

Effectiveness of Socio-Constructive Collaboration Strategy on Post-Covid Primary School Children's Learning Outcome in National Values

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ABSTRACT

This study adopted socio-constructive collaboration strategy to enhance pupils' learning outcome (social and cognitive skills) in national values after resumption from the compulsory closure of school for 6months. Quasi-experimental design was employed. Three hypotheses were raised and tested at 0.05 level of significance. 480 Primary one pupils from four public primary schools assigned to experimental and control within two local governments across four states participated in the study. The research spanned 15weeks. Validated instruments; Primary Pupils' Achievement Test in National Values (PPATNV) and the Primary Pupils' Social Skills Rating Scale (PPSSRC) were used to measure outcomes. Additionally, a Socio-constructive Pedagogical Instructional Guide (ScPIG) steered the delivery of the teaching and learning activities during the experiment. The study employed a statistical technique called analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) combined with a post-hoc test, especially the Bronfenbrenner test to analyse the pupils' learning outcome. The results revealed significant positive effects of the intervention on both social skills and cognitive abilities ($p < 0.05$) of pupils. Interestingly, school location also influences social skills. Furthermore, the intervention demonstrably improved students' national values performance ($p < 0.05$). The study concludes that a socio-constructivist collaborative teaching strategy significantly enhances pupils learning outcomes in areas related to social skills and cognitive development (national values comprehension). These findings suggest the potential benefits of adopting such strategies in primary school education for fostering well-rounded development in young learners

Keywords: Post-Covid, National Values, Socio-constructive and collaborative strategy

INTRODUCTION

Globally, the impact of COVID 19 was felt in almost all the sphere of life ranging from health, education, social and food security, violence, among others. Most especially, teaching and learning activities were disrupted, children were forced to be out of school for almost period of 6months globally. Some of the cherished values were badly affected. Social isolation/distancing became the new normal. Consequently, crime was on the increase since people were idle, hunger ravaged both the old and young. Abuse of different forms were reported. There were changes in lifestyles and livelihood.

The impact of the pandemic in Nigeria was also all encompassing (Amusan & Agunya 2021). It did not only

affect education but also brought crises into households. Incidences that reflected loss of moral values occurred during the lock down. Domestic abuse was heightened, incest was fuelled. Homes became places where sexual offences flourished. Sen & Narula (2024) & Umukoro & Ozobeme (2020) reported that the lock down of support system such as schools during the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated child sexual abuse especially incestuous rape. URN (2020) also reported that with the onset of COVID-19, incest became prominent in families with children becoming silent victims. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTP) reported 143 cases of incest, rape and other related violence against women and girls when there was lockdown during COVID-19 (John-Mensah, 2020).

Many children, during the lockdown period that were supposed to bond with the members of their family, silently underwent different vices. These, will no doubt not leave them without experiences that might likely affect their moral values if not nib in the bud. Values are one of the necessary ingredients to produce the desired citizen. They are determinants of what is good and bad. They give meaning and strength to a person's character by occupying a central place in his life (Majebi, Olowe & Leigh, 2021). Children in their early years are the best to get the values inculcated to them (Majebi & Oduolowu 2020). Instilling in the young generation right values that will help in curbing societal ills and moral decadency propelled the introduction of national values as one of the subjects to be offered in basic level of education as the level has been discovered to be the period when values can be learned and relearned (Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commissions (ICPC), 2016). Building on the work of Mumini and Hussaini (2021), the introduction of national values education in Nigeria reflects growing recognition that innovative curricula can play significant role in fostering ethical values and national development.

National values according to Aina (2023) can be seen as a representation of the parameter values upheld throughout the common cultural experience of the nation. These values which include honesty, tolerance, justice, happiness, forgiveness, self-control among others can be referred to as the acceptable principles or standard of a group of people. In an effort to streamline primary school education, the Nigeria Educational Research Development Council (NERDC, 2013) combined five subjects- Social Studies, Civic Education, Islamic Studies, Christian Religious Studies, and Security Education into a single curriculum titled 'Religion and National Values Education'. However, despite this amalgamation, it has been reported that strategies and methods adopted in teaching these subjects have been making it difficult to achieve the purpose they were designed for (Meziobi, Onyeoku & Ezegbe 2012, & Idowu 2017). There is a critical need to move away from the conventional methods of teaching value education (Mezieobi and Mezieobi, 2011). These methods often involved teachers simply delivering information without engaging learners in activities, resulting in students passively receiving the content. Only few numbers of teachers adopt appropriate methods, procedure and approaches in their instructional strategies to teach social studies (Idowu, 2017). Aina (2023) reported that moral values were not properly taught in school.

