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## EFFECT OF BLENDED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF UPPER BASIC SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS IN DELTA STATE

BY

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### ABSTRACT

*This study investigated the effects of blended instructional strategies on academic performance of Upper Basic Social Studies students. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of blended instructional strategy instructional strategy on the academic performance of Upper Basic Social Studies student in Delta State. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated and tested. A quasi-experimental, equivalent pre-test, post-test, control group design using a 2x2 factorial design was adopted for the study. The subjects included all the Upper Basic II Social Studies students from three purposively selected secondary schools in Delta State. The two (2) different schools selected were randomly assigned to the various groups: Blended instructional strategy and conventional lectures method as control. Each group consisted of 128 (blended instructional strategy) and 124 (conventional lecture method) students making a total of 252 sampled students. Treatments were given to the two groups for four weeks. A Social Studies Achievement Test (SSAT) with reliability coefficient of 0.83 was used to measure students' performance before and after treatments. The student's pre-test and post test scores were analysed using Mean, Standard deviation, t-test and Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). The findings showed that: there is a significant difference in the academic performance of Social Studies students taught with blended instructional strategy and those taught with conventional lecturing method, there is no significant difference in the performance of male and female students taught using blended instructional strategy, and there is no significant interaction effect of instructional strategies and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies. Based on these findings, conclusion was drawn and recommendation were made among others that Social Studies teachers should endeavour to expose students to blended instructional strategy so as to promote and encourage social interaction, active engagement in learning, self-motivation, learning by doing and learning by experience in the classroom.*

**Keywords:** Social Studies, Blended Instructional Strategy, Academic Performance, Gender

## INTRODUCTION

The vital role Social Studies plays in the development of any nation has long been recognized, and it is also known that the socio-cultural and political development of any nation can only be enhanced when there is quality teaching of social studies in the schools. Social Studies is an integrated study of the Social Sciences and Humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school programme, Social Studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as Anthropology, Archaeology, Economics, Geography, History, Law, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Religion, and Sociology as well as appropriate content from the Humanities, Mathematics, and Natural Sciences. The primary purpose of Social Studies is to enable individuals to acquire and develop the adequate and appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and behaviors necessary to function optimally as citizens (Bayero, 2021).

The evolution of social studies as a subject in Nigeria was to make education more relevant to the needs of society. Olaleye (2017) said that it was from the United States and Britain that Social Studies spread to Africa, including Nigeria. The adoption of Social studies as a subject in Africa was to make education more relevant to the needs of the society. Social Studies was introduced into Nigeria like other countries in response to societal needs and aspirations (Olaleye, 2017). And to use education for national integration as an attempt to heal the wounds of the civil war (Dubey and Barth in Etaneki 2019). Around 1958, Social Studies was taught in some teachers' training colleges in the defunct Western Region of Nigeria (Awopetu, in Festus 2018). At the secondary school level, Social Studies was first taught at Aiyetoro Comprehensive High School in the Yewa area. Ogun State (Okunrotifa & Mabofa, 2018). Okunrotifa and Mabofa, (2018) also confirms that social studies as a field of study was introduced into the Aiyetoro Comprehensive High School in 1964, with the program being mainly financed by the Ford Foundation of America and being described as an "Experiment". With the assistance of the Ford Foundation and the Comparative Education Study and Adaptation Centre (CESAC) of the University of Lagos, the Social Studies department of the school published a book in 1968, which was then adopted for use in the lower forms of the secondary school. He also said it helped to use education for national integration as an attempt to heal the wounds of the civil war. Social studies education focuses on issues of social living and how the learner can be equipped with good moral values and positive attitudes and acquire skills to identify, evaluate, and find solutions to problems in society.

