

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF GEOGRAPHY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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Abstract - This study is aimed at determining the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. To guide this study, three research questions and two hypotheses were formulated. The population for this study consists of all the 12 Geography teachers (8 urban, 4 rural, 9 females and 3 males) in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area. The entire population was used as sample for the study as the size was small and manageable. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Strategies for Effective Teaching and Learning of Geography Questionnaire. The validation of the instrument was done by three experts, one from measurement and evaluation, two from Department of Social Science Education University of Nigeria, Nigeria. Also, the reliability of the instrument was ensured using Cronbach alpha estimate. The instrument shows an overall index of 0.79 showing that the reliability co-efficient is high and the instrument is reliable. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings of this study showed project method, problem solving method, discussion method, inquiry concept mapping, guided discovery, adequate utilization of Information and Communication Technology, demonstration method among others are the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography. The study also shows that most important strategy is field trip. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended among other things that the States' Ministry of Education should also intensify more efforts in the inspection and monitoring of schools to ensure that teachers use the appropriate teaching strategies that would enhance the effective teaching of Geography in all secondary schools in the State.

Keywords: Geography, strategies, teaching, learning, secondary

Introduction

Geography as a subject is important as it gives the individual knowledge, skills, and positive attitude in dealing with the environment. Geography may be defined as the subject which describes the earth surface, its physical features, climate, soil, vegetation, animals, products, people and events and their distribution over the earth surface (Hanks, 2011). Geography can also be defined as the study of the earth, its inhabitation and the inter-relationship between them in the context of place, space and environment (Gifford, 2011). It is concerned with the nature, distribution and interaction of human and natural features over the earth's surface, the processes which create, sustain or change these features and the contributions they make to the distinctive character of a place. Geography draws data (Information) from a wide range of specialized sciences such as meteorology, biology, anthropology, astronomy and geology. According to Mohammed (2014), Geography is divided into two main branches which are Physical Geography and Human Geography. Physical Geography concerns the understanding of the dynamics of physical landscape and the environment. It examines the natural environment and how organisms, climate, soil, water and landforms produce and interact (Ezeudu & Gbendu, 2020) while

Human Geography concerns the understanding of dynamics of cultures, societies and economies (Falode & Mohammed, 2023). It focuses on the built environment and how humans create, manage and influence space.

Geography equips the individual with an understanding of the earth's surface and the inter relationship between man and different part of the environment. Geography helps to proffer solution to different environmental problems such as pollution of the soil or environment, erosion, flooding, desertification, bush burning and windstorm. Geography helps students to understand other disciplines such as biology, geology, physics, mathematical and cultural sciences among others. Geography equips the individual with the graphical skills necessary for representation of physical features on paper (i.e., mapping and surveying) (Omorogbe & Nato, 2014). Geographical knowledge is very essential in military strategies, planning and execution of war which is achieved through terrain understanding and estimation of distances for enemy locations. Geography education is concerned fundamentally with developing the students understanding and appreciation of the world in which he/she lives. The importance of Geography in secondary schools' curriculum cannot be over emphasized. As one of the required subjects in the curriculum of secondary schools in Nigeria (FRN, 2004), Geography is being taught in the upper classes of secondary schools.

Despite the importance of Geography, there is poor participation of students offering the subject. Since, Geography is an elective subject at the secondary school level, students have no motivation to study Geography because they feel it is less important in comparison to other subjects (Hussain & Sulaimon, 2018). Many students do not opt for Geography because they deem it to be very difficult especially the way the instruction has been presented to them by their teachers (Wichendu, 2022). This probably explain the push and pull factors and the skeptisms of senior secondary school students to register for the subject in the West African Examination Council (WAEC) examinations, National Examination Council (NECO) examinations and University Matriculation Examination (UME) for admission into tertiary institutions (Aderogba, 2012) let alone, reading Geography as a major course of study at the tertiary level of education (Aderogba & Ogunowo, 2010). Furthermore, there is low performance level of students in the SSCE examination as reported by Chief Examiner of West African Examination Council (WAEC) (2022-2024). This low participation and poor performance could be attributed to the teaching strategies bused by Geography teachers in the teaching and learning process (Eze, 2021). The contention of researchers (Dhakal, 2017) is that teaching and learning strategies used by teachers in many schools might have not been appropriate enough to allow for effective teaching of the subject, such strategies include the use of question and answer, textbook method, lecture method, simulation and game-, game- and role-playing method, dramatization among others.