All these observation about the strategy adopted in teaching of national values in general necessitated the consideration of another strategy which might be of help in the disseminating and achieving the original expectation of national values. Different studies have adopted various instructional strategies which include active learning and peer tutoring, problem solving strategies, cooperative groups, discrepant event strategy and the use of collaborative learning (Ayodele 2023, Haruna 2018, Yusuf 2014) to teach national values. Considering some of the experience of children reported during the period of staying at home, this study therefore adopted socio-constructive collaboration strategy to teach some of the concepts of national values.

Socio-constructive and collaboration strategy is a process of teaching and learning activities that gives room for the involvement of community members such as experts in various field of study, artisans and other professionals to achieve meaningful and culturally relevant learning. Constructivist classrooms are described by active learning, critical thinking and cooperation with others as the teacher isn't a distributor of learning rather, he/she is a guide and facilitator who urges children to address, challenge, plan their own thoughts, feelings and conclusions (Weeger and Pacis, 2012). Constructivist pedagogy according to

Richardson (2003) is thought of creation of classroom environments, activities and method that are grounded in a constructivist theory of learning, with goals that focus on individual students developing deep understandings in the subject matter of interest and habits of mind that aid in future learning.

A strong collaboration among the school, family and other groups from the community to be involved in children's education can enhance child holistic development, academic performance, lead to fewer discipline problems, higher staff morale, and improved use of resources as well as enhancing parenting and socialization by families and other community entities. Strategies such as this have been proved to have potential not only to improve learners' academic performance but also to equip them with social skills needed to live a meaningful life. Social constructivism affirms that all knowledge can develop through social interaction and the language use. This makes knowledge to be shared, rather than seeing it as an individual experience. This implies that it takes the involvement of more than the teacher to achieve meaningful teaching and learning especially the one that can make meaningful impact in the life of the learners.

School location was also given special consideration in the study because the lockdown affected every child regardless of location. Olapegba, Ayodele & Kolawole (2020) confirmed that the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak have swept across the entire human race like a whirlwind with several challenges, although with varying levels of severity. According to Adejoro (2020) a larger proportion of these infections occur at the community level and this has encountered different perceptions and reactions. Thus, no child should be left behind in the teaching that focuses on reviving the values lost during the lockdown through socio-constructive collaboration strategy to teach some of the concepts of national values.

Statement of the Problem

The effect of suddenly outbreak of Corona virus known as COVID-19 that shook every nation including Nigeria was all encompassing. It did not only disrupt educational activities but also contributed to high moral decadency in the society. Many children, during the lockdown period that were supposed to bond with the members of their family, silently underwent different vices. Families and community engaged in value-betrayed activities. Isolation and social distancing replaced close interaction and relationship which eventually became the new normal. National values curriculum had been introduced earlier to curb the societal ills and moral decency. However, studies have revealed inadequacies in the strategies that teachers have been adopting to teach the content of the curriculum. Attempt to restore values into children, enabling them to settle down in physical classroom after six months of compulsory break requires a more interactive strategy different from the conventional teaching which children are used to before the locked down. Collaboration with other stakeholders were considered necessary to get this done. This research investigated the impact of a socio-constructivist collaborative learning approach on primary school pupils' learning outcomes in national values education, specifically focusing on social and cognitive skills development. Additionally, the study examined the potential influence of school location on these outcomes

Hypotheses

H₀1: There is no significant main effect of treatment on primary school pupils'

1. Social skills outcome in National Values
2. Cognitive skills outcome in National Values

H₀2: There is no significant main effect of school location on primary school pupils'

1. Social skills outcome in National Values
2. Cognitive skills outcome in National values

H_{03a}: There is no significant main effect of treatment and school location on pupils’

1. Social skills outcome in National Values
2. Cognitive skills outcome in National Values

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quasi-experimental design utilizing a pre-test-posttest control group structure. A 2×2 factorial matrix was used to analyse the effects of two instructional strategies (experimental and control) on pupils’ learning outcome (social and cognitive skills). Additionally, school location, categorized into two levels, served as moderator variable in the analysis. Random sampling technique was used to select 4 schools from both rural and urban in two local government areas across the four states totally 48 schools. Two schools were used for experimental and control groups respectively in each local government area across the four states. Intact classes were used in each of the schools selected. 480 pupils, 240 (50%) were in experimental while 240 (50%) were in control. Instructional guide was prepared in form of lesson plan for teachers to steer the delivery of each of the topics selected. Teachers and research assistants were trained on how to use the instructional guide and social skills rating scale. The teachers did most of the teaching while community members were engaged in teaching and learning activities of some specific topics and the research assistants did the rating of the social skills of the pupils during each of the teaching activities. The study lasted for 15 weeks. Learning outcomes in this study covered the social skills and cognitive development of the primary school pupils.

