

## **ATTITUDE OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS TOWARDS SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAMME IN EASTERN PARTS OF NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Attitude remains a critical factor in promoting meaningful acceptance and education of children with special needs in Nigerian. It is in the light of this that this study investigated into the attitude of educational administrators who are involved in the implementation of Social Studies programme in Eastern parts of Nigeria. A survey research design was used for the study. Available sample of 86 educational administrators participated in this study. A validated instrument title "Administrators Attitude Scale (AAS)"s with reliability coefficient of  $r=0.08$  was used to collect the data. The results show that the educational administrators had a positive attitude towards Social Studies programme in Eastern parts of Nigeria. Secondly, gender of the administrators did not have a significant difference on their attitude towards Social Studies programme. Despite the results, recommendations were made to improved and sustain the attitude of educational administrators towards Social Studies in Eastern parts of Nigeria. These include the need for regular workshops and conferences on special needs education for these administrators, paying of special allowances as an incentive to encourage the officers who visit schools/centers for special needs children regularly. This would help them to monitor the progress and problems facing the education of the Special needs Children.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background**

Social Studies is unique in every aspect. It is an education for special persons. Social Studies was introduced to minimize the problem of persons with special needs. It is a programme that addresses the conditions and learning styles of persons who require special attention. Social Studies differs from regular education because of the following reason; use of special methodology, special curriculum content and use of specially trained persons.

Harward (2003) described Social Studies as an individually planned, specialized, intensive, out come directed instruction, remedial and compensatory. The Federal Government through the National Policy on Education (2004) described Social Studies as formal Social Studies training given to persons (children and adults) with special needs.

To ensure a successful implementation of specially education in all the States of Nigeria, the Federal Government encouraged the establishment of special centres and units as well as inclusive education and appointment of educational administrators to co-ordinate the programme. Educational administrators include officials in the Federal and State Ministries Education, Desk officers, supervisors and principal heads of various regular and special schools/centres. Key point in the success of any educational programme is the administrator's management behaviours and roles (Agomoh, 2006). The activities of the educational administrators are vital in the education of children with special needs.

Administrators who are involved in the implementation of Social Studies programme must possess positive attitude and appropriate intellectual and professional background to enable them take good decision in any complex situation.

The Federal Government of Nigeria through the National Policy on education (2004) has stated that good leadership in education sector is the hub on which all activities and success in education rotate. Just as poor attitude can kill any business such could happen to any educational programme.

### **EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS' ATTITUDES**

Attitude towards education of persons with special needs are mixed Vassar (1979) found that Social Studies programmes in United States of America failed particularly gifted education because of improper qualities of educators.

Mittler (2021) suggested that administrators and educators of Social Studies programme require good orientation on how to manage children with special needs. Ntukidem (2022) has observed that one of the major problems facing successful implementation of Social Studies programme in Nigeria is lack of administrative commitment and dysfunctional leadership. Ozoji (2021) found that improper appointment of education administrators in the affairs of Social Studies led to poor implementation of Social Studies programmes in various states.

Attitude is the key factor in the implementation of any educational programme, particularly Social Studies programmes. The hardest burden to bear by children with special needs is not their disabilities but the attitude of people towards them. Studies have shown that attitudes toward the education of special needs persons are mixed (Agomoh, 2016). Attitude of education administrators in developing countries particularly Nigeria toward children with special needs are however poor (Mba, 2015). This is shown by percentage of children with special needs in schools and poor academic achievement of most of these students.

The World Education Forum Conference on the "Education for All 2000" advocated for education for all children. Despite the above movement it has been observed that about 98% of children with disabilities in developing countries (including Nigeria) do not attend schools (UNICEF, 2021).

### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

1. What is the attitude of education administrators towards Social Studies programme?

### **Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female education administrators towards Social Studies.

### **METHODOLOGY**

**Design:** The study adopted a survey design which aims at investigating into the attitude pattern of education administrators towards Social Studies programme.

**Populations:** The target population comprised all Education Administrators in the State Ministries of Education.

### Sampling Techniques/Sample

A purposive sampling techniques was adopted, hence the selection of all the 86 available officials of State Ministers of Education/Social Studies units.

**Instrument:** The instrument was validated by experts in the field of Social Studies and counseling psychology. It has a reliability coefficient of 0.80, which shows high coefficient reliability.

### Administration of the Instrument:

The instrument was administered with the help of Research Assistants. The researcher and the assistants visited various States, namely (Abia, Anambra, Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo and Rivers) to administer the instrument.

**Data Analysis:** The data collected was analyzed with both descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean, percentages and t-test were used to analyze data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Attitude of Educational Administrators towards Social Studies Programme

Key: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strong Degree (SD).

