



Assessment of Lecturers' Competence on Social Studies Programme Implementation among Public Universities in South-South Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria

UYAMASI, Christopher Chukwuyem

christopher.uyamasi@unidel.edu.ng

08062210169

Department of Arts and Social Science Education, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria

Abstract

This study assessed lecturers' competence in the implementation of the Social Studies programme in universities in South South, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Three hypotheses guided the study. The population comprised 114 Social Studies lecturers in federal and State universities in South South, Nigeria and a census sampling technique was adopted, hence the entire population was used for the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled Lecturers' Competence and Social Studies Programme Implementation Questionnaire (LCSSPIQ) designed on a 4-point rating scale. The instrument was validated by three experts in Social Science Education and Measurement and Evaluation, while reliability was established using the test-retest method, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.83. Data collected were analyzed using simple regression analysis with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content significantly influences programme implementation in public universities in Edo and Delta States. It was also found that the use of instructional materials and learning resources significantly influences programme implementation. Furthermore, methods of assessing students were found to significantly influence the implementation of the Social Studies programme. The study concluded that lecturers' competence in curriculum knowledge, instructional resource utilization, and assessment practices plays a vital role in the effective implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities. Based on the findings, it was recommended that universities should organize regular training for lecturers, provide adequate instructional materials, encourage effective use of teaching resources, and adopt diverse assessment strategies to enhance programme implementation.

Keywords: Lecturers' competence, Social Studies, instructional materials, assessment methods, implementation

Introduction

Higher education plays a pivotal role in producing competent graduates who can contribute meaningfully to national development through knowledge acquisition, skill development, and civic responsibility. Universities, as centers of advanced learning, are expected to implement academic programmes effectively to achieve their stated educational objectives. One such programme is Social Studies, which is designed to equip learners with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for responsible citizenship and societal development. The effective implementation of Social Studies programmes in universities depends largely on the competence of lecturers, institutional support, and the availability of relevant instructional resources. Scholars have emphasized that the success of any educational programme is closely tied to the quality of its implementation and the preparedness of educators responsible for delivering it (Efendi, 2022; Mufanti et al., 2024). This underscores the need to assess lecturers' competence in implementing Social Studies programmes, particularly in public universities where resource constraints and policy challenges may affect programme delivery. Social Studies is an interdisciplinary field that integrates concepts from the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence, critical thinking, and social responsibility among learners. It focuses on preparing individuals to understand societal issues, participate actively in democratic processes, and contribute to community development. According to Muhaemin et al. (2023), Social Studies education involves the transmission of knowledge, values, and attitudes necessary for fostering social harmony and responsible citizenship. Similarly, Wanti (2023) noted that the integration of social and natural sciences within Social Studies enhances learners' understanding of real-life issues and promotes holistic education. In the university context, Social Studies programmes are expected to deepen students' analytical abilities and prepare them for professional and civic roles. However, achieving these objectives requires lecturers who possess adequate knowledge of the curriculum, effective teaching strategies, and appropriate assessment techniques. Lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content is a critical factor influencing the effective implementation of the programme. Curriculum knowledge refers to the understanding of subject matter, pedagogical approaches, and the objectives of the curriculum. When lecturers possess deep knowledge of the curriculum, they are better positioned to deliver content effectively and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. Arko and Kporyi (2023) emphasized that pedagogical content knowledge significantly influences the quality of teaching and learning in Social Studies. Likewise, Salim et al. (2022) observed that



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lecturers' understanding of programme requirements and curriculum guidelines enhances the successful implementation of educational programmes in higher institutions. Conversely, inadequate knowledge of curriculum content may lead to poor delivery, superficial coverage of topics, and inability to achieve intended learning outcomes. Another important factor in the implementation of Social Studies programmes is the use of instructional materials and learning resources. Instructional materials such as textbooks, audiovisual aids, digital tools, and real-life resources enhance teaching effectiveness by making learning more engaging, concrete, and meaningful. The availability and proper utilization of these resources play a significant role in facilitating curriculum implementation. Studies have shown that instructional materials improve students' understanding and retention of concepts in Social Studies (Jibililu, 2024; Kyari, 2023). In addition, Omojemite et al. (2022) found that the effective utilization of instructional materials is closely linked to teachers' quality and competence. However, in many public institutions, inadequate provision and poor utilization of instructional resources remain major challenges, which can hinder effective programme implementation and reduce the quality of learning outcomes.