Primary Pupils’ Achievement Test in National Values (PPATNV) and the Primary Pupils’ Social Skills Rating Scale (PPSSRC) were used to measure the learning outcomes. Additionally, a Socio-constructive Pedagogical Instructional Guide (ScPIG) guided the delivery of the teaching. The study employed a statistical technique called analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) combined with a post-hoc test, especially the Bronfenbrenner test to analyse the learning outcome.

RESULTS

H₀₁: This first hypothesis explored whether the implemented intervention has a statistically significant direct effect on the development of social skills among primary school pupils within the national values education curriculum

Table 1: Summary of 2 X 2 Analysis of Covariance on Primary Pupils Social Skills

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects						
Dependent Variable: Post Pry Social						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	6072.516 ^a	4	1518.129	11.811	.000	.093
Intercept	74739.090	1	74739.090	581.445	.000	.559
PrePrySocial	43.267	1	43.267	.337	.562	.001
Treatment	1660.305	1	1660.305	12.917	.000	.027
Location	3357.843	1	3357.843	26.123	.000	.054
Treatment * location	821.935	1	821.935	6.394	.012	.014
Error	59000.027	459	128.540			

Total	1125506.000	464				
Corrected Total	65072.543	463				

a. R Squared = .093 (Adjusted R Squared = .085)

Table 1 presents the findings of the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) examining the intervention’s effect on primary pupils’ social skills. The results indicate a statistically significant main effect ($F(1,459) = 12.92, p < 0.05$), suggesting that the intervention has a meaningful impact on social skill development. The partial eta squared (η^2) of 0.03 suggest effect size. Consequently, hypothesis 1a, which proposed no significant main effect of the intervention on social skills is rejected.

Table 2: Estimated Marginal Means (EMMs) for Primary Pupils’ Social Skills across the treatment groups

Intercept/Groups	Mean	Std. Error
Intercept	39.950	–
Pre-test	47.089	0.554
Post test		
Treatment Group	49.092	0.803
Experimental	45.086	0.769
Control		
School Location	49.951	0.664
Urban	44.227	0.895
Rural		

According to Table 2, pupils who participated in the socio-constructive collaborative learning strategy achieved a higher social skill mean score (49.09) than those exposed to conventional method (45.09). The difference of 4.0 between the two group is statistically significant.

H_{01b}: This hypothesis aimed to determine whether the implemented intervention has a statistically significant main effect on the cognitive development of primary school pupils within the national values education curriculum.

Table 3: Findings of a 2×2 analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) investigating the impact of the intervention (independent variable) on primary school pupils’ cognitive development in national values education (dependent variable).

Analysis of differences between the groups formed by the intervention and potentially other factors in the study design						
Dependent Variable: Social Studies						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1142.103 ^a	4	285.526	11.415	.000	.088

Intercept	10347.209	1	10347.209	413.664	.000	.466
PreSOS	634.676	1	634.676	25.373	.000	.051
Trtmet	101.012	1	101.012	4.038	.045	.008
Loca	114.929	1	114.929	4.595	.033	.010
Trtmet * loca	42.832	1	42.832	1.712	.191	.004
Error	11856.427	474	25.014			
Total	94340.000	479				
Corrected Total	12998.530	478				

a. R Squared = .088 (Adjusted R Squared = .080)

The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) results presented in Table 3 reveal a statistically significant main effect of the intervention on primary pupils' National Values (Cognitive) scores ($F(1, 474) = 4.04, p < 0.05$). This suggests that the intervention has a measurable impact on students' cognitive development in national values education. The partial eta squared (η^2) of 0.01 indicates a small effect size. In light of this finding, hypothesis 1b, which proposed no significant main effect of the intervention on National Values scores, is rejected.

