in Nigeria, Social Studies occupies a strategic position in achieving national educational objectives. The subject equips learners with civic knowledge, democratic values, problem-solving abilities, and social skills necessary for peaceful coexistence and responsible citizenship. According to the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2022), Social Studies is designed to develop learners' understanding of their environment, promote national unity, and prepare students for effective participation in society. Likewise, Banks (2020) explains that Social Studies education enables learners to develop critical thinking, social responsibility, and respect for cultural diversity, while UNESCO (2023) identifies the subject as an important vehicle for promoting global citizenship education.

The achievement of these objectives depends largely on the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum. Curriculum implementation refers to the process of translating curriculum plans, objectives, and content into meaningful classroom experiences through effective teaching and learning activities. Ornstein and Hunkins (2018) describe curriculum implementation as the practical execution of planned educational programmes, while Fullan (2020) argues that successful implementation depends greatly on the teacher's ability to interpret and deliver curriculum content effectively. Therefore, regardless of how well a curriculum is designed, its success ultimately depends on teachers who implement it in the classroom.

Among the various factors influencing curriculum implementation, teachers' qualification remains one of the most significant. Teacher qualification refers to the academic and professional credentials that prepare teachers with the knowledge, pedagogical skills, and competencies necessary for effective classroom instruction. Qualified teachers possess adequate subject knowledge, instructional skills, and professional competence required to interpret curriculum objectives accurately and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. Darling-Hammond (2022) maintains that professionally qualified teachers contribute significantly to improved teaching quality and learner achievement. Similarly, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2021) reports that teacher qualifications are positively associated with instructional effectiveness and students' academic outcomes.

Another important teacher-related factor is the use of instructional materials. Instructional materials include textbooks, charts, maps, models, globes, audio-visual resources, digital technologies, and other teaching aids that facilitate effective classroom instruction. These materials make learning more meaningful by simplifying abstract concepts, stimulating learners' interest, and encouraging active participation during lessons. UNESCO (2022) notes that adequate instructional resources improve students' understanding and enhance curriculum implementation, while Mayer (2021) argues that the effective use of multimedia instructional materials promotes deeper learning and better knowledge retention. In Social Studies education, instructional materials are particularly important because they help learners visualize geographical locations, historical events, social institutions, and cultural practices, thereby improving comprehension and participation.

Despite the importance of qualified teachers and adequate instructional materials, evidence suggests that many public upper basic schools in Nigeria continue to experience challenges associated with inadequate teacher qualifications and insufficient utilization of instructional resources. These challenges often result in ineffective curriculum implementation, poor learner participation, and reduced achievement of instructional objectives. In Wukari Education Zone of Taraba State, observations indicate that some Social Studies teachers may not possess specialized qualifications in the subject, while the availability and utilization of instructional materials remain inadequate in many schools. Such conditions may hinder

the successful implementation of the Social Studies curriculum and limit the attainment of its intended educational goals.

Although previous studies have examined factors affecting curriculum implementation in different educational settings, limited empirical evidence exists on how teachers' qualification and teachers' use of instructional materials specifically influence the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. This gap necessitates the present study. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the influence of teachers' qualification and teachers' use of instructional materials on the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

Statement of the Problem

Education is expected to produce responsible, disciplined, and productive citizens who possess the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes required for national development. One of the major subjects established to achieve these objectives at the Upper Basic Education level is Social Studies, which is designed to promote civic responsibility, moral values, national unity, peaceful coexistence, and democratic participation among learners. Effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum is therefore essential for achieving these educational goals. However, the realization of these objectives depends largely on the quality of teachers responsible for curriculum delivery and the availability and effective utilization of instructional materials during the teaching and learning process.