Strategy means plan of action, the art of planning the best way to achieve something. It means the plan and art of teaching in the best way to achieve the desired result. Strategies could also mean the teaching styles the teacher uses to deliver his lessons. Strategies are all the activities engaged in by the teacher with the aim of facilitating change in the learners' behavior (Filgona & Sababa, 2017). The teacher employs various strategies to bring out the desired learning; such strategies may include lecturing, discussion, questioning, demonstration and other instructional behaviours (Akintade, 2012). Most of Geography concepts are complex and abstract in nature (Musa, 2018) making teachers seek effective and efficient ways of teaching and learning. Geography teaching and learning cannot be effective without the use of innovative

teaching strategies. Therefore, Geography teachers need to be conversant with various teaching strategies which may be applied to the teaching of Geography. The main purpose of these teaching and learning strategies is to make it possible for learning to take place. Teaching and learning strategies facilitate teaching and learning and it also refers to the methods that teachers use to deliver instruction to their students, and that includes not only didactic elements, but also subjective and personality factors that influence the way a teacher instructs students (Kocalar & Demirkaya, 2017). Kocalar and Demirkaya argue that there are numerous teaching strategies mainly because teaching is a very personal activity. Certain teaching strategies which might suit one teacher may not be appropriate for another. A dynamic, interactive and passionate teacher who instills beliefs in students that they cannot only learn Geography but enjoy doing so will be far more successful than a teacher who relies on packaged curricular and pedagogical techniques.

The teaching and learning strategies employed by most Geography teachers have often been criticized. This according to Artvinti, (2010) pointed out that there is sometimes narrowness in the range of teaching methods. These teaching methods are characterized by over long exposition, over directed style, inhibiting curiosity, initiative and discussion mediated by and through the teachers, all of which reduce opportunities for developing thinking (Nbina, 2012). It is believed by Gikunda, (2016) that Geography is taught in a way that discourages open question; inquiry and active participation imagination of students are closed. According to Aderogba and Ogunowo (2010), the study of Geography from its inception was through verbal description of geographic features which made the study very abstract and quite uninteresting. There are also complaints about the large scope and abstract nature of the subject. The complaints are wide spread among students and teachers alike (Aderogba, 2011). The subject being abstract is accentuated by the assumption that it is difficult to teach and learn, and more importantly the strategies used do not aid effective teaching and learning of the subject. Aderogba (2012) also revealed the undue emphasis on theoretical aspect of Geography to the detriment of scientific and experimental approach which has made the subject very abstract and also uninteresting. Students are just made to learn Geography concepts in the abstract form and are subjected to too much imagination of geographic features instead of learning through practical observations (Sofoworo & Egbedokun, 2010). The resultant effect of all the above is that the subject no longer attracts young scholars due to the dull, uninspiring and stereotyped approach being adopted. Most Geography teachers may not know or are not familiar with the strategies for effective teaching and learning of the subject. Consequently, according to Aderogba (2012), inexperienced teachers who fumble as they teach tend to frustrate and discourage and scare students away. Considering the views and findings of these researchers, this study explored the different strategies that would enhance the effective teaching and learning of Geography within Nsukka Local Government Area.

The present study among other things seeks to find out if gender could influence on teachers' response on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography. Gender is a social construct determined by social norms, culture, attitude, values, tradition, belief and practices. It refers to roles, responsibilities, identities or other qualities attributed to people because they are men or women (Rolleri, 2012). Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women (Fausto-Sterling, 2012). Gender is the cultural role expected of people which helps in the classification of individuals into male and female. Agbo & Mayor (2025) found no significance difference in the mean responses of male and

female Economics educators on the use of e-learning strategy to improve the teaching and learning of Economics. However, Dewi, Fajariyah & Hermawan (2020), concluded that there were significant differences between a male and female teacher in the ideas of instructional strategies in Geography. The study determines if the diverse roles and expectations of males and females in the society have any influence on teachers' response on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography.

