

# **Effects of Guided Inquiry and Expository Teaching Methods on Secondary School Social Studies Students' Academic Achievement in Delta South Senatorial District, Nigeria**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This study examines the effect of guided inquiry and expository teaching methods on secondary school social studies students' academic achievement in Delta South Senatorial District. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The study adopts a quasi-experimental design; pre-test and post control group were used. The population of the study comprises all the students in JSS II classes in Delta State South Senatorial District. A sample of 240 students was randomly selected from six public secondary schools. The instrument used for data collection was Social Studies Achievement Test (SSAT). The data collected were analyzed using t-test statistical tool. The findings of this study revealed that guided inquiry teaching method was more effective in enhancing students' performance than the lecture method. The study significantly establishes that students who were taught with guided inquiry method performed better than students taught with the lecture method. The findings of the study also confirm that students in urban area outperformed students in rural schools. Based on these, it is recommended among others that social studies teachers should be encouraged to employ guided inquiry teaching method in their pedagogical practices.*

**Keywords:** *Guided Inquiry, Expository Teaching, Social Studies, Students' Academic Achievement*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Social studies as school subject deals with real life situation. It is an inter-disciplinary subject that cuts across other subjects such as sociology, economics, psychology, geography etc. The focus is on man and his problems in his environments. The nature, objectives and aims of social studies stress students' familiarity with their physical, social, economic, political, cultural and technological environments. The subject tackles problems and issues from a wholistic perspective. In other words, it deals with the totality of man's experiences in his environments. Consequently, the subject needs problem solving approach method in its pedagogical practices. Oniyama, Aluede, Onoguere and Mangkam (2008) opined that one major strategy

of achieving this aim is to ensure that social studies lessons contain activities for students and should be directed towards achieving certain skills to make the lesson purposeful. The Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) in the National Policy on Education stipulated that educational activities should be centre on the learner for maximum self-development and self-fulfillment. This implies that students should be actively involved in the teaching and learning process. The use of guided inquiry method in teaching social studies therefore, cannot be over-emphasized. McBride, Bahtti, Mohammed and Martin (2004), conceptualized guided inquiry teaching method as a process by which children actively investigate their world through questioning and seeking answer to their world through questioning. They stressed that in this method; the teachers help students generate questions to guide these investigations. Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2008) defined inquiry method as an activity oriented, thought-provoking creative method in which students, out of curiosity and on their own or under the guidance of the teacher, probe, investigate, interpret relevant issues and problems with a view to providing solution through reflective thinking and rational decision making.

Olibie and Ezeoba (2013) viewed guided inquiry method as a student-centred method of teaching whereby students interact actively, question assumptions and provide their viewpoints on any area of subject matter. The teacher in this approach to instruction is behind the curtain. He guides, facilitates and prompts students to conduct investigations and construct their own meaning of the events and phenomena that occur naturally. Agboola and Oloyede (2013) posited that the inquiry is a style or method of teaching where the learner with minimum guidance from the teacher seeks to discover and create answers to a recognized problem through procedure of making an industrious search. Olibie and Ezeoba (2013) noted that it is through such search or investigations at the students' own rates and levels of ability that learning takes place. Consequently, achievement will be high. Garcia (2003) asserted that students who are exposed to inquiry approach express a more positive attitude to learning in all areas and have thinking skills independent thinking abilities than students taught the traditional way.

Over the years, it has been observed that the teaching of social studies has been through the use of the expository teaching method. McBride, Bahtti, Mohammed and Martin (2004) asserted that teacher-talk and textbook are still the primary source of information for students. The inclination for this teaching method by social studies educators has been observed by Akinlaye (2002), Okam and Makut (2005) who rightly opined that most social studies teachers in Nigeria stick to the use of the expository teaching method where they dominate instruction in the class. Yusuf (2008), Edinyang and Ubi (2012) similarly observed that most social studies educators make use of the expository method. This teaching method does not given room for students' participation. It is teacher-centres and it makes them to be passive in the lesson. Consequently, students memorize and regurgitate material learnt without the ability to understand them and apply them to real life situation.

Researchers have shown that the inquiry method is more effective in teaching and learning than the expository method. Mao and Chang (1999) for instance, investigated the impact of inquiry teaching method on earth science students' achievement and attitude towards earth science in northern region of Taiwan secondary schools. The study revealed that inquiry instructional method produced significantly greater achievement among ninth grade earth science students than the conventional teaching approach on both astronomy content and meteorology content. The finding also revealed that students in the experimental group developed significantly more positive attitudes towards earth science than those in the control group. Centre for Inspired Teaching (2008) reported that middle school physics students taught through inquiry teaching method outperformed high school students taught with conventional methods. Edinyang and Ubi (2012) study in Akwa Ibom State, established that students who were taught through inquiry teaching method performed better than those taught with the expository method. The study of Olibie and Ezeoba (2013) in Anambra State also confirmed that inquiry method significantly improved students' achievement and participation in social studies lesson than the conventional lecture method. Conversely, the study of Agboola and Oloyede (2013) showed that lecture demonstration method was more effective than inquiry teaching method. They reported that chemistry students taught with lecture demonstration method performed better than those taught with inquiry teaching method.