Despite the important role of Social Studies in shaping learners' character and citizenship values, evidence from many public upper basic schools suggests that the curriculum is not being implemented as effectively as expected. In Wukari Education Zone of Taraba State, increasing cases of indiscipline, examination malpractice, drug abuse, violence, disrespect for constituted authority, cult-related activities, kidnapping, and other antisocial behaviours among young people continue to generate concern among educators, parents, and policymakers. These social problems raise questions about whether the Social Studies curriculum is being implemented effectively to achieve its intended objectives of developing morally upright, responsible, and socially conscious citizens.

One major factor that may be responsible for this situation is the qualification of teachers handling Social Studies in upper basic schools. In some schools, teachers assigned to teach the subject may lack the required academic and professional qualifications, thereby limiting their ability to interpret curriculum objectives, apply appropriate teaching strategies, and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. Inadequate teacher qualification may consequently affect the quality of curriculum implementation and learners' attainment of the desired knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes.

Another challenge relates to the availability and effective use of instructional materials. Social Studies requires the use of teaching resources such as textbooks, maps, charts, globes, audio-visual materials, and other instructional aids to enhance learners' understanding of concepts and encourage active classroom participation. However, observations indicate that many public upper basic schools in Wukari Education Zone either lack adequate instructional materials or fail to utilize available resources effectively during classroom instruction. This situation may reduce learners' interest, limit active participation, and negatively affect the successful implementation of the Social Studies curriculum.

Although several studies have examined factors influencing curriculum implementation in different educational contexts, there is limited empirical evidence focusing specifically on the influence of teachers' qualification and teachers' use of instructional materials on the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. This gap in knowledge necessitates the present study. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the influence of teachers' qualification and teachers' use of instructional materials on the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically, this study seeks to:

i. Ascertain the influence of teachers' qualification on effective implementation of social studies curriculum at Upper Basic Level of Education in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.
ii. Determine the influence of teachers' use of instructional materials on effective implementation of social studies curriculum at Upper Basic Level of Education in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

i. What is the influence of teachers' qualification on the effective implementation of social studies curriculum at Upper Basic Level of Education in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State?
ii. What is the influence of teachers' use of instructional materials on the effective implementation of social studies curriculum at Upper Basic Level of Education in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho_1: Teachers' teaching qualification does not significantly influence the implementation of social studies curriculum at upper basic level of education.

Ho_2: Teachers' use of instructional materials does not significantly influence the implementation of social studies curriculum at upper basic level of education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine teacher-related factors influencing the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in Upper Basic schools within Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. The study was conducted in Wukari and Ibi Local Government Areas, with a population of 105 teachers, out of which 101 respondents participated through a census sampling technique after four respondents were unavailable. A researcher-developed questionnaire titled *Teachers' Influence on Related Factors in Social Studies Questionnaire (TIRFISQ)* served as the main instrument for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of 60 items covering six key dimensions: teachers' qualifications, instructional materials, teaching methods, teaching experience, attitude toward teaching, and competence. To ensure the quality of the instrument, it was subjected to face and content validation by three experts from Taraba State University, while its reliability was established through a pilot study using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.88, indicating high internal consistency. Data were collected with the assistance of trained research assistants after obtaining permission from school authorities and assuring respondents of confidentiality. The collected data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while Chi-square statistics were employed to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected from 100 teachers on the Teachers' Influence on Related Factors in Social Studies Questionnaire (TIRFISQ). The analysis is organized according to the six research questions and six hypotheses. Descriptive statistics (mean scores) are used to determine the influence of teacher-related factors on the implementation of the social studies curriculum.

Research Question One: *What is the influence of teachers' qualification on the effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum at Upper Basic Level of Education in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State?*

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on Teachers' Qualification and Effective Implementation of Social Studies Curriculum (N = 101)

