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Teachers' Perception of Social Studies as an Instrument for Promoting Peaceful Coexistence in Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examined the teachers' perception of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence in Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive research design with population comprising Social Studies teachers in both private and public secondary schools in Nigeria. The sample consisted 100 respondents selected using a multistage sampling procedure. The instrument used for the study was a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Perception of Social Studies for Peaceful Coexistence Questionnaire" (PSSPCQ) which was validated by experts. The reliability was established at 0.78 co-efficient. Frequency and percentages were used to analyse the research questions and t-test was used for the hypotheses generated. The study showed that Social Studies is effective in promoting peaceful coexistence by tolerating each other, preparing individuals through the acquisition of knowledge, attitude, values and skills necessary for social and civic responsibilities. Results also indicated that there was significant difference in the perception of teachers on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence based on school type and religion. The study therefore, recommended that Social Studies should also be taught at all levels of the Nigerian school system to ensure that the citizenry has all needed information needed for peaceful coexistence.

Keywords: Peace, Peaceful coexistence, Social Studies, Teachers' perception, Tolerance

1. Introduction

The state of peace and tolerance in Nigeria is cautiously collapsing as the country is gradually disintegrating. This is evident in the clamour by many eminent Nigerians for a sovereign national conference while others advocate secession which spells doom for the once united giant of Africa. The unity and peaceful coexistence of Nigeria are under the threat of collapse by the growing level of religious, tribal and political intolerance. In line with this, there is a growing need to embrace a type of education that will inculcate in the young ones the values of peace and unity in diversity, the understanding of uniqueness, tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Young ones should be taught to acquire knowledge about people, races and various ethnic groups in the country, knowing that these differences should not become a potential source of conflict but a tool for building unity and togetherness. Acquisition of all these would promote peaceful coexistence among various diversities in Nigeria.

In his integrative theory of peace, Danesh (2006) viewed peace as a psychological, social, political, ethical and spiritual state with expressions at intrapersonal, intergroup and international areas of human life. Citing Miller (2005), Osemene (2012) submitted that peace is a political condition that ensures justice and social

stability through formal and informal institutions, practices, and norms. Several conditions must be met for peace to be reached and maintained. These conditions are; (1) balance of political power among the various groups within a society, region, or the world; (2) legitimacy for decision-makers and implementers of decisions in the eyes of their respective group, as well as those of external parties, duly supported through transparency and accountability; (3) recognize and value interdependent relationships among groups fostering long-term cooperation during periods of agreement/normality and disagreement/crisis; (4) reliable and trusted institutions for resolving conflict; (5) sense of equality and respect, in sentiment and practice, within and without groups and following international standards; (6) mutual understanding of rights, interests, and flexibility despite incompatibilities (Osemene, 2012).

Historically, peace, unity and progress have eluded this nation due to violent religious crises especially in the northern part of Nigeria. This readily brings to mind the Maitatsine conflict of 1980, which is considered one of the most disruptive crises ever to occur in the country since the bloody thirty (30) months civil war (Tijani, 1998). Recently, much attention has been given to the need for stability, peace, unity and peaceful co-existence. The Nigerian state, especially in this present democratic era, has been faced with several conflicts which ranged from ethnic, religious, socio-political, economic to personal conflicts (Adetoro & Omiyefa, 2012). Danesh (2006) opined that the universal presence of conflict and war in human history has always necessitated that priority is given to education for conflict and war preparation and the preservation of the larger community. Consequently, Social Studies can act as a catalyst for peace, both nationally and globally. Within the Social Studies curriculum, peace and conflict-related issues are not treated in isolation but are seamlessly embedded. This deliberate inclusion reflects the commitment to ensuring that learners are not only academically equipped but are also imbued with a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding peace and conflict in society. Social Studies is looked as an instrument of global peace based on different perspectives, be it analytical or prescriptive.