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	STD
1	Social Studies programme is too demanding.	33 (37.9)	36 (41.4)	11 (12.6)	7 (8.0)	1.90	.91
2	There is nothing too special about Social Studies	1 (1.1)	3 (3.4)	40 (46.0)	43 (49.4)	3.43	.62
3	Most exceptional children are products of the devil	-	4 (4.6)	21 (24.1)	62 (71.3)	3.43	.56
4	It is a waste of money and time trying to educate exceptional children	2 (2.3)	3 (3.4)	13 (14.9)	63 (79.3)	3.71	.64
5.	Exceptional children should depend on charity and alms giving for survival	-	5 (5.7)	26 (29.9)	56 (64.4)	3.58	.60
6.	Social Studies programme should be abandoned.	4 (4.6)	2 (2.3)	11 (12.6)	70 (80.5)	3.68	.73
7.	Social Studies budget should be priority in state government's annual budget	42 (48.3)	40 (46.0)	2 (2.3)	3 (3.4)	3.39	.70
8.	Much time and effort are needed in fostering Social Studies program	29 (33.3)	51 (58.6)	4 (4.6)	3 (3.4)	3.21	.68
9.	Administrator (policy makers) should be held responsible for failure in Social Studies programme	31 (35.5)	34 (39.1)	15 (17.2)	7 (8.0)	3.02	.92
10.	Special schools for exceptional children should be preferred to integrated school system.	17 (19.5)	30 (34.5)	30 (34.5)	10 (11.5)	2.62	.93
11.	Visits to special schools should be embarked upon by the administrators (policy makers) at least once a term	44 (56.6)	40 (46.0)	1 (1.1)	2 (2.3)	3.44	.64
12.	High cost of facility, special equipment	53 (60.9)	28 (32.2)	5	1 (1.1)	3.52	.66

	and material should be borne by the government			(5.7)			
13	The most difficult group to work with are the exceptional children	18 (20.7)	20 (23.0)	35 (40.2)	14 (16.1)	2.51	.99
14	It is interesting working with the exceptional children	19 (21.8)	56 (64.4)	8 (9.2)	3 (3.4)	3.54	4.5
15	Exceptional children should be educated to the best of their ability.	48 (55.2)	29 (33.3)	8 (9.2)	2 (3.4)	3.54	.75
16	Government should pay more attention to the regular education than Social Studies	7 (8.0)	9 (10.3)	35 (40.2)	36 (41.4)	1.85	.90
17	Regular school should be mandated to mainstream only the gifted	5 (5.7)	13 (14.9)	47 (54.0)	22 (25.3)	2.01	.79
18	More special school/centre should be establish in each state to enable the exceptional children receive the best care they require.	51 (58.6)	28 (32.2)	1 (1.1)	7 (8.0)	3.41	.87
19	Determining the accurate number of exceptional persons in the state is difficult and so should be discarded	2 (2.3)	15 (17.2)	29 (33.3)	41 (47.1)	3.25	.82
20	Social Studies has a lot to offer to regular education	28 (27.6)	44 (50.6)	13 (14.9)	6 (6.9)	2.98	.84
21	Beneficiaries (exceptional children) of Social Studies should be given automatic scholarship and bursary award.	46 (52.9)	35 (40.2)	5 (5.7)	1 (1.1)	3.44	.66
22	Social Studies is not complete until its graduates are gainfully employed.	39 (44.8)	32 (36.8)	8 (9.2)	8 (9.2)	3.17	.94
23	All integrated schools should be headed by special educators.	21 (42.1)	32 (36.8)	26 (29.9)	8 (9.2)	2.75	.92
24	Social Studies is a passive form education	3 (3.4)	17 (19.5)	37 (42.5)	30 (34.5)	3.08	.82
25	Social Studies should enjoy the same acceptability as other disciplines.	36 (41.4)	39 (44.8)	4 (4.6)	8 (9.2)	3.18	.89
26	The study of Social Studies as a course should be made compulsory in all tertiary institutions	20 (23.0)	33 (37.9)	26 (29.9)	8 (9.2)	2.74	.91
27	Research in Social Studies deserves more fund then in general education	17 (19.5)	48 (55.2)	15 (17.2)	7 (8.0)	2.86	.82
28	Teachers studying Social Studies as a course should be given automatic university scholarship and regular bursary award.	26 (29.9)	38 (43.7)	18 (20.7)	5 (5.7)	2.97	.86

**Table 1: Research Question 1:** What is the attitude pattern of education administrators?

The table above shows the pattern of education administrators' attitude towards the Social Studies. A4 point scale was used and scores were collapsed into positive and negative attitudes. The results of the mean and percentage score show that the general

attitude of education administrators towards Social Studies is positive. (see items, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13,14,15,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27 and 28). Only a few responses indicated negative attitudes. (See item 1, 16 and 17).