S/N	Item Statements	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The teacher is a critical resource for effective curriculum implementation.	101	3.72	0.58	Agree
2	Qualified teachers are instrumental for academic excellence.	101	3.75	0.54	Agree
3	Teachers with requisite qualification and competent teaching topics are ideal for effective implementation.	101	3.68	0.61	Agree
4	Assigning Social Studies subject to teachers who are masters of other subjects can prevent effective curriculum implementation.	101	3.55	0.70	Agree
5	The quality of a nation's education can only be as high as the quality of its teachers.	101	3.78	0.52	Agree
6	Teachers with the right qualification are better equipped for practical teaching.	101	3.70	0.59	Agree
7	A better curriculum document can be actualized if qualified teachers are involved from formulation to implementation.	101	3.66	0.63	Agree
8	Teachers' educational qualifications influence students' learning outcomes in Social Studies.	101	3.71	0.57	Agree
9	Well-qualified teachers are more confident in handling curriculum innovations.	101	3.60	0.65	Agree
10	Continuous academic upgrading enhances teachers' qualification and instructional performance.	101	3.63	0.62	Agree

Grand Mean = 3.68 Average SD = 0.60 Decision = Agree

The results presented in Table 1 reveal respondents' perceptions regarding the influence of teachers' qualification on the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level. The mean scores for all the items ranged from 3.55 to 3.78, which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates agreement among respondents that teachers' qualification significantly influences effective curriculum implementation. Specifically, Item 1, which states that the teacher is a critical resource for effective curriculum implementation, recorded a mean score of 3.72 (SD = 0.58), indicating strong agreement among respondents. Item 2, which focused on qualified teachers being instrumental for academic excellence, obtained a mean score of 3.75 (SD = 0.54), suggesting that respondents recognize the importance of teacher qualification in promoting educational achievement. Item 3, which examined the role of requisite qualification and competence in teaching, recorded a mean score of 3.68 (SD = 0.61), while Item 4, relating to assigning Social Studies to teachers who are not specialists in the subject area, had a mean score of 3.55 (SD = 0.70). These findings indicate that subject specialization contributes significantly to curriculum effectiveness. Furthermore, Item 5 recorded the highest mean score of 3.78 (SD = 0.52), demonstrating respondents' strong belief that the quality of education largely depends on the quality of teachers. Items 6 and 7, which focused on practical teaching competence and teacher involvement in curriculum development, recorded mean scores of 3.70 and 3.66 respectively, showing that qualified teachers are essential for successful curriculum planning and implementation. Similarly, Items 8, 9, and 10, which addressed learning outcomes, confidence in curriculum innovation, and continuous professional development, recorded mean scores ranging from 3.60 to 3.71. These results further affirm that teacher qualification positively affects instructional delivery and student achievement. The grand mean score of 3.68 with an average standard deviation of 0.60 indicates a high level of agreement among respondents. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' qualification has a significant influence on the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

Research Question Two: *What is the influence of teachers' use of instructional materials on the effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum at Upper Basic Level of Education in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State?*

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on Teachers' Use of Instructional Materials and Effective Implementation of Social Studies Curriculum (N = 101)

S/N	Item Statements	N	Mean	SD	Decision
11	I use student textbooks to illustrate key issues during my teaching.	101	3.55	0.64	Agree
12	Globes are used to help students learn about people in different places of the world during my teaching.	101	3.40	0.72	Agree
13	I use chalkboards effectively whenever I am teaching Social Studies in my classroom.	101	3.65	0.58	Agree
14	I usually use dictionaries to find the origin, meaning, and usage of some Social Studies words when I am teaching in the classroom.	101	3.30	0.76	Agree
15	Graphs are used to make my teaching real in Social Studies.	101	3.48	0.67	Agree
16	Newspapers and magazines are used to help students learn current affairs and events in my classroom.	101	3.35	0.73	Agree
17	I usually use maps to illustrate the location of places in my teaching.	101	3.52	0.65	Agree
18	Audio visual materials enhance students' understanding of Social Studies concepts.	101	3.60	0.60	Agree
19	I improvise instructional materials when standard ones are not available.	101	3.28	0.78	Agree
20	Adequate availability of instructional materials makes teaching and learning more effective.	101	3.72	0.55	Agree

Grand Mean = 3.49 Average SD = 0.67 Decision = Agree

The results presented in Table 2 reveal respondents' perceptions regarding the influence of teachers' use of instructional materials on the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level. The mean scores for all the items ranged from 3.28 to 3.72, which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates agreement among respondents that the use of instructional materials significantly influences effective curriculum implementation.