However, the re-orientation of Nigerians to seek non-violent means of conflict resolution is becoming necessary as there is a growing need to re-awaken the spirit of tolerance, unity and peaceful coexistence through the teaching and learning of Social Studies. In light of this, Kisko (1981) viewed Social Studies as a programme of study which a society uses to instill in learners the knowledge, skills attitudes and actions that are considered important for the relationships among human beings and the world. The system of inter-ethnic and inter-religious group relationship currently prevailing in the Nigerian society is far from being satisfactory and there is a need to improve or completely change them.

In Nigeria, the National Curriculum Conference held in 1969 in Lagos brought a change in the educational development of the country which provided the nation with a new educational foundation. Hence, the National Council of Social Studies (NCSS, 1994) posited that Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school programme, Social Studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics and natural sciences. It has become an accepted fact in many quarters that Social Studies emerged in the schools' curricula to reform education for sensitizing humanity to the needs and resources of the world. Nigeria is currently experiencing upheaval especially with the spate of killings and bombings unleashed on many innocent citizens by the dreaded Islamic religious sects commonly known as Boko Haram, it becomes imperative to use Social Studies as an existing school curriculum to re-awaken national unity, tolerance and peaceful coexistence among Nigerians. Within the education curriculum, peace and conflict-related contents embedded in Social Studies encompass a spectrum of vital topics. These include addressing social issues and problems such as corruption, cultism, and drug abuse. Furthermore, the Social Studies curriculum delves into the essence of peace, its types, and ways of promotion, emphasizing crucial elements like tolerance, social justice, and human rights.

Social Studies was conceived as a subject to help heal the wounds of civil war, ethnicity, and to promote national unity, cooperation, good citizenship etc. using the instrumentality of the school (Ezegbe 1994). It is a school subject intended to enable the Nigerian child to develop the spirit of patriotism, tolerance and other types of productive qualities of citizenship. The goals of Social Studies in Nigeria which took root from the National Policy on Education (NPE) include the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity; the inculcation of the right type of values and attitude for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society; and the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical, and social abilities and

competencies as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society (Federal Government of Nigeria – FGN, 2004).

In respect to the goals of Social Studies as contained in the NPE document (FGN, 2004), it aimed at training citizens to understand one another, tolerate one another despite their differences. It is a major tool for national development and is capable of presenting partial or total solutions to issues of crises and intolerance in Nigeria and many countries of the world. Orakwue (2007) submitted that one of the objectives of Social Studies is to inculcate in children the appreciation of the diversity of Nigeria, positive attitude to citizenship, entrepreneurship, positive thinking, cooperation and honesty. In the same vein, Alaezi (1991) observed that the essence of Social Studies is to inculcate core societal values in children. The first two national goals of education contained in the National Policy of Education are the immediate concerns of Social Studies. The quest for a free, just, fair and egalitarian society is the pursuit of Social Studies in Nigeria.

Though previous efforts in solving violence within Nigeria has been limited to mainly awareness campaigns, inter-ethnic dialogue, setting up of panels of investigation, lectures, seminars, sensitization campaigns backed by the condemnation of the causes that gave rise to conflicts. These steps were important at the early stage of the crises; today it has little or no effect. One would wonder what the future holds for our unity if lasting solutions are not found to societal conflicts. Social Studies is a unique subject with great potentials of instilling patriotism, love, co-operation, unity, tolerance and it has a therapeutic measure in problem-solving. More so, when teachers become tolerant of divergent views and freely discuss controversial issues in the classroom, the more tolerant our youths will become. Children growing in conflict-prone areas grow to become aggressive, intolerant and violent but, with education and the school's role in socialization, the child will learn to tolerate differences and also appreciate diversity. Social Studies by nature is against any form of destruction, disunity and balkanization of the Nigerian state as autonomous and independent political units which weakens the strength and ability to push the country into a self-reliant nation. Ukeje (1976) opined teachers are the hub of any education system. For upon their number, their devotion and their effectiveness depend on the success of the system and no education system can be stronger than its teachers. Thus, the teacher is a person who is professionally trained and equipped with the skills of transmission of knowledge and information from one generation to another.

