



Evaluation of Upper Basic Social Studies Students' Performance Trend in Public Examination Between 2010- 2014 In Cross River State, Nigeria

¹*Opoh, Fredrick Awhen Ph.D , ¹Adams, Amina Peter & ²Akai, Kevin Polycarp (Ph.D)

¹Department of Social Science Education
Faculty of Education
University of Calabar, Calabar- Nigeria

*Contact details of corresponding author: fredrick.opoh@yahoo.com; 08039317085

²World Harvest Bible College and Seminary, Calabar
Cross River State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study centered on the evaluation of upper basic social studies students' performance trend in public examination between 2010- 2014 in Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of this study, one research question was posed to guide the study. The study employed Stufflebeams Product Evaluation. The descriptive (survey) design was adopted for the study. All the 117,174 JSS3 students in Cross River State who registered and sat for Social Studies Junior Secondary Certificate Examination between 2010 to 2014 formed the population of the study. Researcher made inventory was used for data collection from State Ministry of Education. Data generated were summarized and interpreted in table and chart. The results obtained revealed among others that the trend of Social Studies students' performance in public examinations between the periods of 2010- 2013 was not encouraging but has improved drastically in 2014. Considering the finding of the study, it was recommended among others that since the success of policy implementation depends on the ability to provide and utilize available policy materials, proactive and urgent steps should be taken towards sustainable procurements and distribution of policy resources in the research area to sustained and continue to improve on the performance trend as witnessed in 2014.

Keywords: Public examination, Performance trend, UBE, Social Studies

INTRODUCTION

With the global idea of *education for all* and the introduction of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria as a follow up scheme, it was believed that development of Nigeria will be accelerated because of the inherent values in education. Social studies as a core discipline at the upper basic of the Nigeria education system, is one of those subjects with the greatest mandate for transforming Nigeria to join league of developed nations of the world. Despite this importance attached and efforts made to the learning of Social Studies in schools, students' academic performance in social studies does not equate with the investment on it. Essien (2004) reported that there has been a fall in students' academic performance in social studies over the years as compared to other subjects in the education system.

This has become an area with great interest and concern among stakeholders in the education sub-sector. In a regrettable manner, Okam cited in Mezieobi, Fabura and Mezieobi (2013:14), affirmed the shortcomings of Social Studies when he states that, "...Social Studies education in Nigerian schools and colleges... has failed in its educational mission in Nigeria or rather is falling in this enterprise". This falling standard is noticed in the academic performance in Social Studies among students. In a similar vein, after an empirical study on teachers' variables and secondary school students' academic performance in Social Studies in Cross River State, Essien (2004) quoted in Opoh (2011), lamented that

students' academic performance in Social Studies deteriorates yearly when compared to other subjects like Christian Religious Knowledge even though, they belong to the same subject group.

The manifestation of the above problems is a strange phenomenon as Opoh and Okou (2014) reported that when the goal of UBE, "Education For All" (EFA) which is in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was envisaged from the conception of the scheme, little did anyone know that fourteen years after, the policy would not make a significant achievement in competing with systems in other developed nations of the world. The source further reiterated that a critical analysis of the off targets of the UBE scheme is a signal that the programme policy itself was an *obiter dictum* during its conception to meet the demand of the international organization. Hence, the policies of the UBE programme can be said to be a statements without fact, and a theoretical propaganda if its current trend is not reversed.

Tostensen and Scott cited by Adebola (2007) reported that the production of sufficient numbers of secondary and university graduates with the required skills, knowledge and expertise for filling the middle and high level positions to prop the modern dynamic economy remains a challenge to educational planners. Rose (2007) however submitted that there is a significant shift from UPE in the present UBE programme in terms of access, transition, completion with the introduction of early childhood education to public primary school as well as other services like provision of mid-day meal. This assertion could be as a result of the fact that UBE was put in place so as to add to or improve the then UPE programme. To start with, the scope of UBE in terms of number of years is more than that of UPE. Also, UPE covered only six years of primary education however, UBE covers the pre-primary, the primary and the junior secondary education as well as nomadic and adult literacy. The implication of this is that for anyone to claim possession of basic education now, such a person must have performed academically well and have completed the junior secondary education.

This extension has increased the level of literacy in the country (Ejere 2011). The source stressed that Universal Basic Education (UBE) also has well-defined and detailed objectives than the UPE. For instance, it is aimed at equipping individuals with such knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to live meaningful and fulfilling lives, contribute to the development of the society and discharge their civil obligations competently among others. All these have been pointing to UBE as the advanced programme to the then UPE, hence the finding cannot be discarded.

