
**STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING STUDENTS' LOW ENROLMENT IN SENIOR
SECONDARY SCHOOL HISTORY IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA****Abubakar SAIDU**Department of Arts Education
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Tijani A. AHMEDDepartment of Adult and Primary Education,
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History as a subject in Nigerian secondary schools is not only significant for its role as an instrument of nation building rather it instills creative, imaginative and critical thinking skills on the learners. However, as as History is, the enrolment rate is still low in Nigerian secondary schools. Therefore important, this study examined teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State. The population consisted of all Senior Secondary School teachers in Kwara State. Descriptive survey research design was employed in the study while 450 teachers were randomly sampled using multistage sampling techniques. A researchers' self-developed questionnaire was used for data collection while the data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and rank order to answer research question and inferential statistics of t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings from this study revealed that the perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State, Nigeria are by making History as a core subject for Arts students; making History as a general/optional for all SSS students to have knowledge of the past events of their immediate community and at large among others. There was a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on teaching qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria. It was therefore recommended among others that History should be made a core subject for Arts students and a general/optional for other category of students; the use of modern teaching and learning techniques such as inquiry teaching technique, co-operative (e.g. think-pair-share) and competitive teaching technique (game theory), all which are learner-centeredness in History teaching and learning process should be integrated so as to increase the number of students enrolling for History

Keywords: History, Students' Low Enrolment, Improvement Strategies

Introduction

History as a subject has, for a long time, enjoyed a place in Nigerian school curriculum. The teaching of it in Nigeria is traced informally to the pre-colonial days when parents and elderly persons recounted the past of their communities to the younger generation through folktales, music, and other art forms (Anjaneyulu, 2015). The teaching of History took a formal turn in the colonial period when it was taught in the schools established by the missionaries and those established by the British colonial officials. In the period after colonialism, History was among the four subjects which were taught and examined in the Middle School Leaving Certificate Examination (M.S.L.C.E). According to Taylor and Young (2003), History was also offered as an elective subject in the Secondary Schools (1 to 6) for Arts students who wrote the Senior School Certificate Examinations and General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (SSCE/GCE 'O' Level).

The long existence of History in the Nigerian school curriculum could be as a result of the numerous purposes that it serves. As a study of the past, History draws on significant events of the past to inform the present and to safeguard the future. In effect, History does not study the past in isolation from the present, but relates intricately, the successes, achievements and failures of antecedent generations to the contemporary case and sets the stage for a better living in the morrow (Boadu, 2016). With the seemingly importunate problems society is subjected to, especially in the 21st Century, the utility of History cannot be overlooked as most of the current problems facing society have deep-lying historical geneses (Cobbold & Oppong, 2010b).

Despite its overwhelming importance, History is gradually losing its grip on Nigerian education system that at a time (during 2009/2010 academic session), History was completely expunged from Nigerian school curriculum and it was returned after seven years when the government realized that it was a wrong decision to remove History from the school curriculum. A question that is certainly worth an answer is; what accounts for the current state of History in the country? Historians, history educators and history students may be quick to point to a host of factors relating to low students' enrolment, and the turn of attention towards the so called economically viable subjects. Though it might be difficult to hold a single factor as the cause of low students' enrolment in History, the problem certainly cannot be dissociated from how the subject is being taught. For instance, Boadu, Awuah, Ababio and Eduaquah (2014) observed that for some time, History teachers have adopted the classical methods of teaching with little or no innovation. Since interest in the subject is gained primarily through how the subject is taught and/or presented to learners, issues and conditions surrounding the teaching of the subject might plausibly explain the current state of History especially at the Senior Secondary School level and subsequently resulting to low students' interest and enrolment in the subject (Kola & Nelson, 2004).

However, low students' enrolment in History classes at the Nigerian Senior Secondary Schools has been of worrisome to the stakeholders especially History teachers and Historians. Low students' enrolment occurs when students' attendance in History classes or the number of students who register for History at the external examinations like WAEC, NECO, NABTEB, etc. is relatively small and decreasing compared to the large number of students registering for Government (Amon, 2003). From the research material obtained from Educational Authority in the Kwara State Ministry of Education and Human Capital Development (2018), the following results were obtained on the students' enrolment trend in WAEC Government and History Examinations from 2010 to 2017.