Specifically, the need for Social Studies arises when society determines that formal education is required to develop a common set of understandings, skills, attitudes, competences and actions about the human relations among all members of the society. These common understandings can include the concept of unity in diversity in a multi-ethnic society, preserving cultural heritage and creating desirable social behaviours. Social Studies seeks to de-emphasize those things which widen the gaps between individuals within a country while emphasizing more strongly the path that creates unity, tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Social Studies is needed anywhere change is required. Okam (2002) posited that Social Studies in Nigeria is aimed at breaking the ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural barriers that keep apart the various groups that constitute the Nigerian society so that nation-building can be facilitated by the concerted efforts of those divergent peoples of the Nigerian polity. Social Studies is needed to develop and integrate the various ethnic groups, religious groups and culturally diverse groups in Nigeria to work together in unity, tolerating and understanding their differences.

Social Studies provides a common orientation to all compatriots in Nigeria enabling them to see themselves first as Nigerians and putting the interest of the nation first before any other. Social Studies is that part of the school's general education programme which is concerned with the preparation of citizens for participation in a democratic society. The most important aim of Social Studies in a democracy is to help students acquire a store of tested social theory, or body of principles relevant to contemporary social issues and beliefs (Onyabe, 1978). The primary purpose of Social Studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally interdependent world (NCSS 1994). Social Studies is a school subject which studies people's interaction in their environment. It is the study of how the environment influences man and how he in turn influences the physical, social, economic, political, psychological, cultural, scientific and technological environment. Earlier Scholars (Onwuka, 1981; Ezema, 2001; Nwuzor, 2002) underscores the roles of the school as a vital agent of socialization and provision of the curriculum for prompt moral cultivation and transformation. Ezema (2001) noted specifically that with Social Studies, the student can "appreciate the diversity and interdependence of members of the different

communities of the world over, to appreciate the need for cooperation, justice, fair play, tolerance, honesty and the need for patience, all of which are indispensable for the well-being, progress and general development of every human community. The increasing popularity of the idea of globalization makes Social Studies an imperative manual for Nigerians in their bid to interact with the outside world (Ayodele in Iyela & Audu, 2006).

Social Studies as a tool and a vehicle for national development have been used as a partial solution for social problems in many countries of the world. In West Germany, it was initiated after World War II as a means of developing a new political order. In Britain, Social Studies is used to legitimize the teaching of the social sciences, particularly sociology. In Japan, Social Studies is used to build a foundation for a democratic society. In Canada and the United States of America, Social Studies continue its primary role of preparing students for effective citizenship in a democratic society. In Thailand, it is used to foster individual and national development. In other African nations like Sierra Leone, Social Studies are being used to improve the self-image of the people in society after a colonial heritage. In Ghana, Social Studies is used to learn ways of improving the economy after military rule. In Ethiopia, it is used to transform the political culture. In Nigeria, it is used to inculcate concepts of nationalism, unity, and interdependence among the citizenry. In Nigeria, Social Studies came as an answer to national problems (Kissock, 1981).

The definition and philosophy of Social Studies at all levels is to enable its learners to become nationally conscious, better informed, effective citizens. It also aims at inculcation of national consciousness and national unity, imbibing the right type of values and attitudes for self and national survival, the acquisition of necessary skills, abilities and competencies which individuals need to be able to contribute to national development. Okobiah (1985) also observes that the main philosophy behind the birth of Social Studies in Nigeria during the 1960s is aimed at mobilization of youths, students and young learners to help them cultivate an awareness and understanding that would transform them into citizens with skills, attitude, competencies, moral values and reasoned judgment to effectively live, interact, interrelate and contribute positively to the economic, social, political and cultural development of the Nigerian society.