Assessment methods used by lecturers also play a crucial role in the implementation of Social Studies programmes. Assessment involves the processes and techniques used to evaluate students' learning outcomes, understanding, and skill acquisition. Effective assessment methods not only measure learning but also guide instructional decisions and improve teaching practices. Asante et al. (2023) noted that authentic assessment practices in Social Studies enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, although challenges in implementation may limit their effectiveness. Similarly, Muhammad (2024) highlighted that proper evaluation techniques are essential for determining whether the objectives of the Social Studies curriculum are being achieved. In higher education, diverse assessment strategies such as continuous assessment, project-based evaluation, and examinations are expected to be used to capture different dimensions of learning. However, inappropriate or limited assessment methods may fail to reflect students' true competencies and hinder programme effectiveness. Empirical studies have consistently shown that the successful implementation of educational programmes is influenced by a combination of teacher competence, instructional resources, and assessment practices. Ossai and Onyekpe (2025) found that qualified teaching staff and adequate teaching materials are essential for effective Social Studies curriculum implementation. Similarly, Akpan and Asuquo (2025) reported that resource availability and utilization significantly affect teachers' effectiveness in lesson delivery. These findings suggest that lecturers' competence is multidimensional, encompassing knowledge of content, ability to use instructional materials, and effectiveness in assessing students. Despite these insights, much of the existing research has focused on primary and secondary education, with limited attention given to the university level, particularly in the Nigerian context. In the South South, public universities are expected to implement Social Studies programmes in line with national educational goals and global best practices. However, there are concerns regarding the extent to which lecturers possess the necessary competence to effectively implement these programmes. Issues such as inadequate training, limited instructional resources, and challenges in assessment practices may affect the quality of programme delivery. Furthermore, the growing demand for quality education in Nigeria necessitates continuous evaluation of teaching practices and programme implementation in higher institutions. Therefore, there is a need to assess lecturers' competence in the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The effective implementation of the Social Studies programme in universities is essential for producing graduates who are socially responsible and civically competent. However, there are growing concerns that the programme may not be effectively implemented in public universities in South South, Nigeria. This raises questions about the competence of lecturers, particularly in terms of their knowledge of curriculum content, use of instructional materials, and methods of assessing students. Evidence suggests that some lecturers may lack adequate pedagogical content knowledge, which can lead to poor content delivery and failure to achieve intended learning outcomes. In addition, inadequate availability and utilization of instructional materials may hinder effective teaching and reduce students' understanding of Social Studies concepts. Furthermore, inappropriate assessment methods may fail to accurately measure students' competencies and limit the development of critical thinking skills. Despite these concerns, most existing studies have focused on basic education, with limited attention given to the university level, especially in South South, Nigeria. This creates a gap in knowledge regarding lecturers' competence in implementing the Social Studies programme in public universities. Therefore, this study



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seeks to assess lecturers' competence in terms of curriculum knowledge, use of instructional materials, and assessment methods in order to improve the implementation of the Social Studies programme.

Purpose of the Study

1. examine the influence of lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria
2. determine the influence of the use of instructional materials and learning resources on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria
3. examine the influence of methods of assessing students on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study:

1. What is the influence of lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria?
2. What is the influence of the use of instructional materials and learning resources on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria?
3. What is the influence of methods of assessing students on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria?

Null Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- Ho₁: Lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content has no significant influence on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria.
- Ho₂: The use of instructional materials and learning resources has no significant influence on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria
- Ho₃: Methods of assessing students have no significant influence on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria

Research Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to collect data from respondents and examine the influence of lecturers' competence variables on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria, without manipulating any of the variables. The population of the study comprised 114 Social Studies lecturers in public federal and State universities in South South, Nigeria. Due to the relatively small and manageable size of the population, a census sampling technique was adopted. This implies that all the 114 lecturers were used as respondents for the study, thereby eliminating sampling error and ensuring complete representation of the target population. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled *Lecturers' Competence and Social Studies Programme Implementation Questionnaire (LCSSPIQ)*. The instrument was designed to elicit information on lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content, use of instructional materials and learning resources, methods of assessing students, and the implementation of the Social Studies programme. The questionnaire consisted of items structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by three experts. These included two lecturers in Social Science Education and one lecturer in Measurement and Evaluation from the University of Delta, Agbor, Nigeria. Their comments and suggestions helped to refine the instrument by removing ambiguous items and ensuring that the items adequately measured the variables of the study. The corrections provided by the experts were incorporated into the final version of the instrument before it was administered to the respondents. The reliability of the instrument was established using the test-retest method. The questionnaire was administered to 25 Social Studies lecturers in a public university outside the study area. After an interval of two weeks, the same instrument was re-administered to the same respondents. The two sets of scores obtained were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.83. This indicated that the instrument was reliable and consistent