Another important variable that is of interest to the researcher is location. Location has to do with the area which may be urban or rural area where an individual resides. Contextually, location in this study implies a geographical place or area where something or somebody is situated, be it rural or urban area. Rural areas are often made up of villages which could either be linear, dispersed or nucleated in their patterns of distribution on the terrain, having few buildings and also few people. The settlers' life style is simple and quiet with economic activity as farming, few amenities and service centres. According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2010), awareness and attitudes of the rural dwellers in Nigeria on environmental issues could be directly proportional to the quality of information prevalent and available to them. On the other hand, urban areas are relatively large, characterized with dense and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals. The settlement could be towns, cities, metropolis or even conurbations. Urban areas have a large and heterogeneous population, medical and social amenities, educational, recreational, banking, administrative and social activities, having highly developed manpower (male and female) and artisans among others who engage in non-agricultural occupation with highly impersonal relations. It is the opposite of rural environment, with its sophisticated life and bustle life activities. The contrasts between the urban and rural areas could influence teachers' response on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography. Thus, this study intends to find out among other things if location has any influence on the teachers' response on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography.

Research questions

The following questions guided the study

1. What are the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography?
2. What is the mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on gender?
3. What is the mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on location?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on gender.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on location.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consists of all the 12 geography teachers (3 males and 9 females, 8 urban and 4 rural) in the 30 secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area. The entire 12 teachers were used and no sampling was done because the population is small and manageable.

Therefore, total enumeration was used. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled Strategies for Effective Teaching and Learning of Geography. It has two sections, section A and B – Section A asks questions on personal information of the teachers which are gender and location, and Section B elicits information on strategies for effective teaching and learning Geography. The instrument used a rating scale constructed on a four-point scale with strongly agree (SA) =4, agree (A) =3, disagree (D) =2 and strongly disagree (SD) =1. Thus the respondents were required to indicate their opinion by ticking either strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The instrument was subjected to face validation. Three (3) experts, one from Measurement and Evaluation Unit, Department of Science Education and two from Geography and Environmental Education Unit, Department of Social Science Education, all from Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka validated the instrument. The instrument was trial-tested on ten (10) teachers from Udenu Local Government Area of Enugu State. Upon analysis of the responses to the questionnaires, the Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency of the items of the instrument. The instrument shows an overall index of 0.79 showing that the reliability co-efficient is high and the instrument is reliable. On-the-spot mode of administration and collection of the instrument was used to ensure high percentage rate of return. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation in providing answer to the research questions. Thus, all items that scored mean of 2.5 and above were accepted while all items whose mean score were less than 2.5 were rejected. The hypotheses were analyzed using t-test statistical tool tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What are the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography in Nsukka Local Government Area?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of teachers on the Strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Creation of Geography laboratories.	2.55	1.016	Accepted
2	Acting out story	2.50	.792	Accepted
3	Use of frequent repetition, reinforcement, examples and illustration.	2.58	1.134	Accepted
4	Engagement in co-curricular activities	2.71	.812	Accepted
5	Humour in the class room	2.51	1.043	Accepted
6	Lecture Method	2.44	1.022	Rejected
7	Game /Role playing method	2.46	1.014	Rejected
8	Adequate utilization of information and communication technology	2.57	.914	Accepted
9	Adequate provision of instructional materials/facilities.	2.58	.908	Accepted
10	Non Incentives to Geography teachers	2.49	.905	Rejected
11	Dramatization method	2.56	.870	Rejected
12	Textbook method	2.58	1.122	Accepted
13	Simulation/game	2.75	.885	Accepted

14	Interdisciplinary teaching	2.78	.890	Accepted
15	Inductive method	2.80	.909	Accepted
16	Questioning and answering method	2.83	.901	Accepted
17	Inductive method	2.85	.978	Accepted
18	Team teaching method	2.92	.870	Accepted
19	Ensuring that no student prevents/disturbs another student from listening during classes.	3.00	.914	Accepted
20	Use of Good teaching style /proper teaching methods	3.10	.859	Accepted
21	Concept mapping	3.15	.746	Accepted
22	Co-operative learning	3.18	.936	Accepted
23	Supplementing teaching materials with authentic texts and tasks	3.20	.894	Accepted
24	Discussion method	3.22	.952	Accepted
25	Giving projects and assignments to students.	3.23	1.020	Accepted
26	Guided discovery	3.25	.719	Accepted
27	Problem solving method	3.26	.891	Accepted
28	Laboratory method	3.28	.782	Accepted
29	Ensuring that the student sits where they can see the board or demonstration by teachers.	3.30	.746	Accepted
30	Project method	3.32	.718	Accepted
31	Inquiry.	3.33	.607	Accepted
32	Recruiting professionally qualified Geography teachers	3.35	.654	Accepted
33	Conducting field trips to different schools and institution of Geographical interest.	3.36	.879	Accepted
34	Demonstration method	3.36	.638	Accepted
35	Making lessons interesting and lively by careful selection of appropriate instructional materials.	3.38	.765	Accepted
36	Developing good teacher-students relationship	3.42	.727	Accepted
37	Creating Conducive learning environment	3.45	.730	Accepted
38	Appropriate use of formative and formative evaluation	3.46	.730	Accepted
39	Adequate utilization of instructional materials/facilities.	3.53	.914	Accepted
40	Ensuring that every student participate in class activities.	3.55	.829	Accepted
41	Expository method	3.64	.495	Accepted
42	Field trip	3.84	.397	Accepted