Social Studies is conceived of as an interdisciplinary area of study, as a result, knowledge from the social sciences, humanities physical sciences, to a certain extent, religion and art need to be utilized to understand man. Social Studies is not an amalgamation of these subjects but each of the disciplines becomes a tool in the mastery of Social Studies concepts and the understanding and application of its methods. Social Studies remain a broader organization of concepts rather than a description and absorption of a given course content (Adekeye, 1979). Some have argued against the fact that school subjects have no bearing on the country socio-economic and political spheres, and as such against the separation of disciplines and in favour of the unity of knowledge. To this group, the subject matter should be drawn based on problems of society cutting across traditional subjects with the hope of achieving integration (Mezieobi, Joof & Amadi, 1994). This is why Ezeoba (2012) submitted that the ultimate aim of Social Studies is to equip individuals with knowledge and understanding for peaceful relationships and living. Similarly, she argues that nations which used Social Studies as a corrective measure for reconstruction and rehabilitation of their societies place high value in the implementation of their Social Studies curriculum so that the subject exposes them to new values and skills necessary for the sustainability of a peaceful nation.

Studying the causes, effects, and possible solutions to ethnic and religious crises in Kaduna State, Adamu, Adewale, Agbange, Joseph and Momoh (2004) concluded that the inability of Nigeria as a sovereign state to evolve a viable social system capable of all Nigerians is due to the prevalence of ethnic and religious sentiments which makes people not to identify themselves with the national course but instead tends to identify and commit themselves to the immediate ethnic and religious environment. They further emphasized the need for elimination of ignorance in the populace through re-orientation.

Using a structured type of questionnaire to study the views of 102 respondents across Kaduna State, Oddah, (2005) discovered that (i) some privilege elites use religion to achieve their set objectives; (2) provocative, biased policies of the government and its involvement and preachers, biased policies of the government and its involvement in religious affairs is a major cause of conflicts; and (3) most religious conflicts are politically inclined. The study emphasized the socio-economic implications of religious crises in Nigeria. The findings revealed that it scares away foreign investors and this retard national development. These findings by Oddah coincide with the findings of some other researchers, who agree that religious conflicts docs more harm than good to the nation. The study also proved that religious crises are detrimental to the lives and

properties of the citizens of the state in particular and the development of Nigeria at large. Similarly, Ayeni, Gambo, Sadiq, Sambo and Sambo (2006) investigated inter-religious crises 2000 till 2006 and observed that diverse solutions have been proffered by different authorities yet it has remained a pertinent problem in our society today.

Another study by Okunola (2008) examined issues involved in inter and intra-religious conflicts and peace building in Nigeria and discovered that intolerance, ignorance, language barrier and communication gap are a pivot to conflict build-up and its peaceful resolution. The study further observed that the methods of resolution by the government and its agencies have been grossly inadequate; the respondents from both religions had similar views on the efforts of the government in resolving conflict. It was a consensus that the government only suppressed conflict by drafting police, mobile police and even soldiers when such situations arose, but actual resolution was abandoned and forgotten. The implication is that resolution through suppression that is not followed up by actual and intense negotiation and conciliation by the parties, (Christian Muslims in one hand and the mediator in another) is bound to fail. Considering this analysis of religious conflicts as identified by Okunola, there is the necessity to building a type of study to bridge understanding and tolerance between Islam and Christianity in one hand and Muslim and Christian Communities on the other hand.