Table 1: Number of Students' who registered for WAEC Government and History Examinations (2010 to 2017) in Kwara State, Nigeria

Year	Total number of students wo registered for Government	Total number of students wo registered for History
2010	22,628	114
2011	24,306	101
2012	27,541	124
2013	28,335	137
2014	28,599	122
2015	29,181	117
2016	29,475	94
2017	30,193	91

Source: Ministry of Education and Human Capital (2018),

From the result obtained and shown in Table 1 on the student's enrolment trend in WAEC History Examinations from 2010 to 2017 in Senior Secondary Schools in Kwara State, it is glaring that students' enrollment trend in History is far below satisfactory and if these trends continue as there is proof that situation is getting worse. Low Students' enrolment in History has been observed to be rooted from lack of suitable History textbooks and overloaded syllabus while Boadu (2016) submitted that the teaching of History is being hindered by many factors such as insufficient qualified history teachers, large class size, insufficient instructional time, inadequate administrative support for the subject, lack/insufficient teachers' incentives, unavailability and inadequacy of instructional aids/materials as well as lack of government measures for History as a school subject (Cobbold, &Oppong, 2010a; Ruto & Ndaloh, 2013).

Although several strategies and policies have been put in place to tackle low students' enrolment in education especially in Nigeria such as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and Education for All (EFA) initiative, adopted the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) as a reform measure in 2004 (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education, 2010). However, given the low students enrolment trends in SSCE history (a case study: Kwara State), this study is centered on the strategies or measures to be put in place for improving the enrolment of students especially in Senior Secondary School History.

Many strategies have been proffered to arrest the situation of low students' enrolment. There is a large body of research and theory exploring the individual, social and organizational factors that improve students' enrolment (Amon, 2003; Banerjee & Duflo, 2006). One of the strategies observed for improving students' low enrolment in History is to put in place such measures that could be used to arouse and facilitate students' interest in the subject (Fadairo, 2009). Amon (2003) submitted that through the making of History as a core subject for Arts students and as a general/optional subject for all students to have knowledge of the past events of their immediate community and at large with the provision of more qualified History teachers that are competent enough to make the subject interesting to students with adequate and up-to-date teaching and learning material in History, the number of students enrolling for History tends to increase.

Also, the integration of modern teaching and learning techniques such as inquiry teaching technique, co-operative (e.g. think-pair-share) and competitive teaching technique (game theory),

all which are learner-centeredness rather than story telling method have been observed to make the teaching and learning more concrete and embed students' greater participation (David & Alan, 2015). Through students' participation in teaching and learning process, students develop interest, love and passion for the subject matter and tend to be punctual in classes and engage themselves in extra moral classes so as to do well in the particular subject. David and Alan(2015)submitted that all these modern teaching and learning techniques improve students' self-esteem, positive interpersonal relations with other students, motivation to learn, and develop positive attitudes and interest toward the subject matter.

Some scholars have also opted for the use of field trips and historical places which facilitate teaching and learning of History in collaboration with the invitation of community resource persons that are conversant with past events at school. Field trip is a study trip taken outside the classroom to obtain direct experience from a natural setting. It is organized to improve students' interest in learning as well as to observe objects or phenomena not possible to bring within the classroom. Field trip is a planned exercise taking place outside the four walls of the classroom to offers opportunity for learners to get first-hand information on people, places and things for the permanency of learning experiences (Greene, Kisida, & Bowen, 2013).

Another strategy is to conduct an enlightenment about the relevance of the learning History on students' career goals and objectives (Voss & Gruber, 2006; Simpson, 2004). This is done through mass students' orientation programme funded by government through its Ministry of Education (Rowley, 2003; Derby & Smith, 2004). offering an optional face-to-face student orientation programme could also prove beneficial in this regard, as it would give students the opportunity to internalize the relevant of History and establish a sense of commitment to learning it as a school subject (Malik, 2015). These are strategies observed from the literature to enhance students' enrolment and retention in Senior Secondary School History classes (Lauer, 2002). However, most of these literatures are abroad based and given the present low enrolment rate of students in History especially in Senior Secondary School in Kwara State, Nigeria, the researcher finds it interesting to look into the strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Although History is an important school subject which conveys invaluable lessons from the past and whose worth transcends regional, national and cultural boundaries, learners do not gain deep appreciation of the relevance of learning History as a subject. As a result, students hardly enroll in SSCE History as the number of students registering for SSCE History examinations is relatively too low leading to the extremely low students' knowledge of the history of their communities and the world around them all which became a major set-back in the pedagogical process. This has been worrisome to stakeholders and tempts the researcher to investigate the strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State, Nigeria. The general purpose of this study was to investigate the strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