Key: SD= Standard Decision

From table 1 above, the findings revealed the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area. Thirty-nine items contained from numbers 1-5 had mean ratings of 2.55, 2.50, 2.58, 2.71, 2.51 with standard deviation of 1.01, 0.29, 1.13, 0.81 and 1.04 respectively, numbers 8-9 had mean ratings of 2.57 and 2.58 with standard deviation of 0.91 and 0.90 respectively and numbers 11-42 had mean ratings of 2.56, 2.58, 2.75, 2.78, 2.89, 2.83, 2.85, 2.92, 3.00, 3.10, 3.15, 3.18, 3.20, 3.22, 3.23, 3.25, 3.36, 3.36, 3.38, 3.42, 3.45, 3.46, 3.53, 3.55, 3.64, 3.84 with standard deviation 0.87, 1.12, 0.88, 0.89, 0.90, 0.90, 0.97, 0.87, 0.91, 0.85, 0.74, 0.93, 0.89, 0.95, 1.02, 0.71, 0.89, 0.78, 0.74, 0.71, 0.60, 0.65, 0.87, 0.63, 0.76, 0.72, 0.73, 0.73, 0.91, 0.82, 0.49, 0.39 respectively, have mean value above the criterion mean of 2.50, and

can be said to be strategies for effective teaching and learning Geography, while four items listed 6-7 and 10 had mean ratings of 2.44, 2.46 and 2.49 with standard deviation of 1.02, 1.01 and 0.90 respectively, have mean value less than the criterion mean of 2.50, thus were rejected.

Research Question Two: What is the mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on gender?

Table 2: Summary of male and female geography teachers mean response

Group	N	Mean	SD	Difference in \bar{X}
Male	3	33.04	0.65	0.23
Female	9	33.27	0.66	

Table 2 shows that the mean response of male and geography teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of geography teachers. The mean response of male geography teacher is 3.04 with a standard deviation of 0.65 while the mean response of female teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of geography teachers is 3.27 with a standard deviation of 0.66. Table 2 shows that a difference in mean of 0.23 exists between male and female geography teachers' response on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography. This difference is quite insignificant.

Research Question Three: What is the mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on location?

Table 3: Summary of urban and rural geography teachers mean response

Group	N	Mean	SD	Difference in \bar{X}
Urban	8	3.01	0.63	0.21
Rural	4	2.80	0.60	

Table 2 shows that the mean response of urban and rural geography teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of geography teachers. The mean response of urban geography teacher is 3.01 with a standard deviation of 0.63 while the mean response of rural teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of geography teachers is 2.80 with a standard deviation of 0.60. Table 3 shows that a difference in mean of 0.21 exists between urban and rural geography teachers' responses on their perception on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography. This difference is quite insignificant.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on gender.

Table 4: t-test analysis on mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	T	Sig	Decision
Male	3	2.74	0.21	10	5.03	0.86	NS
Female	9	2.53	0.25				

NS = Not Significant

Table 4 indicates that t-value of 5.03 with a degree of freedom of 10 and a probability value of 0.86 was obtained. Based on this, the null hypothesis formulated was accepted, hence, there is no significant difference in the mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on gender.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean response of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on location.

