

# EFFECTS OF COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY ON DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-CONCEPT OF STUDENTS IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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## Abstract

This study investigated the effects of collaborative strategy on development of self-concept of students towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world. The study was guided by two research questions while two hypotheses were formulated and tested. A quasi-experimental research design specifically, non-randomized control group was adopted. The population comprised 10,306 Upper Basic II students in Gombe South Education Zone. The sample consisted of 208 students from six government schools in the study area. Data were generated using adopted Academic Self-Concept Scale (ASCS). The ASCS was validated and subjected to reliability analysis using Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) formula which yielded a coefficient of 0.87. Data collected for the study were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy and those taught using Conventional Method ( $p = 0.834 > 0.05$ ); there was no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy ( $p = 0.490 > 0.05$ ). Based on the findings, the study concluded that Collaborative strategy enhance self-concept ratings of Social Studies students in similar manner as conventional method. It was therefore recommended among others that teachers of Social Studies should actively involve male and female students in learning activities while using collaborative strategy since the method had proved gender friendly and sensitive in enhancing students' self-concept towards a new definition of Social Studies.

**Keywords:** Collaborative Strategy, Gender, Self-concept, Social Studies and New World

## Introduction

Social Studies is a core subject at the basic education level in Nigeria. The subject contains aspects of man's activities that are of great values to the society which learners must understand. Of most importance are the relationships among people, between people and institutions, between people and the environment, and between people and values of the society as well as all the consequences, issues and interminable problems arising from these inter-relationships. The Federal Government of Nigeria (NPE, 2013) has described the subject as a fundamental component of basic education. More so, Social Studies is believed to have essentials in laying solid foundation for the learning of subjects like Economics, Geography, Government, History and Commerce at the senior secondary school level and courses such as anthropology, philosophy, political science, psychology and sociology at the higher institutions (Shamija, 2015). This means that the performance of students at the higher levels

of education may also depend on the solid foundation laid by Social Studies at the basic level of education.

Performance is the process to which someone has achieved short or long-term goals. In school, it is academic performance that is used to determine the progress or achievement of students in various subjects and classes. The determinants of academic performance of students according to Kapur (2018) include class participation, class assignments, tests, examination and participation in competition or other events. The academic performance of students in Social Studies especially in Gombe South Education Zone has not been encouraging. This is evident in the students' Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) results as documented by Gombe State Ministry of Education over the period of five years (2015-2019).

The BECE results as documented by the Gombe State Ministry of Education (2019) showed that in Balanga Local Government Area, Students who passed Social Studies with A grade were 19.7% for 2015/2016, 26.4% for 2016/2017, 22.1% for 2017/2018 and 27.4% for 2018/2019 academic sessions. The percentage of students who passed with B grade were 32.2%, 39.2%, 35.4% and 38.2% respectively while the percentage for students who obtained C grade showed 45.7% in 2015/2016, 31.1% in 2016/2017, 37.3% in 2017/2018 and 32.3% in 2018/2019 academic sessions. This trend of performance cut across Billiri, Kaltungo, and Shongom Local Government Areas that comprise Gombe South Education zone.

The challenge of students' performance in school as observed by Curtis and Shaver (2015) is that of self-concept. Self-concept to Davis-Kean, Susperregny and Chen (2017) is the notion an individual has of himself or herself based on experiences with others and on how they evaluate their own behaviour which encompasses emotional, social, physical, family and academic aspects. The academic self-concept has to do with the success or failure in school which implies that if students do not have self-concept in Social Studies, the performance in the subject may suffer set back.

At the Upper Basic school level, learners are expected to have developed self-concept, given that this is the time most children must have become aware of their academic performance, their popularity among peers and how the teachers react to their gestures, attitudes, successes and failures. Shamija (2015) however stated that, until Social Studies teachers find child centred approaches to teaching just like in pure sciences where learning by doing is emphasized, the teaching/learning of the subject will remain dull and students will keep losing self-concept in the subject therefore, continue to keep academic performance of students in the subject low.