Researchers have also shown that school location has influence on students' achievement. The study of Adesoji and Olatunbosun (2008) reported that students in urban area performed better than rural students in chemistry. The study of Utibe-Abasi (2010) also revealed that school location has significant effects on students' academic achievement. Urban physics students were more significantly superior over rural counterparts in physics problem solving competence. Bayo (2003) argued that no single teaching method is best. The choice of a method depends on the teaching situation, instructional materials available, class size, objectives to be achieved and nature of content of a subject among others. The researcher examined the relative effectiveness of guided inquiry over the expository method (lecture methods). In order to determine its effects on social studies students academic performance in Delta South Senatorial District.

Most social studies educators today still maintain their deposition to the use of expository method which is teacher-center method where they dominate instruction in the class. NTI (2006) observed that the teaching of social studies has depended on conventional method of teaching such as the lecture method, dictation and note taken, which are not interactive. It emphasized that these methods are inadequate to facilitate optimal learning in pupils and modify their behavior positively. Consequently, students memorize facts learnt without the ability to understand them and apply them to real life situation. The imperative questions here therefore, are:

- (i) Does the teaching method use by the teacher affect the academic performance of students?

- (ii) Will guided inquiry teaching method significantly influence students' academic performance more than the lecture method in Delta South Senatorial District?

The main objective of the study is to determine the relative effectiveness of inquiry and expository method of teaching social studies on academic achievement of secondary school students. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- (i) Compare the effects of the guided inquiry method and lecture method on students' academic performance in order to determine the one that is more effective.
- (ii) Examine the effect of location (urban and rural) on academic performance of social studies students taught with guided inquiry method.

#### Research Questions

- (i) Is there any difference in the achievement mean scores of students taught social studies with guided inquiry method and those taught with expository teaching method?
- (ii) Is there any difference in the achievement mean scores of urban and rural students taught social studies with guided inquiry methods?

#### Research Hypotheses

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference between the achievements mean scores of students taught social studies with guided inquiry method and those taught with expository teaching method.

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant difference in the achievement mean scores of urban and rural students taught social studies with guided inquiry method.

### METHOD

The study was a quasi-experimental design. Pre-test, post test control group was used. The lecture method was used as control group. The population of the study comprises of all the students in JSS II classes in Delta South Senatorial Districts of Delta State, Nigeria. The population is 1,500 students. A total of 240 students were randomly selected from six public schools in Delta South Senatorial Districts. The instrument used for data collection was Social Studies Achievement Test (SSAT) the instrument was designed by the researcher and validated by one social studies educator and two expert in measurement and evaluation.

The instrument was a 20 item multiple choice questions. The test items were administered on students of JSS II. The data collected were analyzed using t-test statistics. The level of significance adopted for the analysis was 0.05

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results presented on table 1 shows that the t-cal (17.92) is greater than the t-critical (1.66) at 0.05 significant level. The null hypothesis that show that there is a significant difference between achievement mean scores of students taught social studies with guide inquiry method and those taught with lecture method is therefore

rejected. Table 2 reveals that there is a significant difference between the achievement mean scores of urban and rural students taught with guided inquiry teaching method. This is because the t-cal (7.34) is greater than the t-critical (1.66) at 0.05 significant level. Since the t-cal is greater than the t-critical, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the achievement mean scores of urban and rural students taught social studies with guided inquiry teaching methods is therefore rejected. The result of hypothesis one showed that there is significant difference between the achievement mean scores of students taught social studies with guided inquiry and those taught with lecture method. The study disagreed with the finding of Agboola and Oloyede (2013) who claimed that students taught with the lecture method performed better than those taught with inquiry method. The finding is in consonance with the study of centre for inspired teaching (2008), Edinyang and Ubi (2012), Olibie and Ezeoba (2013) they found that there is a significant difference between achievement scores of students taught with guided inquiry method and those taught with lecture method. This confirmed that the inquiry method is more effective in teaching social studies than the lecture method. The difference between these studies and Agboola and Olayede (2013) may be deduced from the fact that no single teaching method is the best. It depends on the teaching situation, class size, availability of materials, the subject and content of the subject matter among others. These factors may affect the achievement scores of the students. The result of hypothesis two revealed that there is a significant difference between the achievement mean scores of urban and rural students taught with guided inquiry method. The study is in congruence with the study of Adesoji and Olatunbosun (2008), Otibe-abasi (2010). Their study confirmed that students in urban area outperformed their rural counterpart. The possible reason for this result could be deduced from the fact that those in the urban areas have more access to educational opportunities than those in the rural areas. Schools in urban areas are also more privilege to have more qualified teachers and instructional materials.

**Table 1:** T-test comparison of guided inquiry method and lecture method achievement scores

Teaching Methods	Mean	STD	N	df	t-cal	t-critical	Sign	Remark
Guide inquiry	58.82	18.86	120	119	17.92	1.66	0.05	Reject
Lecture	44.73	20.28	120					

**Table 2:** T-test comparison of urban and rural achievement scores

Teaching Methods	Mean	STD	N	df	t-cal	t-critical	Sign	Remark
Urban	69.63	18.30	70	118	7.34	1.66	0.05	Reject
Rural	47.44	13.09	50					

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted to determine the relative effectiveness of inquiry and expository method of teaching social studies on academic achievement of secondary school students. The study revealed that guided inquiry teaching method was more effective in enhancing students' performance than the lecture teaching method. The

finding of the study also confirmed that urban students outperformed their rural counterparts. Therefore, Social studies teachers should be encouraged to employ guided inquiry teaching method in their pedagogical practices. In addition, re-training of social studies teachers on modern innovative teaching techniques through workshop seminar and conferences should be regular and must be taken seriously.

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