According to Loof in Olabisi (2020), Social Studies in Nigeria, no doubt, presents one of such efforts towards making education socially functional and responsive to the challenges of our complex environment. These challenges are the propagation of national unity, a stable economy, ethnic tolerance, enhanced citizenship education, skills acquisition for independent creation, peace education, inquiry-oriented consciousness, inculcation of positive values and attitudes for social reconstruction, and the exposure of the learner to national problems that will ignite high thinking skills and problem-solving approaches. Jiboku (2016) defined social studies as the specific learning that is centered on one's environment, physical as well as human, and how to develop those skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that characterize a responsive and responsible citizen in a free society. Responsiveness to environmental problems and progress is the primary focus of social studies education. Social Studies Education plays a vital role in developing rational thinking ability for practical social life, promoting political literacy and encouraging democratic values and principles for the promotion of functional citizenship. It also enables citizens to develop positive attitudes towards other people and toward citizenship and also to contribute his best towards the welfare of society and building up of Nigeria (Abubakar, 2018). Etaneki (2021) stated that

Social Studies when effectively taught has the potential to influence the intellectual, social and personal growth and development of the individual.

In addition, Social Studies is an interdisciplinary field in which man learn about problems of survival in his/her environment (Aderalegbe as cited in Daramola 2020). Social Studies teaches positive values and social norms by inculcating the do and don'ts of the society; and positive attitudes in all Nigerian school children. In a sense, Social Studies as a school subject emerged to improve the citizenry. The broad objective of Social Studies is to ensure the acquisition of relevant body of knowledge which is a prerequisite to personal development and contribution to the betterment of oneself and that of the society. (Okobia, 2015).

In achieving these objectives lies in the quality of instruction given in the classroom. Social Studies being a unique subject requires variety of methods to be able to make impact on the lives of the learners. In light of this, the teaching of Social Studies using different methods which are learner-centered becomes indispensable. This is one of the reasons why we cannot ignore blended and collaborative learning as one of the major strategies in making the teaching learning of Social Studies meaningful. Social Studies has its major focus in the promotion of civic competence, integration of knowledge skills and attitudes in resolving societal problems, issues and challenges. It is a discipline that ruminates and explores the dynamism of society and the changing nature of knowledge. Social Studies fosters new and integrated approaches to resolving societal and environmental issues (Osakwe, in Izekor 2019).

In spite of the important place of Social Studies in our educational system, including its role in relation to societal values, problems, changing circumstances and democratic heritage, students' performance in the subject shows growing decline in Junior Secondary School Certificate Examination (JSCE) now known as Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in Delta State. The Basic Education Certificate Examination is conducted for candidates in their third year of the Upper Basic School III, to transit from the ninth year of the Basic Education to the Senior Secondary School. In five successive years of 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, the number of candidates who sat for Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in Delta State, for example, the table below shows the trend of Performance of Social Studies.

**Table 1. The Trend of Performance of Social Studies Students in BSCE in Delta State for 2017 – 2021**

Year	Candidates Examined	Grades							
		A	%	C	%	P	%	F	%
2017	3380	16	0.47	600	17.75	2231	66.00	533	15.77
2018	3612	8	0.22	458	12.67	2334	64.62	812	22.48
2019	3983	2	0.51	425	10.67	3259	81.82	297	7.46
2020	4699	2	0.04	420	8.94	3734	79.46	543	11.56
2021	5452	5	0.09	331	6.07	2077	38.10	3039	55.74

Source: Delta State Ministry of Education (2021)

It can be observed from Table 1 that certain factors are attributed to this problem. From table 1, students' academic performance declined continuously, these results became a source of worry at each year of low performance of student. Members of the public,

educators, parents as well as the student are eager to obtain better and excellent academic performance.

Over the years, many instructional strategies have been recognized and tried out by teachers. These instructional strategies are demonstration, laboratory work, simulation, concept mapping, constructivist learning, problem based, inquiry method, small group teaching and peer tutoring, are all perceived good and effective methods that can be used for instructional method (Oyovwi, 2015).