This study therefore, assessed the teacher's perception of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence. Teachers are indispensable to any educational system; and as a matter of fact, 'no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers' (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004). The statutory responsibility for teacher education in Nigeria today is vested in Colleges of Education. The Policy makes it mandatory for all teachers in Nigeria to be trained and stipulate Nigeria Certificate of Education (NCE) as the minimum qualification to the profession. The teacher education is the focus of this study because of its significance in the training of young minds today, who in turn will become tomorrow's leaders. There is a need to teach students to become more tolerant of differences and not to see these differences as a threat to their survival.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The issue of peaceful coexistence is one of the serious concerns to the Nigerian nation and its people and has become a national cry that seems almost impossible in many states of the nation. The nation has witnessed a lot of disastrous scenes (flood disasters in North Central and many parts of the country), bloodshed, loss of lives and destruction of lives and properties, under the guise of intolerance. Boko Haram, Nigeria's homegrown Islamist insurgency, whose name in Hausa roughly translates as "Western education is forbidden," has abducted at least 1000 women and girls from northern Nigerian since 2009 and has perpetrated numerous human rights abuses against them in captivity. Peaceful co-existence has eluded this nation due to suspicion and crises that has left many villages and homes deserted; this nation cannot speak of peaceful co-existence until issues of religious, ethnic and political intolerance are dealt with. In spite of the effort made by the government through campaign, lectures and awareness (by National Orientation Agency, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, and so on) on the effect of violence in Nigeria at large. It is disturbing that there is yet to be any significant improvement in promoting peaceful coexistence. Hence, it is important to find out from the teachers, what their perception is about the inclusion of Social Studies in the school curriculum for promoting peaceful coexistence. Therefore, this survey research investigated teachers' perception of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence in Nigeria.

1.2 Purpose of Study

This study investigated Teacher's perception of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence in Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. assess the views of the teachers regarding the impact of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence;
2. examine the relevance of Social Studies towards promoting peaceful coexistence in Nigeria;
3. determine Muslim and Christian teachers' perception on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence;
4. determine teachers' perception on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence based on school type; and
5. determine teachers' perception on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence based on gender

1.3 Research Questions

The following questions were asked to guide this study:

1. How do Social Studies teachers perceive the impact of Social Studies on peaceful coexistence?
2. How relevant is Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence in Nigeria?

1.4 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance;

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the perception of Muslim and Christian teachers on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers in private and public secondary schools towards Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers' perception of the impact of Social Studies on promoting peaceful coexistence

2. Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used in carrying out the investigation which focused on the perception of teachers on Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence. The population for the study comprised all secondary school teachers of Social Studies in Ogun and Osun States in Nigeria. The sampling techniques are simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Ogun and Osun States have three Senatorial Districts each out of which Ogun Central and Osun East were selected for the study using simple random sampling technique. Thereafter, purposive sampling technique was used to select One Hundred (100) Social Studies Teachers with Christianity and Islamic religious background from both private and public junior secondary schools in the two states.

Table 1 - Sample for the Study

Sample		School Type		Religion		Teachers' Gender	
Osun State	Ogun State	Private	Public	Christianity	Islam	Male	Female
48	52	46	54	52	48	43	57

A self-designed questionnaire titled "Perception of Social Studies for Peaceful Coexistence Questionnaire" (PSSPCQ) was the main instrument used to collect data. The questionnaire is divided into two sections namely; section A and B. Section A contained demographic information on the respondents such as name of the school type, state and religious affiliation while section B contained twenty (20) structured items based on four Likert Scale Model of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD) to elicit information on the

Teacher's Perception of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence. The questionnaire was first validated by four Social Studies teachers in Ogun and Osun States and later by an expert in the Faculty of Education of Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife. The reliability was established at 0.78 co-efficient using the split-half reliability method which established that the instrument is reliable. Data collected were analyzed using frequency, percentages, mean, standard deviation and t-test. In specific terms, descriptive statistics in form of frequency and percentages were used to answer the research questions while inferential statistics of mean, standard deviation and t-test were used to test the hypothesis.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

Research Questions One: How do Social Studies teachers perceive the impact of Social Studies on peaceful coexistence?