A summary of some responses show that 4.6% of the respondents agree that there is nothing too special about Social Studies, while 95.4% of the respondents disagree with the statement. This shows that Social Studies has something special offer to the beneficiaries. On item 3, 4.6% of the respondents agree that children with disabilities are products of the devil, while 95.4% of the respondents disagree with the statement. This shows that many respondents do not see children with disabilities as products of the devil. On item 6, 6.9% agree that Social Studies should be abandoned while 93.1% agree that Social Studies should be abandoned while 93.1% of the respondents disagree with the statement. This shows that educational administrators are in favour of the continuity of Social Studies programmes.

**Table 2: Hypothesis: Gender difference in the altitude pattern of education administrators toward Social Studies**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Std error mean	t-val	df	Sig.	Remark
Male	34	86.0082	9.4944	1.6283	.264	85	.792	N.S
Female	53	86.6792	10.6026	1.4564				

***N.S=Not significant at  $P<0.5$***

**Table 2:** Shows that the male education administrators' attitude mean score is 8.01 while that of their female counterparts is 86.67. The t-value is .264. The result shows that the difference is not significant ( $t=.264$ ,  $df$  85,  $sig.$  .792,  $P>$ , .05). Therefore the hypothesis is not rejected.

## DISCUSSION

The result of the analysis of the research question shows that general attitude of educational administrators towards Social Studies programme for children with special needs is positive. This is shown in the high mean and percentages scores of the respondents. Only three items responses indicated low scores. The results show that the education administrators who are involved in the implementation of Social Studies programme in Eastern parts of Nigeria have positive attitude towards the programme. This is an encouraging attitude that could promote the success of Social Studies programme. This result supports the work of Booth and Brown (1982) who remarked that it is important that education managers/administrators put the programme of special needs children in a proper prospect. This result could be inferred from the fact that the positive attitude of the education administrators could be as a result of their level of awareness about special needs children. This is also supports the finding of Lake (1978) that people with knowledge of special needs persons had significantly more realistic attitude towards them and their programme. Ukwuije (1983) also found that attitude toward special needs persons was affected by the level of awareness of Nigerians about special needs persons and Social Studies. This means that awareness can improve attitude change towards a person. This is also supported by Milaham (2016) who

remarked that attitude change is best achieved through information. Ozoji (2015) quoted the attitude of most Nigerians "let us accept and do something for children with special needs" This can be seen particularly among those who believe in equal educational opportunities for children with special needs. This may be the reason for positive attitude by the education administrators.

The result of the finding on table 2 reveals that there is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female education administrators towards Social Studies programme. This means that gender did not affect the attitude of education administrators. This finding supports the study of McDaniel (2017) in which male and female educator's ranked equal in score in their attitudes toward the education of children with special needs. The study of Ezera (2016) on societal attitudes towards special needs persons also revealed that there was no significant difference in the attitudes of male and female subjects sampled. This finding also corroborates Olukotun's (2021) study in which male and female did not differ significantly in the attitudes toward the children with blindness. One would have however thought that male administrators would have shown less concern for children with special needs. Awareness and contact with special needs children may be the reasons for male administrators showing equal positive concern for children with special needs. It could therefore be deduced that male and female education administrators have equal feelings towards children with special needs.

Education and exposure have strong influence on a person's attitude. The education administrators no doubt are educated personnel and have understood the need for education for all children. They also perhaps have awareness of the education of children with special needs through conferences or workshops organized by agencies involved in special needs education. This might have influenced their perception and attitude towards the education of special needs children. Sambo (2022) observed that the success of Social Studies programmes depends to a large extent on the administrator's knowledge about Social Studies. Ekeleme (2022) also noted that the attitude of education administrators towards education of children with special needs is crucial to the successful implementation of the entire programme.

## **CONCLUSION**

Social Studies is a tool that can be used to develop special needs children, mentally, socially, vocational and emotionally. It aims at equalizing educational opportunities for all children as well as achieving the goal of education for all. For successful implementation of the programme, the activities or involvement of educational administrators become very vital.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. There is need to improve and sustain the attitude of education administrators towards Social Studies programme.
2. There is need for regular workshops and conferences on special needs education for the education administrators.
3. Education administrators should be encouraged to visit schools/centres regularly where special needs children are accommodated.
4. Attitudes of education administrators should be improve and sustained be way of paying them special allowances.

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