Specifically, Item 11, which states that teachers use student textbooks to illustrate key issues during teaching, recorded a mean score of 3.55 (SD = 0.64), indicating that textbooks remain an important instructional resource. Item 12, which focused on the use of globes to help students learn about different places of the world, obtained a mean score of 3.40 (SD = 0.72), suggesting that visual teaching aids are utilized to support geographical understanding. Item 13, which assessed the effective use of chalkboards during instruction, recorded a mean score of 3.65 (SD = 0.58), indicating that the chalkboard remains a valuable instructional tool in Social Studies classrooms. Item 14, relating to the use of dictionaries to explain the origin, meaning, and usage of Social Studies terms, recorded a mean score of 3.30 (SD = 0.76), showing that teachers make use of reference materials to facilitate comprehension. Furthermore, Item 15, which focused on the use of graphs to make teaching more realistic, recorded a mean score of 3.48 (SD = 0.67), while Item 16 on the use of newspapers and magazines to teach current affairs recorded a mean score of 3.35 (SD = 0.73). These findings suggest that teachers incorporate different instructional materials to enrich classroom learning and connect lessons with real-life situations. Similarly, Item 17 on the use of maps recorded a mean score of 3.52 (SD = 0.65), while Item 18 on the use of audio visual materials recorded a mean score of 3.60 (SD = 0.60), demonstrating the importance of visual and multimedia resources in enhancing students' understanding of Social Studies concepts. Item 19, which examined teachers' ability to improvise instructional materials when standard resources are unavailable, recorded a mean score of 3.28 (SD = 0.78), indicating that teachers are able to adapt to resource constraints. Finally, Item 20 recorded the highest mean score of 3.72 (SD = 0.55), showing that

respondents strongly agreed that the adequate availability of instructional materials improves teaching and learning effectiveness. The grand mean score of 3.49 with an average standard deviation of 0.67 indicates a high level of agreement among respondents. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' use of instructional materials has a significant influence on the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

Null Hypotheses

The six null hypotheses formulated for this study were tested using the **Chi-square (χ^2) statistic** at the **0.05 level of significance** to determine whether teacher-related factors significantly influence the implementation of the social studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. The Chi-square test was appropriate for analyzing categorical data derived from the 4-point Likert-scale responses (SA = 4, A = 3, D = 2, SD = 1), allowing for assessment of whether observed frequencies significantly differ from expected frequencies under the null hypotheses.

Table 3: Hypothesis 1 (H01) – Chi-Square Analysis of Teachers' Qualification and Curriculum Implementation

S/N	Item Factor	Mean Score	χ^2 Value	df	p-value	Decision
1	1–10	3.53	48.72	3	0.000	Rejected

The mean score in table 3 of 3.53 (above the cut-off mean of 2.50) indicates that teachers generally agree that their qualifications positively influence social studies curriculum implementation. Teachers with higher qualifications are more capable of understanding and delivering the content effectively, using appropriate pedagogical strategies, and handling curriculum innovations. The chi-square statistic (χ^2 = 48.72, p = 0.000) confirms that the observed distribution of responses is significantly different from what would be expected by chance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows a strong, statistically significant relationship between teacher qualification and effective curriculum implementation, suggesting that policy measures should prioritize teacher education and qualification improvement.