The teaching and learning of the Social Studies is mostly carried out in the classroom during school hours using different strategies but a time entails going for an excursion or field trip to an environment different from the usual classroom and the school environment. However, Abdu-Raheem, (2012) stated that most Social Studies teachers continuously rely on conventional methods such as lecture method that does not inspire learners. Adamu (2016) affirmed that the conventional methods are inadequate to facilitate optimal learning in students and modify behaviours positively thereby leaving the self-concept of students in the Social Studies with little to be admired. In addition, several studies have pointed out that innovative strategies are instrumental in reducing the decline in students' academic performance and self-concept (Dostál, 2015; Aubrey & Christo, 2017). However, innovative strategies appear to be alien to both teachers and students (Okeke & Ordu, 2018). Hence, the introduction of instructional strategy like collaboration needs to be investigated.

Collaborative strategy (CS) is a technique in Social Studies that is capable of helping students in self-concept. It is a relationship among learners that require positive interdependence, individual accountability, interpersonal skills, face-to-face interaction and processing under the guidance of the

teacher that may help students to actualize their future dreams. There are four types of collaborative instructional strategy which include; think-pair-share, three-step interview also known as a team-building exercise, simple jigsaw and number heads together. In this study, the number heads together is considered giving that students benefit from the verbalization, and the peer coaching which may help in performance and self-concept. This level is also considered because class time is usually better spent for less time is wasted on inappropriate responses and all students are actively involved with the material.

The use of learner-centred strategies (collaborative inclusive) to the teaching and learning is also confronted by its inability to have the same effects on both male and female students. This raises the issue of gender in relation to self-concept. Gender according to Neboh (2011) is a socio-cultural construct that assigns roles, attitudes and values considered appropriate for each sex. The effect of gender on students' self-concept has over the years attracted the attention of scholars. However, it is worth noting that opinions and findings on the issue have been diverse.

Some scholars such as Trumper (2012) and Sunny (2015) found out that males tend to be more independent than females, others such as Ertl, Luttenberger and Paechter (2015) found that females tend to be more independent than males. The problem, according to Danjuma (2015) might be linked to the type of learning strategy where some activities are preferred for males or females. This therefore makes it pertinent for teachers to be sure of how instructional strategies affect their students' self-concept in Social Studies before using such strategies on the students. The study like this could enable the researcher to determine the role of gender in teaching students' social studies at the basic school using collaborative strategy.

Social Studies as a subject has laudable potentials of man's activities that are of great values to the society such as the relationships among people, between people and institutions, between people and the environment, and between people and values of the society as well as all the consequences, issues and interminable problems arising from these inter-relationships to enhance Nigerian citizenry. It has its major objectives of guiding students to inculcate in their conscious common values that will produce responsible citizens that will be self-reliant with the right attitudes towards a new world.

In spite of the immense benefits to be derived from the introduction of Social Studies in the Nigeria's school curriculum, there seems to be low self-concept in the subject at the upper basic education level. Of great concern is that most Social Studies teachers still rely mostly on the conventional methods of imparting knowledge. Consequently, the low self-concept of students in Social Studies have been on the increase. This has led to the failure of producing the desired results in terms of academic performance and development of self-concept on the part of many students toward a new world. It is on this premise that this study investigated what results would be obtained when innovative teaching strategy such as collaborative is used to teach students in terms of self-concept in Social Studies in Gombe State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of collaborative strategy on development of self-concept of students towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out the difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) and those taught using Conventional Method (CM) towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world.

2. Ascertain the difference in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) and those taught using Conventional Method (CM) towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world?
2. What is the difference in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world?

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance;

1. There is no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) and those taught using Conventional Method (CM) towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world.