Instructional strategies are known to contribute very significantly to cognitive attainments of students in various subject areas. Students are known to have developed intrinsic interest in a subject as a result of the teaching strategy used by the teachers. Yusuf, (2018) asserted many teachers do not have the sound knowledge and appropriate instructional strategies to enhance Social Studies teaching and development, thus Social Studies is being taught using only one particular instructional strategy that is the lecture method. The lecture method is a teaching method in which the teacher presents a verbal discourse on a particular subject, theme or concept to the learners, the teacher delivers preplanned lessons to the students with little or no instructional aids (Nwagbo & Chikelu, 2019). Lecture instructional strategy is the most prevalent teaching method some teachers often employ in teaching in secondary school. Arends (2016) pointed out that though the lecture method facilitates the transmission of large amount of information to students in an efficient manner, it does not encourage students to participate actively in the learning process. In support of this Francisco, Nicoli and Trautmann (2017) stated that the lecture method seems to deprive students from taking charge of their own learning, hence student performance continues to decline in Social Studies due to lack of students' active participation in the teaching-learning process. As good as the lecture method seems to be, it has some drawbacks that can hinder effective learning among students: It does not take into account individual needs and feelings. Nwagbo and Chikelu (2019) observed that "the lecture method is the most prevalent instructional strategy that most teachers often use in teaching" (p9). Mari in Hesse (2017) had advocated a shift away from the lecture method in the teaching of Social Studies. Instead of teacher-centred approaches, the focus ought to be shifted to learner-centred and learning-centred strategies. In the content of education, learners are no more the empty vessels to be filled in, rather they need to be the co-creators of knowledge; they should be willing to take ownership of their learning and contribute to the development of knowledge.

In order to achieve the creativity and overall national development, teaching strategy that can motivate secondary school students for better performance in Social Studies is imperative. Social Studies teachers are therefore expected to possess the adequate pedagogical knowledge, capabilities and disposition needed to create the kind of learning experiences and school environment that are envisioned to gear learners towards meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging and active instruction. In other words, teachers should employ teaching methods that has its roots in constructivism, that is, method that will enable the learner construct his/her own understanding. Among the instructional strategies aimed at meeting the principle of constructivism and characterizing powerful Social Studies teaching, might be blended learning and collaborative learning strategy in terms of learning effectiveness.

Blended instructional strategy is one of the most modern methods of teaching that help in solving the knowledge explosion problem, the growing demand for education and the problem, blended instructional strategy could increase the learning effectiveness of students to a large degree, also allows the learner to study at his favorite time and place, allows for group discussions and as well provides updated information that suit the learning need of the

learners. The term blended instructional strategies involve technology in and outside the classroom. More specifically, it refers to the use of online sites and apps to deliver a portion of the curriculum while the teacher facilitates instruction (Smith & Suzuki 2015).

The blended instructional strategy involves the effective combination of different modes of lesson delivery, models of teaching and styles of learning which are exercised in an interactively meaningful learning environment. Blended instructional strategy is a combination of multimedia application and classroom face-face teaching and learning activities, it is also the use digital resources in an optimal way in order to improve student learning outcomes (Garrison & Kanuka 2018; Cihad 2020). Blended learning combines the best features of classroom interaction and multimedia based teaching method. Blended instructional strategy in this study refers to a teaching method involving both face-to-face/live instruction and multimedia/digital based instruction. It involves the effective combination of digital resources and traditional method of lesson delivery.

One variable that may moderate students' performance irrespective of instructional used in the classroom are gender. Gender is biological and physiological characteristics of being a boy or a girl. Gender is a factor that may also influences student performance. However, gender is also seen as a factor that could affect the academic performance of students as boys are likely to show better performance than girls. Looking at the influence of gender roles and identities on the achievement of boys and girls in school, maintained that it is how people identify to these biologically constructed categories that mold and shape, how gender identities emerge and are operated into the world.

Gender is a socially ascribed attribute which differentiates males from females, according to Udosoro (2019), gender is a cultural construct that distinguishes the roles, behavior, mental and emotional characteristics between males and females developed by a society. Several studies have been done to find out if gender really has an effect on performance in social science in general and social studies in particular. Aniodoh and Egbo (2018) revealed in their study that female students scored significantly higher than the male students in science subjects.

Teachers also encourage gender stereotypes by giving different treatment to boys and girls in the class. Teachers also give different career guidance to boys and girls, homes are not left out as responsibilities are assigned differently to boys and girls; the society frown at seeing boys cooking or girls climbing a tree. The boys are also assigned leadership positions and the girls are to assist or to follow (Ezeudu & Obi, 2018). Thus, social expectations and conformity pressures may create cultural blocks for girls. Hence gender composition has a significant relationship with students' academic performance and that gender composition has a significant influence on secondary school students' academic performance. Besides this, inconsistent findings have been discovered on gender differences and academic achievement (Dania, 2014). These show that the issue of gender in Social Studies is not yet been resolved. Hence, further study is required.