Table 5: t-test analysis on mean response ratings of teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography based on location

Location	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	T	Sig	Decision
Urban	8	2.51	0.25	10	6.32	1.39	NS
Rural	4	2.53	0.27				

NS = Not Significant

Table 5 indicates that t-value of 6.32 with a degree of freedom of 10 and a probability value of 1.39 was obtained. Based on this, the null hypotheses formulated was accepted, hence, there is no significant difference in the perception of urban and rural geography teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography.

Discussion

The findings of the study with respect to research question one shows the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography. The teachers are of the opinion that field trip, expository method, ensuring that every student participate in class activities, use of good teaching style/proper teaching methods, adequate utilization of instructional materials/ facilities, use of frequent repetition, reinforcement, examples and illustration, making lessons interesting and lively by careful selection of appropriate instructional materials, conducting field trip to different schools and institution of geographical interest among others are the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography. The finding agrees with Akintade, (2012) who maintained that teachers employ various strategies to bring out the desired learning; such strategies may include lecturing, discussion, questioning, demonstration and other instructional behaviours. This finding implies that there are diverse instructional strategies that could be employed in the teaching and learning of Economics in secondary schools. The finding is in line with Oko and Inya (2019) who pointed out that project method, guided-inquiry method, self-directed method, futures-wheel method, discovery method and individualized learning method among others are activity-centred and enhance students' achievement. The finding is also in line with Alaka and Obadara (2013) who reported that the availability of different

instructional strategies gives the teacher the opportunity to select a method or strategy that best suits the topic and environment and at the same time captures the students' interest.

The teachers also opine that their most important strategy is field trip. This explains why according to Hoalst-Pullen and Gatrell (2011), fieldwork is an inalienable and corporate part of teaching and learning process in Geography. In other words, all classroom knowledge to matter how meticulously designed and delivered remains a model of which its reality resides in the field. The content of Geography does not require long drawn theories from abstractions without a direct linkage with the reality of man's existence, but this call for a fieldwork approach as a necessary component of the syllabus of Geographic education (Balci, 2010). The teacher normally seizes the opportunity to supplement or buttress classroom teaching in real life examples of Geographical features. Field trip helps one to take a close look at his locality more as the means to an end and not as an end itself (Das & Das, 2019). According to Krakowka (2012) who agrees with the finding above reveals that without fieldwork or field research "the theory could easily and quickly become dull, arid and deterministic; with it, theory becomes interesting, rewarding and probabilistic. The study also revealed other strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area. These include expository method, ensuring that every student participate in class activities, use of good teaching style/proper teaching methods, adequate utilization of instructional materials/ facilities among others.

Students' performance is related to teaching strategies because the effective teaching and learning of Geography could be measured through the performance of students in school examinations. There are various strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography. So, Geography teachers should employ these strategies to bring out the desired learning and also learn how to diversify these strategies. A dynamic, interactive and passionate teacher who instills beliefs in students that they cannot only learn Geography but enjoy doing so will be far more successful than a teacher who relies on packaged curricular and pedagogical techniques. Teaching strategies incorporate not only pedagogical methods by which a teacher delivers information, but also of attitude and passion with which such information is conveyed.

Furthermore, the findings of the study show that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the male and female, urban and rural geography teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area. This finding agrees with Agbo & Mayor (2025) who found no significance difference in the mean responses of male and female Economics educators on the use of e-learning strategy to improve the teaching and learning of Economics. On the contrary, this finding is not in line with Dewi, Fajariyah & Hermawan (2020) who posited that there were significant differences between a male and female teacher in the ideas of instructional strategies in Geography.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The study concludes that strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography include field trip, expository method, ensuring that every student participate in class activities, use of good teaching style/proper teaching methods, adequate utilization of instructional materials/ facilities among others.

2. The study also concludes that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the male and female teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography
3. The study also concludes that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the urban and rural geography teachers on the strategies for effective teaching and learning of Geography

Recommendations

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

1. Federal and State Governments should recruit more specialist teachers in Geography and post them to all schools in the state.
2. The States' Ministry of Education should also intensify more efforts in the inspection and monitoring of schools to ensure that teachers use the appropriate teaching strategies that would enhance the effective teaching of Geography in all secondary schools in the State.
3. Federal and State Government should ensure that Geography teachers undergo in-service training. They should organize regular basis workshops, seminars and conferences for them; this will help to expose them to different teaching strategies.
4. Government at all levels should encourage and motivate Geography teachers by paying their salary/allowances to enable them show dedication to duty in view of importance of Geography in nation building.

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