Table 4: Hypothesis 2 (H02) – Chi-Square Analysis of Teachers' Use of Instructional Materials

S/N	Item Factor	Mean Score	χ^2 Value	Df	p-value	Decision
1	11–20	3.48	42.15	3	0.000	Rejected

The mean score in table 4 of 3.48 shows that teachers frequently use instructional materials such as textbooks, maps, globes, and audio-visual aids to enhance students' understanding of social studies. The chi-square test (χ^2 = 42.15, p = 0.000) indicates that the observed response patterns are statistically significant, not due to random chance. This result demonstrates that teachers' use of instructional materials significantly impacts curriculum implementation. Practically, it suggests that ensuring adequate teaching resources in classrooms directly enhances student engagement, comprehension, and learning outcomes.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section presents a detailed discussion of the findings of the study based on the research questions. The discussion is anchored on relevant empirical literature, showing areas of agreement and disagreement with previous studies on teachers' qualification, instructional materials, teaching methods, teaching experience, attitude, and competence as determinants of effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum in Upper Basic Schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

The finding of the present study revealed that teachers' qualification significantly influences the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. The result indicates that professionally qualified teachers are better able to interpret curriculum objectives, prepare lesson plans effectively, select appropriate instructional strategies, and

deliver instruction in a more organised and meaningful manner. This finding suggests that teacher qualification is a critical determinant of curriculum implementation quality. This finding is strongly supported by the empirical work of Okafor (2019), who conducted a descriptive survey in Enugu State and found that teachers possessing professional qualifications such as NCE and B.Ed demonstrated significantly higher competence in curriculum interpretation, lesson preparation, and instructional delivery. Okafor concluded that teacher qualification plays a central role in determining the quality of curriculum implementation and recommended that only professionally trained teachers should be assigned to teach Social Studies. The present study aligns closely with this conclusion, as both studies emphasize that professionally qualified teachers are more effective in translating curriculum objectives into classroom practice.

Similarly, the findings are consistent with Yakubu and John (2020) who reported a strong positive relationship between teachers' academic qualifications and curriculum delivery in Plateau State. Their study revealed that highly qualified teachers perform better in lesson structuring, assessment practices, and the use of instructional materials. This agreement suggests that teacher qualification not only enhances content knowledge but also improves pedagogical decision-making, which is essential for effective curriculum implementation. The present study corroborates this position by demonstrating that qualified teachers in Wukari Education Zone are more effective in delivering Social Studies content.

In addition, Ogunyemi (2021) found that teachers with NCE and B.Ed qualifications performed significantly better in curriculum mastery, instructional delivery, and evaluation of learning outcomes compared to unqualified teachers. Ogunyemi concluded that qualification fundamentally influences teaching effectiveness and recommended strengthening teacher education programmes. This finding supports the present study, which also establishes that qualification is a key factor influencing how effectively Social Studies curriculum is implemented.

Furthermore, Musa and Ibrahim (2022), through a quasi-experimental study in Kaduna State, found that students taught by professionally qualified teachers achieved significantly higher academic performance compared to those taught by less qualified teachers. Their findings demonstrate that teacher qualification directly affects not only curriculum implementation but also learners' academic outcomes. This aligns with the present study, which emphasizes that qualified teachers are more effective in facilitating meaningful learning experiences in Social Studies.

Likewise, Eze and Raphael (2023) discovered that teachers with higher qualifications such as PGDE, B.Ed, and M.Ed displayed stronger curriculum interpretation skills, better lesson presentation, and higher classroom productivity. They concluded that qualification is a major determinant of curriculum implementation. This further supports the present study, reinforcing the view that advanced teacher education enhances instructional effectiveness and curriculum delivery.

However, despite the strong agreement among most empirical studies, some scholars have presented contrasting views. For instance, some educational theorists argue that teacher qualification alone may not guarantee effective curriculum implementation if other factors such as motivation, availability of instructional materials, and school environment are inadequate. This implies that even highly qualified teachers may underperform when faced with poor teaching conditions. Nevertheless, the present study finds that in the context of Wukari Education Zone, qualification remains a dominant factor influencing curriculum implementation effectiveness.

The findings of the present study revealed that teachers' use of instructional materials has a significant influence on the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. The result indicates that the availability and proper utilization of instructional materials enhance students' understanding, participation, and engagement during Social Studies lessons. This suggests that instructional materials serve as essential tools for translating abstract Social Studies concepts into concrete learning experiences.