The discussion so far shows that blended learning strategy is a heuristic approach that may enable teachers to meet the needs of all students and prepare them for better performance. This study therefore investigated the effects of blended learning on students' academic performance upper basic Social Studies students in Delta State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In recent times the teaching and learning of Social Studies have been faced with numerous problems that are capable of impeding the realization of its objectives and one of



such problems is the low academic performance. The problem addressed in this study stems from the need to diversify the teaching methods used in the field of learning and education, particularly, where the results of Social Studies performance tests indicate a low level of performance of Social Studies students. This is reflected in students' low-level learning ability and academic performance of Social Studies students, which led teachers to find various teaching methods to improve students' learning. Over the years there had been a decline in performance of Social Studies student, this could be as a result of the teacher's use of ineffective methods and strategies in Social Studies teaching which among other factors have contributed to the student's poor academic performance at the upper secondary school.

Social Studies as a subject has grown beyond traditional way of learning, hence there is a need for teachers to seek for some learning strategy that will enhance students' academic performance.

The available literature on methods of teaching in Social Studies Education suggests the need to employ new and innovative teaching strategy such as blended learning. Therefore, this study aims at investigating the effect of blended instructional strategy instructional strategy on upper basic Social Studies students. Therefore, the problem of this study is posed as a question; "What will be the effect of blended learning strategy on Upper Basic II Social Studies students' academic performance in Delta State?"

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of blended instructional strategy on the academic performance of Upper Basic Social Studies student in Delta State. Specifically, the study is designed to:

- 1 find out the effect of blended instructional strategy and conventional lecture method on the academic performance of Social Studies students?
- 2 determine the difference in the mean performance scores of male and female taught using blended and conventional instructional strategies on Social Studies students.
- 3 assess the difference in the mean performance scores of urban and rural students taught using blended, collaborative and conventional lecture instructional strategies in Social Studies.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study

- 1 What is the effect of blended instructional strategy and conventional lecture method on the academic performance of Social Studies students?
- 2 What is the difference in the mean performance scores of male and female taught using blended, collaborative and conventional instructional strategies on Social Studies students?
- 3 What is the interaction effect of blended instructional strategy, conventional lecture instructional strategy and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant.

- 1 There is no significant effect of blended instructional strategy and conventional lecture method on the academic performance of Social Studies students.
- 2 There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female taught using blended instructional strategy in Social Studies students.
- 3 There is no significant interaction effect of blended instructional strategy, conventional lecture instructional strategy and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies.

### **Significance of the Study**

The outcome of this study would be of immense benefit to teachers, students, curriculum planner, Ministry of Education, school administrators and researchers.

The outcome of this study would be of benefit to teachers as it will awaken their consciousness on the efficacy of the utilization of blended instructional strategy in the teaching of Social Studies. It may enable the current serving teachers to see the need to undergo in-service training on how to use these methods for effective teaching of Social Studies. The outcome of the study should be of benefit to teachers as it will open opportunities to the teachers to wisely choose from the two instructional strategies, the one that will enhance teachers' productivity than the other.

The result of this study served as a reference point for Curriculum planners as it may enable them to plan towards a robust and effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum. The outcome of the study may be of benefit to Ministry of Education Particularly Federal Ministry of Education as it may help her to determine the appropriate method of teaching Social Studies, to watch out for when planning harmonized Universal Basic Scheme of Work.

The study would be of benefit to the student. Student performance would be enhanced since the teacher who would come across the study must have benefitted from how any of the two strategies may better improve the performance of the students. On the part of school administrators, the study may enable them to know the value of this instructional strategy so as to encourage teacher to update their knowledge and skills through seminars, workshop and conferences.

The study should be useful to researchers in the field of Social Studies, the result of finding, conclusion, recommendation drawn in the study would help for future investigation. The relevant information contained in this study has become a source for their reference and would inspire as new strategy for studying issues affecting the improvement of test scores achievement in Social Studies in particular and other areas of discipline in general in the educational system.