Literacy rates are very low, at 61 percent for adults (USAID, 2011). There are indications that learning outcomes, in particular literacy and numeracy, are very unsatisfactory. According to World Bank (2013), three out of five students who have completed Basic 4 and 44 percent of students who have completed Basic 6 are not able to read a complete sentence in English or in their preferred language. Students perform slightly better in numeracy, measured by a simple test of adding numbers. About 10 percent of students cannot add numbers at the end of primary school. An analysis based on the 2010 Nigeria Education Data Survey shows that a significant number of students in Nigeria take 10 or more years of schooling to master the basic competencies of reading, writing, and numeracy.

This situation called for the need to evaluate the product of this programme using Daniel Stufflebeam in 1966 model. The CIPP Model of Programme Evaluation was propounded by Daniel Stufflebeam in 1966 out of his experience of evaluating education projects for the Ohio public school district. The CIPP is an acronym for Context, Input, Process and Product. These types are typically viewed as separate forms of evaluation and can also be viewed as steps or stages in a comprehensive evaluation. In this present study, the former is the focus with Product evaluation.

Product evaluation measures, interprets and gives verdict of the achievements of a programme. Product evaluation summarizes the extent of success or failure of a programme by giving feedback from the beginning of the programme to the state of operation. With product evaluation, all indices of the programme implementation process are reported based on the extent of availability, accessibility and adequacy. Also, techniques are suggested for improvement. Product evaluation is divided into impact, effectiveness, sustainability, and transportability evaluations.

This type of evaluation asked question like "did it work?", "did it succeed?" This study had carefully adopted the proceedings of this model for both data collection and enrichment of literature by adopting the Product as a type of evaluation rather than a stage of evaluation

Purpose of the study

The main thrust of this study is to ascertain Social Studies students' performance trend in public examination between the period of 2010- 2014 in the upper basic level. To address this, the question to answer is; what is the trend of Social Studies students' performance in public examination between the periods of 2010- 2014?

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive design. This research design involves the collection of data to accurately and objectively describe existing phenomena as precisely as possible (Isangedighi, Joshua, Asim & Ekuri, 2004). The area covered in this study is Cross River State Nigeria. This comprises 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state that are educationally mapped out into three zones. Cross River State is one of the thirty six (36) states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The population of this study consists of all the public secondary school Social Studies students in Cross River State, Nigeria who registered and sat for the state public examination between 2010 to 2014. There are 117,174 of such students in the state between 2010 to 2014 school years. This population covers two hundred and fifty three (253) public (government approved) secondary schools in the area of study (Department of Planning, Research and Statistics, Post Primary Education Board, Calabar, 2016). The population is made up of male and female Social Studies students. The sampling technique adopted for this study is the purposive sampling technique. With the sampling technique employed above, the sample for this study is the entire population of the study. The entire population of the study was therefore used for the study as census.

The researcher used a structured inventory to collect data for this study. The instrument named Evaluation of Upper Basic Social Studies Students' Performance Trend in Public Examination (EUBSSPTPE) was constructed by the researcher for the purpose of this study. The inventory was design to collect information on year by year number of students that register and sat for the examination, pass and failure ratio on the basis of Local Government Area. Such information was collected from SUBEB and Ministry of Education department of Planning, Research and Statistics (PRS), Calabar by the researchers.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Research question: *What is the trend of Social Studies students' performance in public examinations between the periods of 2010- 2014?*

Public examination used here refers to the Junior Secondary School Certificate Examination conducted annually by the Cross River State Ministry of Education. To answer this research question, data were collected from the Ministry of Education on students' performance trend showing number of students that sat, failed or pass the examination for each of the years under consideration. The summary of data collected showing the performance trend local government area by local government area is as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Social Studies students' performance trend in public examination between 2010 and 2014

S/N	L. G. As	2010			2011			2012			2013			2014		
		Number of students	Pass	Failure	Number of students	Pass ratio	Failure ratio									
1	Abi		471	337		651	184		546	222		620	230		725	101
2	Akamkpa		437	751		471	689		519	548		563	598		1041	334
3	Akpabuyo		164	382		277	305		181	409		228	408		527	222
4	Bakassi		22	41		25	44		77	99		102	82		207	39
5	Biase		446	387		503	379		472	401		509	431		875	151
6	Bekwara		388	350		534	232		433	346		577	233		815	176
7	Boki		985	463		1032	493		1011	572		1233	394		1529	318
8	Calabar mun.		1476	1291		1528	1280		1616	1614		2091	1290		3445	937
9	Calabar south		826	720		929	616		1122	1101		1274	987		2412	296
10	Etung		282	154		317	116		407	106		399	119		661	75
11	Ikom		1067	643		1327	438		1150	1308		1368	1242		2085	538
12	Obanliku		321	417		522	254		417	389		521	349		741	160
13	Obubra		563	571		814	406		755	542		774	586		1486	378
14	Obudu		679	629		854	488		802	557		965	442		1452	253
15	Odukpani		280	531		447	479		378	500		350	545		771	232
16	Ogoja		836	647		1046	471		865	506		981	462		1533	379
17	Yakur		860	868		1207	580		1060	502		1442	302		1371	433
18	Yala		1050	423		994	516		966	393		1172	404		1698	350
	Total:		11153	9605		12785	13478		12777	10095		13331	15169		2337 4	5382