This finding is strongly supported by the study of Mohammed (2019), who investigated the availability and usage of instructional materials in Sokoto State. The study revealed that although instructional materials were available in schools, teachers made poor use of them, and this non-utilization limited

effective curriculum implementation. Mohammed concluded that inadequate use of instructional materials negatively affects teaching effectiveness and recommended training for teachers on how to integrate instructional resources into classroom instruction. This agrees with the present study, which emphasizes that effective utilization of instructional materials enhances curriculum implementation, particularly in improving learners' understanding and participation.

Similarly, the findings align with Okeke and Bello (2020), who conducted a correlational study in Anambra State and discovered that the use of instructional materials such as maps, charts, and real objects significantly enhanced students' understanding of Social Studies concepts. Their study concluded that instructional materials are vital tools for effective curriculum delivery. This supports the present finding, which also shows that instructional materials improve comprehension and engagement in Social Studies classrooms.

In addition, Ajayi (2021) found that teachers who frequently used instructional materials achieved better curriculum coverage and improved student participation in Lagos State junior secondary schools. Ajayi concluded that instructional materials significantly improve comprehension and recommended compulsory training for teachers in instructional media usage. This finding is in agreement with the present study, reinforcing the view that instructional materials play a major role in ensuring effective curriculum implementation.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Simon and Ngozi (2022) provides a deeper insight into the issue by identifying teacher-related constraints affecting the use of instructional materials in Nasarawa State. Their mixed-method study revealed that many teachers lacked adequate training in the use of instructional resources, which reduced their confidence and willingness to integrate them into lessons. The qualitative findings further showed that teachers desired continuous professional development and workshops to improve their skills in instructional material utilization. Simon and Ngozi concluded that proper training and capacity building are essential for effective curriculum implementation. This finding agrees with the present study, which highlights that effective use of instructional materials enhances curriculum delivery, and indirectly supports the idea that teacher preparedness is crucial for implementation success.

Moreover, Abubakar (2023) conducted an extensive study in Kano State and found that instructional materials such as charts, diagrams, audiovisual clips, maps, and models were available in schools but were not consistently utilized by teachers. However, regression analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between instructional material usage and students' engagement and comprehension. The study concluded that instructional materials are indispensable for effective curriculum delivery, as they bridge the gap between theoretical concepts and practical understanding. This strongly supports the present study, which also establishes that instructional materials significantly influence curriculum implementation by improving student participation and understanding.

The findings of Abubakar (2023) are particularly important because they highlight not only the availability of instructional materials but also the critical issue of utilization. This is consistent with the present study's implication that the effectiveness of curriculum implementation depends not only on the presence of instructional resources but also on their proper and consistent use by teachers. However, some studies present contrasting views regarding the necessity of instructional materials in curriculum implementation. For instance, some scholars argue that effective teaching can still occur without instructional materials if teachers adopt innovative teaching strategies and possess strong pedagogical skills. This implies that instructional materials may enhance learning but are not always indispensable. Despite this argument, the present study aligns more with empirical evidence that emphasizes instructional materials as essential tools for improving comprehension, engagement, and effective curriculum delivery in Social Studies.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that teachers' qualification and teachers' use of instructional materials significantly influence the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. Qualified teachers possess the professional

knowledge and pedagogical skills required to implement the curriculum effectively, while the availability and proper utilization of instructional materials enhance learners' understanding, participation, and achievement of curriculum objectives. The study therefore concludes that improving teacher qualifications and ensuring adequate provision and effective use of instructional materials are essential for successful implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in Upper Basic schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Taraba State Ministry of Education and other relevant educational authorities should recruit professionally qualified Social Studies teachers and provide regular in-service training, workshops, and seminars to enhance their instructional competence.
2. Government, school administrators, and other stakeholders should ensure the adequate provision and effective utilization of instructional materials such as textbooks, maps, charts, globes, and audio-visual resources to improve the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic Education level in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

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