### **Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

This study is set to determine the effect of blended instructional strategy on academic performance of Upper Basic II Social Studies students in Delta State. The scope of the study contains instructional strategies at two treatment levels, blended learning strategy (experimental) and conventional teaching instructional strategy (control) in relation to gender. The study covered all the public Secondary Schools in of Delta State. The study is delimited to two public Secondary Schools, Delta State.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

A quasi-experimental, non-equivalent pre-test and post-test control group design using a 2 x 2 factorial design was adopted for the study. The design has treatment (instruction) at two levels (blended instructional strategy and conventional lecturing strategy) and gender at two levels (male and female). The population of this study comprises a total of 49,796 JSS II (Upper Basic 2) students drawn from the 467 Delta State Public Secondary Schools for the 2021/2022 session. A sample of 252 JSS2 (Upper Basic 2) students was drawn from two mixed secondary schools out of the four hundred and seventy-nine public secondary schools in Delta State. A Purposive non-randomized sampling technique was used for the selection of the schools. Purposive sampling was used because the researcher needed

schools that met certain criteria, which included that the school must have functional ICT centre and the school that will allow the use of mobile phone for the purpose of the study. Out the five schools that met these criteria, two was randomly selected and used for the study. Two intact classes were used. For the purpose of this study each class was randomly assign experimental and control groups using simple random sampling technique. The instrument that was used for the study was Social Studies Achievement Test (SSAT) by the researcher. The Social Studies Achievement Test consists of two sections. Section A consists of respondent bio data, gender and location while Section B consists of 40 multiple objective test-items with option letter A-D covering four concepts or topics.

The instrument was validated by experts from the Department of Social Science Education and Measurement and Evaluation, Delta State University, Abraka. The content validity was carried out on the SSAT by using the test blueprint or table of specifications. The researcher carried out a pre-trial test of the SSAT on forty (40) students of JSS 2 from a secondary school outside the intended area of study. Data collected through the test was used to compute the reliability of the instrument. The Kuder-Richardson formula (-21) was used to compute the reliability index, which yielded 0.83. The method was considered appropriate since the test items were multi-choice achievement tests that were scored dichotomously (correct or wrong). The reliability test was done in order to determine the internal consistency of SSAT. Each of the treatment group was assigned to a school.

On the first day of the experiment, pretests were administered to the three groups using the Social Studies Achievement Test (SSAT). The pretest was administered to determine the equivalency of the three groups and to measure the level of prior knowledge of the topics on which the test was based. The actual instruction was carried out by the regular Social Studies teacher in each of the sample schools using the lesson plan developed by the researcher for each group for six weeks. Before the start of the experiment, the teacher explained to the students the features and practice of blended learning, which they learned in their various groups. In the control group, the teacher only used the conventional (lecture) method of teaching. The experiment (instructional activities) lasted for six weeks. At the end of the instruction, a summative posttest was administered to the students using the same materials used during the pretest. The research questions were answered using mean scores and standard deviations of scores. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested with t-test analysis, while hypothesis 3 was tested with analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), at 0.05 alpha levels of significance.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

**Research Question One:** What is the effect of blended instructional strategy and conventional lecture method on the academic performance of Social Studies students?



**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation (SD) comparison of the pretest and post test scores of Social Studies students taught with blended instructional strategy and those taught with conventional lecturing method**

Treatment group	N	Pretest		Post test		Mean performance gain
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Blended instructional strategy	128	13.68	3.63	49.89	7.59	36.21
conventional lecturing method	124	12.99	2.98	30.31	5.72	17.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>					

Table 2 shows that the blended group pretest and posttest mean scores are 13.68 and 49.89 with standard deviation scores of 3.63 and 7.59 respectively. Also, the control group has pretest and posttest mean scores as 12.99 and 30.31 with standard deviation scores of 2.98 and 5.72 respectively. The mean performance gain for the treatment group was 36.21 while the mean gain in the control group was 17.32 indicating the superiority of treatment group over the control group. Hence the table 2 shows that students taught with blended instructional strategies perform better than those taught with lecture method.