Opoh's Field Survey 2014

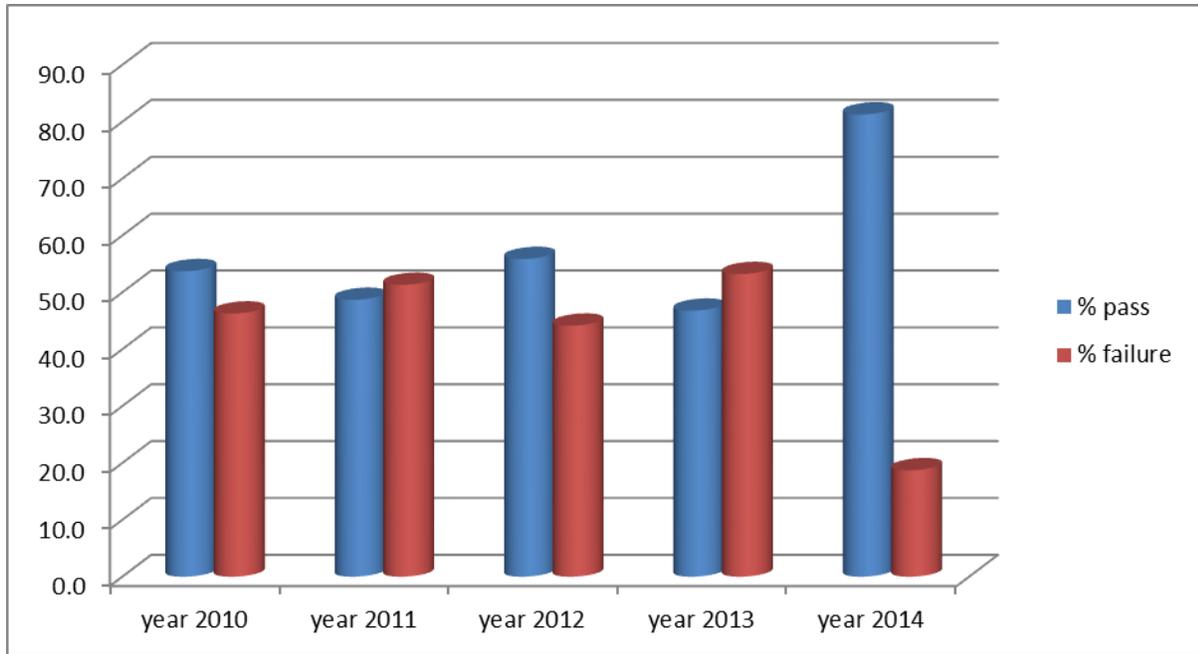


Fig 1: A bar chart showing the percentage pass and failure of Social Studies students in public examination bet 2010 and 2014

The statistics summarised in Table 1 shows year by year pass and failure ratios of 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 as 53.7% and 46.3%, 48.7% and 51.3%, 58.9% and 44.1%, 46.8% and 53.2% as well as 81.3% and 18.7% for pass and failure respectively. The result is further presented in Fig 1 where the blue bars represent percentage pass while oxblood bars represent percentage of failure for each of the years. The trend as presented is not encouraging between 2010 and 2013 with much failure than pass in 2011 and 2013. The chart however shows a drastic improvement in 2014 with pass percentage of 81.3% against failure percentage of 18.7%. and 34.5% increment from the 46.8% of 2013. This shows an improvement of about 73.3% of the previous year. This result revealed inconsistent trend but with an unusual improvement in 2014 which is believed to be sustained.

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The finding of this study agreed with the earlier position of Tostensen and Scott cited by Adebola (2007) that the production of sufficient numbers of secondary and university graduates with the required skills, knowledge and expertise for filling the middle and high level positions to support the modern dynamic economy has remains a challenge to educational planners. The finding of the present study however contradicts the earlier position of Rose (2007) who submits that there is a significant shift from UPE in the present UBE programme in terms of access, transition, completion with the introduction of early childhood education to public primary school as well as other services like provision of mid-day meal. The present finding does not really deviate from Rose's position because there is a drastic improvement in the recent year perhaps as the result of the reasons deduced by the author.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Upper basic Social Studies students' performance trend in public examination between 2010 and 2013 in Cross River State was found to be deplorable and this has sent a bad signal about the system to stakeholders in UBE scheme. However, there was drastic improvement in 2014 performance which is hoped would be sustained. Putting the provision of other policy resources into consideration, the poor students' performance trend witnessed in the area can be averted through award of scholarship to the best performing student(s) in each school in public examination. This would serve as motivating factor to students.

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