Table 2 - Social Studies Teachers' Views on the Attainment of Peaceful Coexistence

S/N	Items	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)
1	Social Studies cannot be used to solve intolerance, violence and encourage peaceful coexistence	22	78
2	Social Studies is to make man to positively influence his environment	64	36
3	Social Studies should be abolished in the school curriculum	24	76
4	The adoption of Social Studies helps to build love in their citizenry	42	58
5	The eradication of Social Studies from the school curriculum would cause damage to the development of Nigeria	66	34
6	Nigeria should effectively utilise Social Studies to solve intolerance among the ethnic groups	56	44
7	Love, tolerance, cooperation and acceptance of one another regardless of religious, tribal and political differences will go a long way to achieve peaceful coexistence	83	17
8	Misunderstanding and intolerance of people caused the social, religious and political crisis in Nigeria	81	19
9	Individuals should see themselves as one and equal despite their tribal, religious and political background	68	32
10	The past crisis has left scars of tension and the urge for vengeance	86	14
11	Violence has scattered the settlement of some individuals and left them no abode	74	26

Table 2 revealed that 22% of the respondents agreed that Social Studies cannot eradicate intolerance while 78% of the respondents disagreed with assumption. Equally 64% of the respondents agreed that Social Studies positively influence man and his environment while 36% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. 24% of the respondents agreed that Social Studies should be removed in the school curriculum while 76% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. 42% of the respondents agreed that the adoption of Social Studies build love in citizenry while 58% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. 66% of the respondents agreed that the removal of Social Studies in the curriculum will cause great damage to the nation-building while 34% of the respondents disagreed with assumption. 56% of the respondents agreed that Social Studies can reduce intolerance if properly utilized while 44% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. Also, 83% of the respondents agreed that teaching love, tolerance, and cooperation will go a long way to achieve peaceful coexistence while 17% of the respondents disagreed with assumption. With this result,

it is realized that teachers believed that if Social Studies is taught and practised in schools achievement of peaceful coexistence will become easier.

Moreover, 81% of the respondents agreed that misunderstanding and intolerance cause crisis in the society while 19% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. 68% of the respondents agreed that individuals should be treated equally irrespective of their background while 32% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. 86% of the respondents agreed that past societal crisis has left scars and vengeance in the society while 14% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. 74% of the respondents agreed that violence has scattered settlements which affected some people and cost them their houses while 26% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. The results suggest that teachers are aware of social issues and their negative impact on society, leading to loss of life, property, and disunity in Nigeria.

Research Question Two: How relevant is Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence in Nigeria?

Table 3 - Relevance of Social Studies towards promoting Peaceful Coexistence in Nigeria

SN	Items	Agreed	Disagreed
		(%)	(%)
12	Social Studies promotes desirable societal habits and attitude necessary for developing peaceful coexistence	52	48
13	The knowledge of Social Studies offers the learner the opportunity to promote tolerance and peaceful coexistence	56	44
14	Social Studies seeks to emphasize social, religious, ethnic and political equality and equity	60	40
15	Social Studies prepares individual through acquisition of knowledge, attitude, values and skills necessary for social and civic responsibilities	72	28
16	Nigeria's conflict problem is properly addressed majorly by Social Studies in the school system	54	46
17	The knowledge of Social Studies is not sufficient enough to handle the achievement of peaceful coexistence	65	35
18	Social Studies should be modified to contain more concepts on peaceful coexistence	72	28
19	Social Studies is not the solution to disunity and inter-tribal war in Nigeria	51	49
20	Cooperation should be emphasized in the Social Studies curriculum to achieve peaceful coexistence	64	36

Table 3 showed that 52% of the respondents agreed that teaches societal habit that develops peaceful coexistence while 48% of the respondents disagreed. 56% of the respondents agreed that knowledge gained in Social Studies develop learner's tolerance while 44% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. 60% of the respondents agreed that Social Studies emphasize equality and equity in all ramifications while 40% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. 72% of the respondents agreed that Social Studies prepares the individual for social and civic responsibilities in the society while 28% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. 54% of the respondents agreed that Social Studies addressed conflict resolution in its content while 46% of the respondents disagreed with assumption. Equally, 65% of the respondents agreed that Social Studies is not sufficient to handle peaceful coexistence in Nigeria while 35% of the respondents disagreed with assumption.