### Research Methodology

The study adopted the quasi-experimental design of pre-test, post-test non-equivalent group design. The population for this study consisted of 10,306 students from 134 public Upper Basic schools in Gombe South Education Zone for 2019/2020 academic session (The inspectorate division, Gombe State Teaching Service Board, Gombe, Gombe State, 2019). This population according to the inspectorate division is made up of 5532 males and 4774 females. A total sample of 208 Upper Basic II students drawn from 6 intact classes in six co-educational schools selected from the area of study through a multi-stage sample technique. Data was collected using adapted Academic Self-Concept Scale of 30 questionnaire items from Flower, Raynor and White (2013). The ASCS consisted of two sections. Section A sought information about respondents' sex while section B bothered on self-concept in Social Studies. Each of the items was a 5-point Likert rating scale. The Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was used to ascertain the reliability index of ASCS,  $r$  value of 0.87 was obtained. Data was analysed using means and standard deviations to answer research questions. The hypotheses for the study were tested using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule was that null hypotheses were rejected if the  $P$ -value was less than 0.05 and not rejected if otherwise.

### Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) and those taught using Conventional Method (CM) towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world?

**Table 1:** Mean Self-Concept Ratings of Students Taught Social Studies Using Collaborative Instructional Strategy and those Taught Using Conventional Method

Strategies	PreASCS	PostASCS	Mean gain	
Collaborative Instructional Strategy	Mean	2.7270	3.1459	0.42
	N	100	100	
	Std. Deviation	.44737	.46857	
Conventional Method	Mean	2.6724	3.0989	0.43
	N	108	108	
	Std. Deviation	.41835	.38111	
Mean difference				0.01

Table 1 shows the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (CIS) and those taught using conventional method. The table shows that 100 students were taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (IIS) and 108 students were taught Social Studies using conventional method. The table reveals that the mean scores of students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (IIS) is 2.73 with a standard deviation of 0.45 during pre-test and 3.15 with a standard deviation of 0.47 in post-test. The mean scores of students taught Social Studies using conventional method is 2.67 with a standard deviation of 0.42 during pre-test and 3.10 with a standard deviation of 0.38 in post-test, Table 1 further shows that the mean gain of students exposed to collaborative instructional strategy (IIS) is 0.42 and that of students exposed to conventional method is 0.43. The difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (CIS) and those taught using conventional method (CM) is 0.01 in favour of students taught Social Studies using conventional method.

**Research Question 2:** What is the difference in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world?

**Table 2:** Mean Self-Concept Ratings between Male and Female Students Taught Social Studies Using Collaborative Instructional Strategy

Gender	PreASCS	PostASCS	Mean gain	
Male	Mean	2.7368	3.1371	0.40
	N	65	65	
	Std. Deviation	.46832	.48717	
Female	Mean	2.7087	3.1623	0.45
	N	35	35	
	Std. Deviation	.41157	.43832	
Mean difference				0.05

Table 2 shows the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (CIS). The table shows that 65 male students and 35 female students were exposed to collaborative instructional strategy (CIS). The table reveals that the mean

self-concept ratings of male students exposed to collaborative instructional strategy (CIS) is 2.74 with a standard deviation of 0.47 during pre-test and 3.14 with a standard deviation of 0.49 in post-test. While the mean self-concept ratings of female students when exposed to collaborative instructional strategy (CIS) is 2.71 with a standard deviation of 0.41 during pre-test and 3.16 with a standard deviation of 0.44 in post-test, Table 10 further shows that the mean gain of male students exposed to collaborative instructional strategy (CIS) is 0.40 and that of female students when exposed to collaborative instructional strategy (CIS) is 0.45. The difference in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (CIS) is 0.05 in favour of female students.

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) and those taught using Conventional Method towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world (CM).