**Research Question Two:** What is the difference in the mean performance scores of male and female taught using blended instructional strategy, collaborative instructional strategy and conventional instructional strategy on Social Studies students?

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation (SD) comparison of mean performance scores of male and female Social Studies students taught using blended, instructional strategy.**

Treatment methods	Gender	N	Pretest		Post test		Mean performance gain
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Blended	Males	55	14.33	3.82	50.78	8.09	31.28
	Female	73	13.19	3.43	49.22	7.18	29.75
	Mean difference		0.03		1.56		

Table 3 result shows that the pretest mean score and standard deviation for the male and female taught using blended instructional strategy are 19.50 and 19.47; 4.21 and 4.18 respectively. Similarly, posttest mean scores and standard deviation for male and female taught using blended instructional strategy are 50.78 and 49.22; 8.01 and 7.18 respectively.

The mean performance gains for male and female students exposed to blended instructional strategy are 31.28 and 29.75 respectively. The mean gain by the male is slightly higher than of the females.

**Research Question Three 3:** What is the interaction effect of blended instructional strategy, conventional lecture instructional strategy and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies?

**Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis of the Interaction Effect of Blended Instructional Strategy, Conventional Lecture Instructional Strategy and Gender On Students' Academic Performance in Social Studies**

Treatment methods	Gender	N	Pretest		Post test		Mean performance gain
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Blended	Males	55	19.50	4.21	50.78	8.01	31.28
	Female	73	19.47	4.18	49.22	7.18	29.75
	Mean difference		0.03		1.56		
Conventional	Males	50	12.03	3.39	31.12	5.27	19.09
	Female	74	11.32	3.71	29.76	5.73	18.44
	Mean difference		0.71		1.36		
Total	Males	152	16.86	5.59	42.41	11.52	25.55
	Female	196	16.43	5.69	40.66	11.00	24.23
	Mean difference	348	0.43		1.75		
	Total						

Table 4 result shows that the pretest mean score and standard deviation for the male and female taught using blended instructional strategy are 19.50 and 19.47; 4.21 and 4.18 respectively. Similarly, posttest mean scores and standard deviation for male and female taught using blended instructional strategy are 50.78 and 49.22; 8.01 and 7.18 respectively. Also, the pretest mean scores and standard deviation scores for male and female students taught using conventional lecturing method are 12.03 and 11.32; 3.39 and 3.71 respectively. Also, the posttest mean score and standard deviation scores for male and female students taught using conventional lecture method are 31.12 and 29.76; 5.27 and 5.73 respectively. The mean performance gains for male and female students exposed to blended instructional strategy are 31.28 and 29.75 respectively. In the conventional lecturing method group, the gains are 19.09 and 18.44 respectively for male and female students.

### Testing of Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant effect of blended instructional strategy and conventional lecture method on the academic performance of Social Studies students.

**Table 5: t-test comparison of the pretest and post-test academic performance of Social Studies students taught with blended instructional strategy and those taught with conventional lecturing method.**

	Instructional strategies	N	Mean	SD	DF	t-cal.	t-crit.	Level of sign.
Pretests	Blended	128	13.68	3.63	250	1.65 <sup>ns</sup>	1.98	0.05
	Conventional	124	12.99	2.98				
	Total	252						
Post-test	Blended	128	49.89	7.59	250	23.27 <sup>s</sup>	1.98	0.05
	Conventional	124	30.31	5.72				
	Total	252						

Ns= not significant; s= significant

Table 5 shows that the experimental (blended instructional strategy) group pretest and posttest mean scores are 13.68 and 49.89 with standard deviation scores of 3.63 and 7.59 respectively. Also, the control group (conventional lecturing method) has pretest and posttest mean scores as 12.99 and 30.31 with standard deviation scores of 2.98 and 5.72 respectively. This gives t-value calculated as 1.65 and t-critical value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significant. The t-calculated is less than the t-critical value of 1.98. This shows that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of Social Studies students in the two groups during the pretest. The two groups were found to be marginally equivalent before the treatment commenced.