The result further indicated that 72% of the respondents agreed that more concepts should be added to Social Studies for promoting peaceful coexistence while 28% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. Equally, 51% of the respondents agreed that the Social Studies concept of cooperation is not the solution to the disunity in Nigeria while 49% of the respondents disagreed with the assumption. Also, 64% of the respondents agreed that the concept of cooperation should be emphasized in the Social Studies curriculum to achieve peaceful coexistence. In line with this analysis, it realized that Social Studies concept can reduce the rate of intolerance, social vices, tribal war, arson and looting but the concept cannot do it all i.e. there is need for other subjects that will entail more concepts that will achieve peaceful coexistence.

3.1.1 Testing of Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the perception of Muslim and Christian teachers on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence

Table 4 - t-test Analysis of Teachers' Perception of Muslim and Christian Teachers on the Relevance of Social Studies as an Instrument for Promoting Peaceful Coexistence

Teachers' Perception	Religion	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
Based on Religion	Muslim	48	47.45	11.222	.471	3.146	98	.002	Significant (p < 0.05)
	Christian	52	54.61	11.923	.913				

Results in Table 4 showed that there was significant difference in the perception of Muslim and Christian teachers on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence ($t = 3.146$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. This means that there was significant difference in the perception of Muslim and Christian teachers toward the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence. This implies that teachers differ significantly on their perception on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers in private and public secondary schools towards Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence.

Table 5 - t-test Analysis of Private and Public Secondary Schools Teachers' Perception of Social Studies as an Instrument for Promoting Peaceful Coexistence

Teachers' Perception	School Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
Based on School Type	Private	46	76.39	10.262	.953	2.576	98	.011	Significant (p < 0.05)
	Public	54	72.55	12.616	1.133				

Results in Table 5 indicated that there was significant difference in the perception of private and public schools' teachers on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence ($t = 2.576$; $p < 0.05$). Thus, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. This implies that there was significant difference in the perception of teachers in public and private secondary schools towards Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence. Meanwhile, the potential factors contributing to this difference could be as a result of more qualified teachers in public schools. Hence, there is the need for adopting Social Studies as a potent subject in promoting peaceful coexistence during curriculum planning and implementation

Ho3: There is no significant difference between male and female perception of the impact of Social Studies on promoting peaceful coexistence

Table 6: t-test Analysis of Male and Female Teachers' Perception of the Impact of Social Studies as an instrument for Promoting Peaceful Coexistence

Teachers' Perception	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
Based on Gender	Male	43	74.93	11.004	1.035	0.656	98	.512	Not Significant ($p > 0.05$)
	Female	57	73.94	12.263	1.088				

Results in Table 6 showed that there was no significant difference in the perception of male and female school teachers on the relevance of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence ($t = 0.656$; $p > 0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. This means there was no significant difference in the perception of male and female teachers from both public and private secondary schools towards the impact of Social Studies on promoting peaceful coexistence. The implications of gender-neutral perceptions for educational strategies or interventions is that irrespective of gender, teachers generally are the main determinants in the quality of educational delivery and peaceful coexistence in the school community.

3.2 Discussion

This study investigated the teacher's perception of Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence. Findings reveal that teachers are fully aware of the impact of Social Studies on young ones in the society, also its usefulness to curb all sort of social vices and achieve peaceful coexistence regardless of tribe, religion and political differences. The study effectively explores teachers' perceptions of Social Studies as a tool for fostering peaceful coexistence. The findings underscore the teachers' profound awareness of the discipline's influence on the youth and its potential to mitigate various social issues. Notably, the study emphasizes the role of Social Studies in promoting unity across diverse backgrounds, transcending tribal, religious, and political distinctions. This aligns with the submissions of Orakwue (2007) that one of the objectives of Social Studies is to inculcate in children the appreciation of the diversity of Nigeria, positive attitude to citizenship, entrepreneurship, positive thinking, cooperation and honesty. In the same vein, Alaezi (1991) observed that the essence of Social Studies is to inculcate core societal values in children.