**Table 3:** ANCOVA of Mean Self-Concept Ratings of Students Taught Social Studies Using Collaborative Instructional Strategy and those Taught Using Conventional Method

Dependent Variable: PostASCS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	19.109 <sup>a</sup>	2	9.554	107.127	.000
Intercept	7.766	1	7.766	87.076	.000
PreASCS	18.994	1	18.994	212.966	.000
Strategies	.004	1	.004	.044	.834
Error	18.283	205	.089		
Total	2064.082	208			
Corrected Total	37.392	207			

a. R Squared = .511 (Adjusted R Squared = .506)

Table 3 reveals that  $F(1, 207) = 0.044$ ;  $p = 0.834 > 0.05$ . Since  $p$  is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) and those taught Social Studies using Conventional Method (CM). Thus, it can be concluded that based on evidence from data analysis, no significant difference exists in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) and those taught using Conventional Method (CM).

### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (CIS) towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world.

**Table 4:** ANCOVA of Mean Self-Concept Ratings between Male and Female Students Taught Social Studies Using Collaborative Instructional Strategy

Dependent Variable: PostASCS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	11.702 <sup>a</sup>	2	5.851	56.560	.000
Intercept	2.902	1	2.902	28.050	.000
PreASCS	11.687	1	11.687	112.980	.000
Gender	.050	1	.050	.480	.490
Error	10.034	97	.103		
Total	1011.405	100			
Corrected Total	21.736	99			

a. R Squared = .538 (Adjusted R Squared = .529)

Table 4 reveals that  $F(1, 99) = 0.480$ ;  $p = 0.490 > 0.05$ . Since  $p$  is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (CIS). Thus, it can be concluded that based on evidence from data analysis, no significant difference exists in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (CIS).

## Discussion

The study determined the effects of collaborative strategy on development of self-concept among students towards a new definition of Social Studies for a new world. Since the population for the study consists of both male and female students, gender was incorporated as a moderating variable for comparison. A discussion of findings is tailored along the variables in the study as guided by the answers to the research questions and test of hypotheses.

Finding reveals that there is no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students taught Social Studies using Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS) and those taught using Conventional Method (CM). This means that Conventional method (CM) enhances students' mean self-concept ratings in similar manner as Collaborative Instructional Strategy (CIS). The finding agrees with that of Adamu (2016) that there was no significant difference in the performance of students taught with conventional method and that of the experimental group. The need to build a design that ensures each student is conscious of the fact that, even though the team is working towards a common goal, the individual effort in the team is observed and evaluated. This design of the activity was strictly adhered to, which made the difference in the mean self-concept ratings of students in Social Studies in both collaborative and conventional method to be very small and therefore negligible.

Another finding is that there is no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings between male and female students taught Social Studies using collaborative instructional strategy (CIS). This implies that the use of collaborative instructional strategy (CIS) is gender friendly in enhancing students' mean self-concept ratings in Social Studies. The finding disagrees with that of Ertl, Luttenberger and Paechter (2015) that females tend to be more independent than males in the class. The no significant difference in the mean self-concept ratings occurs because all the students of the collaborative team were conscious of the fact that they share the same goals, that their individual learn-

ing depends on the help from other members, that working together is both individually and collaboratively beneficial and that both individual and collective success depends on the participation of all members of the team irrespective of their gender.

## Conclusion

Based on the results obtained in this study, it was concluded that collaborative instructional strategy enhanced students' self-concept in similar manner as conventional method. The study also concluded that the collaborative instructional strategy is gender friendly and sensitive in enhancing students' self-concept in Social Studies.

## Recommendations

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

1. Teachers of Social Studies should actively involve male and female students in learning activities while using conventional method and collaborative strategy since the methods had proved gender friendly and sensitive in enhancing students' self-concept towards a new definition of Social Studies.
2. Ministry of Education and relevant academic and professional bodies like Social Studies Educationists Association of Nigeria (SOSAN) and Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) should enlighten Social Studies teachers on the effects of collaborative strategy through organized in-service trainings, workshops and seminars to use collaborative strategy in the classroom considering its potentials to improve students' self-concept towards a new definition of Social Studies.

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