However, in the post test analysis the calculated t-value (23.27) is greater than the critical t-value (1.98) ( $t=23.27$ ,  $df=250$ ,  $P=0.05$  level). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the academic performance of Social Studies students taught with blended instructional strategy and those taught with conventional lecturing method. This indicates that there is a significant difference between the mean performance scores of the experimental group (49.89) and the control group (30.31) at 0.05 level of significant. Consequently, it could be deduced from the study that the use of blended instructional strategy enhanced the performance of students in Social Studies better than the conventional lecturing method.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female taught using blended instructional strategy in Social Studies students.

**Table 6: t-test comparison of the pretest and post-test mean performance scores of male and female taught using blended instructional strategy in Social Studies students**

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Level of sign.	Remark
pretest	Male	55	14.33	3.82	126	1.76	1.98	0.05	Null hypothesis Accepted
	Female	73	13.19	3.43					
Post test	Male	55	50.78	8.09	126	1.15	1.98	0.05	Null hypothesis Accepted
	Female	73	49.22	7.18					

Ns= not significant; s= significant

Table 6 shows that the mean performance scores of male and female taught using blended instructional strategy in Social Studies Students. In the table the male and female students taught using blended instructional strategy have pretest score of 14.33 and 13.19 respectively with standard deviation scores of 3.82 and 3.42 respectively. This gives t-value calculated as 1.76 and t-critical value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significant. The t-calculated is less than the t-critical value of 1.98. There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female taught using blended instructional strategy in Social Studies students. The two groups were found to be marginally equivalent before the treatment commenced.

Also, in the posttest analysis the calculated t-value (1.15) is less than the critical t-value (1.98) ( $t=1.15$ ,  $df=128$ ,  $P=0.05$  level). The null hypothesis was therefore accepted. There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female taught using blended instructional strategy in Social Studies students. The use of blended instructional strategy has similar effect on academic performance of male and female students in social studies.

HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant interaction effect of blended instructional strategy, conventional lecture instructional strategy and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies.

**Table 7: Summary of ANCOVA of interaction effect of blended instructional strategy, conventional lecture instructional strategy and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies.**

**Tests of Between-Subjects Effects**

Dependent Variable: Posttest score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	22749.14 <sup>a</sup>	4	5687.284	119.556	.00
Intercept	19549.59	1	19549.592	410.964	.00
Pretest score	217.49	1	217.494	4.572	.03
Treatment	20672.54	1	20672.544	434.571	.00
Gender	173.28	1	173.281	3.643	.06
Treatments* Gender	12.06	1	12.057	.253	.62
Error	11749.80	247	47.570		
Total	450438.00	252			
Corrected Total	34498.94	251			

a. R Squared = .659 (Adjusted R Squared = .654)

Table 7 shows interaction effect of blended instructional strategy, conventional lecture instructional strategy and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies. The table indicates that  $F(1, 247) = .25, p = .62$ . Testing the hypothesis, it was found that the  $p$ -value of .62 that is associated  $F(1, 247) = .25$  is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis  $H_{03}$  is accepted. That is, there is no significant interaction effect of blended instructional strategy, conventional lecture instructional strategy and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies. This indicates that gender did not mediate on the performance when taught using blended and conventional lecturing instructional strategy in social studies.

### Discussion of Findings

The major purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of blended and collaborative instructional strategies on students' performance. The first finding in this study is that the students taught using blended instructional strategy had mean gain score significantly different from those students taught using conventional instructional strategy. In addition to that it can be said that students taught with blended instructional strategy had a better academic performance than their counterpart taught using lecture instructional strategy, based on the fact that they actively participate in the teaching and learning process which help them to obtain a firsthand information on the content before the face to face teaching in the classroom. Hence the finding revealed that students' performance was better enhanced when taught using blended instructional strategy. Also, blended instructional strategy helps students to source for material on their own and learn at their pace without classroom interaction, with or without teachers' assistance. This finding is in line with Jaemjan, Wawta and Rattiya (2015), they revealed that the blended learning classroom students had higher scores in self-directed learning and communication skills than the normal classroom students. This suggests that blended learning is beneficial not only for the Information Literacy Skills course but also for general courses that assist the first-year students to adjust to university life and prepare them for the work place. The finding is also in line with the study of Mutai (2015) who reported that blended learning paves the way for better teaching and learning in secondary schools, as well as improved performance in other subjects that use English as a medium of instruction. The finding of this study on the superiority of blended instructional strategy is however contrary to the finding of Picciano & Seaman (2017) who states that the use of ICT alone does not enhance students' experiences, and that only the appropriate use of ICT and interactive strategy will enhance students' learning experiences