Table 4: presents the Estimated Marginal Means (EMMs) for primary pupils' National Values (Cognitive) scores across the treatment groups

Intercept/Groups	Mean	Std. Error
Intercept	10.286	—
Pre-test	12.877	0.234
Post test		
Treatment Group	13.349	0.320
Experimental	12.406	0.342
Control		
School Location	13.390	0.301
Urban	12.365	0.365
Rural		

Table 4 shows that pupils exposed to socio-constructive collaborative method have higher National Values (cognitive) mean score (13.35) than those exposed to conventional method (12.41). The difference between the two group (0.94) is significant.

H₀2a: There is no significant main effect of school location on primary school pupils' Learning outcome (Social skills) in National Values

Table 3 reveals that there is a significant main effect of school location on primary pupils' social skills ($F_{(1,459)} = 26.12; p < 0.05; \text{partial } \eta^2 = 0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis 2a is rejected. In order to know the magnitude of performance on social skills of the pupils across the locations,

Table 2 shows that pupils in urban settings have higher social skills mean score (49.95) than their counterparts in the rural settings (44.23). The difference between them (5.72) is shown to be statistically significant.

H₀2b: There is no significant main effect of school location on primary school pupils' Learning outcome (cognitive) in National Values

Table 3 reveals that there is a significant main effect of school location on primary pupils' learning outcome (cognitive) National Values scores ($F_{(1;474)} = 4.60$; $p < 0.05$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.01$). Therefore, hypothesis 2dv is rejected. In order to know the magnitude of performance in National Values across the locations, Table 4 reveals that pupils in urban settings have higher learning outcome (cognitive) in National Values mean score (13.39) than those in the rural settings (12.37). The difference (1.02) is shown to be significant.

H₀3a: This hypothesis explored whether there's a statistically significant interaction effect between the implemented intervention and school location on the development of social skills among primary school pupils within the national values education curriculum.

Table 3 suggests a significant interaction effect ($F(1, 459) = 6.39$, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$) between the intervention and school location on primary pupils' social skills scores. Consequently, hypothesis 3a, which proposed no significant interaction effect, is rejected.