The study showed that there was significant difference in the perception of Muslim and Christian teachers toward the concept of cooperation in promoting peaceful coexistence in society. This result revealed that promoting peaceful coexistence is strongly affected by the religious practices in the society. This laid credence to the findings of Okunola (2008) that issues involved in inter and intra religious views like intolerance, ignorance, language barrier and communication gap are pivot to conflict build-up and its peaceful resolution. He further posited that in analyzing religious conflicts, there is the necessity to building a type of study to bridge understanding and tolerance between Islam and Christianity in one hand and Muslim and Christian Communities on the other. The result further corroborates the position of Okam (2002) that Social Studies in Nigeria is aimed at breaking the ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural barriers that keep apart the various groups that constitute the Nigerian society. Social Studies is needed to develop and integrate the various ethnic groups, religious groups and culturally diverse groups in Nigeria to work together in unity, tolerating and understanding their differences.

Findings revealed that the level of teachers' perception in private and public school is different since the result showed there is significant difference in their views from both schools towards Social Studies as an instrument for promoting peaceful coexistence. This implies that there is no significant difference in the way they perceived it that Social Studies can act as a catalyst of peace, both nationally and globally. The findings indicate a divergence in the perceptions of teachers from private and public schools regarding the role of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence. The observed significant difference in their views suggests that while both groups acknowledge the subject's potential as a catalyst for peace, nuances exist in their perspectives. This nuanced understanding can contribute to a more comprehensive approach in implementing Social Studies across diverse educational settings.

Results further indicated that there is no significant difference in the male and female teachers' perception towards the impact of Social Studies on promoting peaceful coexistence. Meanwhile, irrespective of gender,

Ezema (2001) posits that Social Studies aim to equip individuals with the level of understanding for peaceful living and harmonious relationship. Hence, Social Studies becomes as a corrective measure for reconstruction and rehabilitation as the society places high value in the implementation of Social Studies curriculum so that the subject exposes male and female learners new values and skills necessary for the sustainability of a peaceful nation.

4. Conclusion

From the foregoing analysis, it is evident that Social Studies is an indisposing subject in teaching and learning as it entails cooperation, historical background of a particular society. The finding of this study shows that the teacher is the contributing factor to the success are implemented the Social Studies in Nigeria will be solid to the extent that teaching and learning will inculcate and impart positive character on the learner and will develop their brain and creative mind for future purposes. However, the data analysis shows that teachers need a well-supportive environment for teaching and learning, qualified and certified teachers that will impart knowledge. This study found out that peaceful coexistence of Nigeria has been damaged and is under threat of collapse due to the religious, tribal and political intolerance.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for the improvement of teaching and learning of Social Studies in promoting peaceful coexistence.

1. The government should ensure the reorganization of colleges of education involved in teacher preparation to incorporate instructional strategies, content and technology.
2. Social Studies teacher should actively engage students in real-life situations on concepts from abstracts such as tolerance and peaceful coexistence which can expose students to solutions bothering on conflicts.
3. Within the Social Studies programme, the teacher should entail more concepts of conflicts, tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Teacher education in its structure serves as the foundation for quality and relevant education at all levels of the Nigerian system.
4. Social Studies should be taught at all levels of the Nigerian school system i.e. from primary school to all tertiary institutions. This ensures that the citizenry has all needed information needed for peaceful coexistence.
5. Qualified, certified, competent and committed teachers of Social Studies should be saddled with the task of handling classes. Because the success of any educational system depends on teachers quality, devotion and effectiveness.

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