What are teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State, Nigeria

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on school ownership in Kwara State, Nigeria

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on gender in Kwara State, Nigeria

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria

Ho₄: There is no significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on teaching experience in Kwara State, Nigeria

Research Methodology

This study was a descriptive survey type. The population for this study were all Senior Secondary School History teachers in Kwara State. four hundred and fifty (450) History teachers were sampled for this study using multistage sampling techniques. A researcher's designed questionnaire which contained 15 items structured in a four-response-type with the reliability coefficient 0.79 was used for data collection while the data collected for this study were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean was used to answer the research question while research hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics of independent t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

Data Analysis and Results

Out of 450 (100%) History teachers that were sampled, 178 (40%) of the respondents were male teachers while 272 (60%) were female teachers. Also, 288 (64%) of the respondents were from the public schools and 162 (36%) were from the private schools. More so, 168 (37%) of the respondents were NCE holders; 256 (57%) were B. A. /BSc (Ed) holders and 26 (6%) were M.Sc./M.Ed. holders. In addition, 194 (43%) of the respondents were within 0 – 5 years of teaching experience; 232 (52%) were within 6 – 10 years of teaching experience while 24 (5%) were within 21 years and above of teaching experience.

Research Question One: *What are teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State, Nigeria?*

A cut-off score of 2.50 was used as the baseline for determining participants' responses since the questionnaire items were structured in a four-response-type. Therefore, items found with mean scores equal or above 2.50 were the "Perceived" strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History while items with mean scores below 2.50 were remarked otherwise.

Table 2: Mean and Rank Order of History Teachers' Perceived Strategies for Improving Students' Low Enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State, Nigeria

N	Students' low enrolment in History could be improved through the following strategies	Mean	Rank	Remark
1	Making History as a core subject for Arts students	3.71	1 st	Perceived
2	Making History as a general/optional for all SSS students to have knowledge of the past events of their immediate community and at large	3.56	2 nd	Perceived
8	Provision of more qualified History teachers,	3.43	3 rd	Perceived
10	Teachers' quality improvement to boost their teaching competence	3.37	4 th	Perceived
7	Integration of modern teaching and learning techniques such as inquiry teaching technique, co-operative (e.g. think-pair-share) and competitive teaching technique (game theory), all which are learner-centeredness in History teaching and learning process rather than story telling method.	3.34	5 th	Perceived
3	Provision of more up-to-date teaching and learning materials at schools;	3.02	6 th	Perceived
4	The use of field trips and historical places which facilitate teaching and learning of History	3.02	6 th	Perceived
13	The use of community resource persons with historical records at schools	2.94	8 th	Perceived
14	Capacity building to improve school management systems.	2.91	9 th	Perceived
15	Strong commitment by government to increase overall educational capacity and improve quality	2.83	10 th	Perceived
5	Provision of accurate and detailed information about courses before students enroll	2.76	11 th	Perceived
9	Provision of financial support to students in the form of scholarships, emergency funds, containing non-tuition costs such as books, internet access, printing costs, library fines and parking fees and fines	2.71	12 th	Perceived
6	Regular monitoring of withdrawal and reviewing patterns of attrition.	2.69	13 th	Perceived
11	Motivating students to show interest in History related instructional activities by sponsoring participating students	2.66	14 th	Perceived
12	Provision of standard facilities and materials for effective teaching and learning of History	2.57	15 th	Perceived

As revealed in Table 2, the mean score of all the items are above 2.50. This implies that the perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State, Nigeria are by making History as a core subject for Arts students; making History as a general/optional for all SSS students to have knowledge of the past events of their

immediate community and at large; provision of more qualified History teachers; teachers' quality improvement to boost their teaching competence; integration of modern teaching and learning techniques such as inquiry teaching technique, co-operative (e.g. think-pair-share) and competitive teaching technique (game theory), all which are learner-centeredness in History teaching and learning process rather than story telling method; provision of more up-to-date teaching and learning materials at schools; the use of field trips and historical places which facilitate teaching and learning of History among others.

Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses one and two were tested with the use of independent t-test while hypotheses three and four were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One: *There is no significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on school ownership in Kwara State, Nigeria*

Table 3: t-test Statistics Showing the Difference in Teachers' Perceived Strategies for Improving Students' Low Enrolment in Senior Secondary School History Based on School Ownership in Kwara State, Nigeria

School Ownership	No	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Sig	Decision
Public	288	14.441	2.524	448	1.544	0.13	Accepted
Private	162	14.865	2.614				

$p > 0.05$

Table 3 shows that the t-value 1.544 is obtained with a p-value of 0.13 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.13 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis one is accepted. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on school ownership in Kwara State, Nigeria ($t_{(448)} = 1.544, p > 0.05$).

Hypothesis Two: *There is no significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on gender in Kwara State, Nigeria*

Table 4: t-test Statistics Showing the Difference in Teachers' Perceived Strategies for Improving Students' Low Enrolment in Senior Secondary School History Based on Gender in Kwara State, Nigeria

Gender	No	Mean	S. D.	df	t-value	Sig	Decision
Male	178	15.652	2.481	448	1.655	0.19	Accepted
Female	272	14.685	2.844				

$p > 0.05$

Table 4 shows that the t-value 1.655 is obtained with a p-value of 0.19 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.19 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis two is accepted. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on gender in Kwara State, Nigeria ($t_{(448)} = 1.655, p > 0.05$).

Hypothesis Three: *There is no significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria*

Table 5: ANOVA Summary of the Difference in Teachers' Perceived Strategies for Improving Students' Low Enrolment in Senior Secondary School History Based on Qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria

Variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	238.552	2	119.276			
Within Groups	59584.345	447	133.298	0.895	0.92	Accepted
Total	59822.897	449				

$p > 0.05$

As shown in Table 5, the F-value of 0.895 with a p-value of 0.92 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.92 obtained is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis three is accepted. This thus implies that there is no statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria ($F_{(2, 197)} = 0.895, p > 0.05$).

Hypothesis Four: *There is no significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on teaching qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria*

Table 6: ANOVA Summary of the Difference in Teachers' Perceived Strategies for Improving Students' Low Enrolment in Senior Secondary School History Based on Teaching Experience in Kwara State, Nigeria

Variables	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	331.248	2	165.624			
Within Groups	19556.428	447	43.750	3.786	0.02	Rejected
Total	29815.593	449				

$P < 0.05$

As shown in table 5, the F-value of 3.786 with a p-value of 0.02 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.02 obtained is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis four is rejected. This thus implies that there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on teaching qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria ($F_{(2, 447)} = 3.786, p < 0.05$).

Sequel to the establishment of a significant difference between the means, further test was carried out on the various combinations of means to find out where the difference occurred. The test was conducted using Duncan's Post Hoc procedure at 0.05 alpha levels. The Post Hoc is a statistical procedure used to determine which of the multiple groups actually makes the difference.

Table 7: Duncan's Post Hoc Pair-wise Comparisons Showing the Difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on teaching qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria

Respondents	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	3
More than 10yrs	24	26.02		
6 – 10years	232		28.92	
0 – 5years	194			31.32
Sig.		1.00	1.00	1.00

As revealed in Table 7, the statistical difference noted in Table 6 was contributed majorly by teachers who were within 0 – 5years of teaching experience with the highest mean score 31.32 followed by teachers who were within 6 – 10years of teaching experience with the mean score 28.92 while teachers who were more than 10years of teaching experience had the least score 26.02.