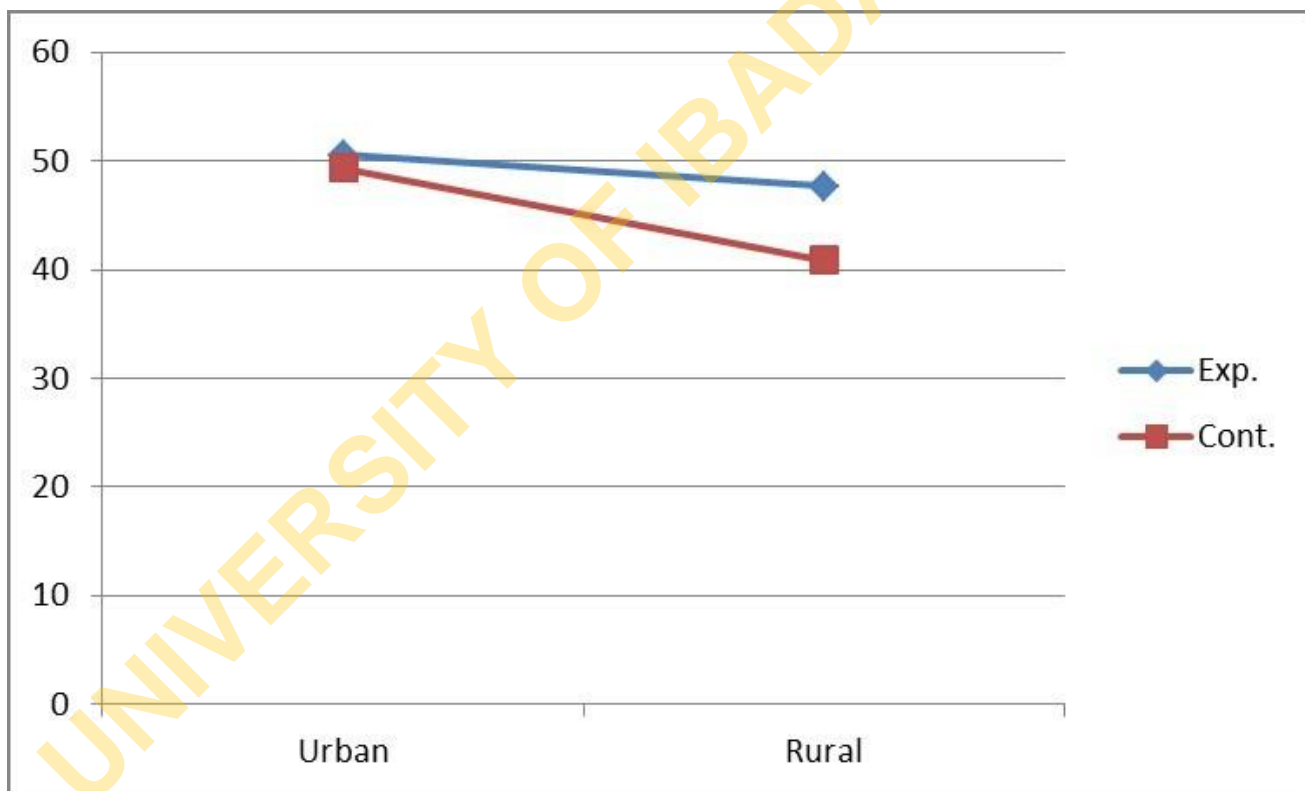


Fig. 1: Interaction Effect of Intervention and Location on Primary Social Skills

As illustrated in Figure 1, the socio-constructivist collaborative learning strategy appears to have resulted in higher mean social skills scores for students in both urban and rural settings. However, the figure suggests a potentially ordinal interaction effect, meaning the difference in social skills scores between the intervention and control groups may be greater in urban schools compared to rural schools.

H₀3b: This hypothesis investigated whether there's a statistically significant interaction effect between the implemented intervention and school location on the cognitive development of primary school students in

national values education.

Table 3 indicates no significant interaction effect ($F(1, 474) = 1.71, p > 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.00$) between the intervention and school location on primary pupils' National Values (Cognitive) scores. Therefore, we fail to reject hypothesis 3b, suggesting that the influence of the intervention on cognitive development in national values education appears consistent across both urban and rural school settings.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

There is a significant main effect of treatment on primary pupils' learning outcome (social skills) in national values. Pupils who participated in the socio-constructivist collaborative learning strategy achieved a higher average social skills score compared to those in the conventional strategy group. The finding corroborates the result of the study carried out by Majebi & Oduolowu (2021) on the use of culturally-based instructional strategy to enhance pre-primary school social competence. The study's results demonstrated a significant positive effect of the culturally-based instructional strategy on children's social competence. Compared to the conventional strategy group, children who participated in the culturally-based approach exhibited greater gains in social competence. Also, Leigh (2021) reported that school-based outdoor activities greatly impacted social skills of pre-primary school children in Ibadan Oyo State. The findings of Adebajo (2024) also reflected that learning centers improved pre-primary school children's social skills.

The research found a statistically significant impact of the intervention on primary school pupils' cognitive development in National Values education. Students who participated in the socio-constructivist collaborative learning strategy achieved a higher average score on the National Values (cognitive) assessment compared to those in the conventional strategy group. This in line with the finding of the survey carried out by Ayodele (2023) which revealed a significant effect of instructional strategies' academic performance. Majebi & Oduolowu (2021) also reported a significant main effect of culturally-based instructional strategy on children's cognitive competence. The pre-primary children exposed to treatment in their study gained more in the skills of cognitive competence than those exposed to conventional strategy. This finding aligns with Farmson (2020), who argues that incorporating new teaching and learning strategies in social studies has the potential to reduce student stress and boredom, improve long-term knowledge retention, and unlock students' natural capacity for learning.

There is a significant main effect of school location on primary pupils' learning outcome (social and cognitive skills) in national values. Pupils in urban settings have higher social and cognitive skills mean score than their counterparts in the rural settings. The results partially align with Amosun, Ajayi, Ogunniyi, & Oduolowu (2024), who found that students engaged in a socio-constructivist collaborative learning strategy achieved higher average English scores in both urban and rural settings. This study adds to the existing knowledge by examining the strategy's impact within the context of national values education.

The analysis revealed a significant interaction effect between the intervention and school location on primary pupils' social skills scores ($F(1; xyz) = p < 0.05$). This suggests that the impact of the socio-constructivist collaborative learning strategy (experimental) on social skills development differed depending on the urban or rural setting. Interestingly, the findings indicate that students in the conventional method group (control) had a higher average social skills score in urban settings, while those in the socio-constructivist collaborative method group (experimental) had a higher average score in rural settings. Therefore, the interaction effect appears to be disordinal.

CONCLUSIONS

Socio-constructive collaborative strategy was able to make significant effect on the learning outcome of primary one pupil especially in the areas of social and cognitive skills. School location is another factor to

be considered when exposing learners to such strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Socio-constructive collaborative strategy should be adopted to achieve holistic development of children. More pre-primary school teachers should be exposed to training on how to use the strategy.

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