The second finding shows that there is no significant difference in the performance of male and female students taught using blended instructional strategy in Social Studies. The study revealed that gender did not mediate on the 'performance when taught using blended instructional strategies in social studies. Based on the findings it can be said that instructional strategies have no effect on performance of male and female, this is because the change on instructional strategies will generally either positively or negatively affect students' performance. This can be said to an extent that when teachers introduce an innovative instructional strategy all students either male or female will be involved to learn within themselves and if the strategy is favourable it will positively influence the academic performance of students generally disregarding their gender. These findings agreed with the findings of Adamson (2017) and Stinebrickner & Stinebrickner (2015). According to their findings, gender did not have any significant effect on their interaction. This finding is also in line with that of Nnorom (2015) who found that that there is no significant difference between the male and female students mean score on BAT. The study also showed that gender and teaching approaches do not jointly affect students' conceptual understanding of electromagnetic induction at the secondary school level. The finding contradicts the study of



Adekunle (2017) which stated that there significant different existed between male and female students' performance in WASSCE multiple choice test in biology based on gender.

The third result further shows that there is no significant interaction effect of blended instructional strategy, conventional lecture instructional strategy and gender on students' academic performance in Social Studies. This indicates that gender did not mediate on the performance when taught using blended and conventional lecturing instructional strategy in social studies. Based on the findings it can be said that instructional strategies have no effect on performance of male and female, this is because the change on instructional strategies will generally either positively or negatively affect students' performance. These findings agreed with the findings of Adamson (2017) who showed that gender did not have any significant effect on their interaction effect on students' academic performance. This finding is also in line with that of Nnorom (2015) who found that there is no significant difference between the male and female students mean score on BAT. The finding is also in the same vein with the study of Christian (2018) which reported that gender does not significantly affect the understanding of students in electromagnetic induction when taught with collaborative teaching approach. The study also showed that gender and teaching approaches do not jointly affect students' conceptual understanding of electromagnetic induction at the secondary school level.

### **Conclusion**

From the findings in the study on the effects of blended and collaborative instructional strategies in Social Studies, it was concluded that Students taught Social Studies using blended instructional strategy performed better than their counterparts taught Social Studies using the conventional lecture method. The academic performance of male and female Social Studies students taught with blended instructional strategy is marginally the same.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made, based on the findings of this study.

- 1 Social Studies teachers should endeavour to expose students to blended instructional strategy so as to promote and encourage social interaction, active engagement in learning, self-motivation, learning by doing and learning by experience in the classroom.
- 2 The curriculum planners should ensure that they incorporate blended instructional strategy in Social Studies curriculum, as it will help to promote students' academic performance in the subject.
- 3 Instructional strategies had no differential effects on male and female students' achievement in Social Studies. Hence, teachers should make teaching and learning of Social Studies gender unbiased.
- 4 In view of the fact that both blended instructional strategy is more effective in teaching Social Studies and enhancing student's academic performance, the Ministries of Education should ensure that textbook authors incorporate both blended instructional strategy in the instructional methods for secondary schools.
- 5 Regular workshops, seminars and symposia on topics/concepts of the Social Studies curriculum should be organized from time to time through universities for Social Studies teachers in the secondary schools so that they would be exposed to the new strategies of teaching Social Studies. In such activities strategies such as blended instructional strategy could be adopted.

### **Contribution to knowledge**

This study has contributed to existing knowledge in the following ways.

- 1 It established that students taught using blended Instructional strategy performed better than their counterparts taught using the conventional lecturing method.
- 2 The study has confirmed the existing literature that differences in academic performance reported by most researchers among male and female students are not due to Instructional strategies.

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