Discussion of Findings

Finding from this study revealed that the perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History in Kwara State, Nigeria included the making of History as a core subject for Arts students; making History as a general/optional for all SSS students to have knowledge of the past events of their immediate community and at large; provision of more qualified History teachers; teachers' quality improvement to boost their teaching competence; integration of modern teaching and learning techniques such as inquiry teaching technique, co-operative (e.g. think-pair-share) and competitive teaching technique (game theory), all which are learner-centeredness in History teaching and learning process rather than story telling method; provision of more up-to-date teaching and learning materials at schools. These outcomes substantiate Uchenna & Patrick (2015) who submitted that students' enrolment in a particular subject could be increased when the History is made a core subject for Arts students and a general/optional subject for all students to have knowledge of the past events of their immediate community and at large with the provision of more qualified History teachers that are competent enough to make the subject interesting to students. In the same vein, Fadairo, (2009) affirmed that one of the strategies observed for improving students' low enrolment in History is to put in place such measures that could be used to arouse and facilitate students' interest in the subject

Also, the use of field trips and historical places which facilitate teaching and learning of History; the use of community resource persons with historical records at schools; Capacity building to improve school management systems.; Strong commitment by government to increase overall educational capacity and improve quality; Teachers' development and training; Provision of accurate and detailed information about courses before students enroll; General and academic

support services specifically customised to suit a variety of students and disciplines; Provision of financial support to students in the form of scholarships, emergency funds, containing non-tuition costs such as books, internet access, printing costs, library fines and parking fees and fines; Regular monitoring of withdrawal and reviewing patterns of attrition; Motivating students to show interest in History related instructional activities by sponsoring participating student; Provision of standard facilities and materials for effective teaching and learning of History. All these are in line with Oluwayemisi (2015) whose study submitted that the integration of modern teaching and learning techniques which had been observed to improve students' self-esteem, positive interpersonal relations with other students, motivation to learn, and develop positive attitudes and interest toward the subject matter could be used to improve students' enrolment in a subject..

In addition, this study indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on school ownership in Kwara State, Nigeria. More so, it was found that there was no statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on gender in Kwara State, Nigeria. This implies that the perceived strategies to improve students' low enrolment in History by male and female teachers from public and private teachers are almost the same. These outcomes corroborate the study of Olanrewaju (2011) which revealed that there was no statistical variation in the views of male and female teachers while Amon (2003) observed no discrepancy in the perception of teachers from public and private schools.

Results of this study showed that there is no statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria. However, findings revealed that there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in Senior Secondary School History based on teaching qualifications in Kwara State, Nigeria. This statistical difference was noted to have been contributed majorly by teachers who were within 0 – 5years of teaching experience. This outcome disagrees with Uchenna and Patrick (2015) whose result indicated that insignificant difference existed in the views of teachers irrespective of their years in teaching service.

Conclusion

With respect to the findings obtained from this study, it could be concluded that students' low enrolment in History could be improved by making the subject a core subject for Arts students and an optional for all students in Senior Secondary Schools just to provide them pre-requisite knowledge of the past events of their immediate community and at large with the provision of more qualified History teachers that are competent enough to make the subject interesting to students with adequate and up-to-date teaching and learning material in History, all which tend to increase the number of students enrolling for History. It could also be concluded that the perceived strategies for improving students' low enrolment in History by teachers given their gender status, school type and qualifications except teachers of different teaching experience with varying perceptions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained from this study, the following recommendations are proffered;

1. History should be made a core subject for Arts students and a general/optional for all students. This would help in students' acquisition of knowledge of the past events of their immediate community and at large
2. More qualified History teachers who are competent enough to make the subject interesting to students should be deployed to Senior Secondary Schools. This could improve the number of students enrolling in History.
3. Modern teaching and learning techniques such as inquiry teaching technique, co-operative (e.g. think-pair-share) and competitive teaching technique (game theory), all which are learner-centeredness in History teaching and learning process rather than story telling method should be integrated so as to increase the number of students enrolling for History.
4. There should be provision of more up-to-date teaching and learning materials at schools coupled with the use of field trips, historical places and community resource persons with historical records to facilitate teaching and learning of History and increase the number of students enrolling for History.
5. There should be strong commitment by government to increase overall educational capacity and improve quality and capacity building to improve school management systems
6. Students should be engaged in History related instructional activities by sponsoring participating students as a strategy of motivating students to enroll in History
7. There should also be provision of standard facilities and materials for effective teaching and learning of History so as to increase the number of students enrolling for History

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