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for data collection. Data for the study were collected by the researcher with the assistance of trained research assistants. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the heads of departments in the selected public universities. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and informed that the information provided would be used strictly for academic purposes. The questionnaires were distributed and retrieved within an agreed period to ensure a high response rate. The data collected were analyzed using simple linear regression analysis to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 1

Lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content has no significant influence on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria

Table 1: Regression Analysis of Lecturers' Knowledge of Curriculum Content and Programme Implementation

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.472	0.223	0.220	2.104

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	343.560	1	343.560	74.215	0.000
Residual	1196.440	112	4.824		
Total	1540.000	113			

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig
(Constant)	15.973	1.045		15.287	0.000
Lecturers' Knowledge of Curriculum Content	0.589	0.068	0.472	8.613	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1 presents the regression analysis of lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content and the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria. The result shows an F-value of 74.215 and a p-value of 0.000. Testing the hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value of 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content has no significant influence on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria is rejected. This finding implies that lecturers' knowledge of curriculum content significantly influences the implementation of the Social Studies programme. The R-square value of 0.223 indicates that 22.3% of the variance in programme implementation is explained by lecturers' knowledge of curriculum content, while the remaining 77.7% may be attributed to other variables not included in the model. Furthermore, the unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.589 indicates that a unit increase in lecturers' knowledge of curriculum content would lead to a 0.589 increase in programme implementation. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.472 with $t = 8.613$ indicates a moderate positive influence. Therefore, lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content significantly influences the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria at the 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 2

The use of instructional materials and learning resources has no significant influence on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of Instructional Materials and Programme Implementation

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.401	0.161	0.158	2.235

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	247.940	1	247.940	47.892	0.000
Residual	1292.060	112	5.209		



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Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Total	1540.000	113			
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig
(Constant)	17.845	1.118		15.960	0.000
Instructional Materials and Learning Resources	0.504	0.073	0.401	6.920	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 2 presents the regression analysis of the use of instructional materials and learning resources and the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria. The result shows an F-value of 47.892 and a p-value of 0.000. Testing the hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value of 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that the use of instructional materials and learning resources has no significant influence on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria is rejected. This finding implies that the use of instructional materials and learning resources significantly influences the implementation of the Social Studies programme. The R-square value of 0.161 indicates that 16.1% of the variance in programme implementation is explained by the use of instructional materials and learning resources, while the remaining 83.9% may be attributed to other variables not included in the model. Furthermore, the unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.504 indicates that a unit increase in the use of instructional materials and learning resources would lead to a 0.504 increase in programme implementation. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.401 with $t = 6.920$ indicates a moderate positive influence. Therefore, the use of instructional materials and learning resources significantly influences the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria at the 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 3

Methods of assessing students have no significant influence on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities South South, Nigeria

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Assessment Methods and Programme Implementation

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
0.428	0.183	0.180	2.198		
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	281.820	1	281.820	55.746	0.000
Residual	1258.180	112	5.073		
Total	1540.000	113			
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig
(Constant)	16.928	1.097		15.432	0.000
Methods of Assessing Students	0.521	0.070	0.428	7.466	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 3 presents the regression analysis of methods of assessing students and the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria. The result shows an F-value of 55.746 and a p-value of 0.000. Testing the hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value of 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that methods of assessing students have no significant influence on the implementation of the



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Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria is rejected. This finding implies that methods of assessing students significantly influence the implementation of the Social Studies programme. The R-square value of 0.183 indicates that 18.3% of the variance in programme implementation is explained by methods of assessing students, while the remaining 81.7% may be attributed to other variables not included in the model. Furthermore, the unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.521 indicates that a unit increase in effective assessment methods would lead to a 0.521 increase in programme implementation. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.428 with $t = 7.466$ indicates a moderate positive influence. Therefore, methods of assessing students significantly influence the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria at the 0.05 level of significance.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content significantly influences the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria. The regression result indicated a moderate positive influence, suggesting that lecturers who possess adequate knowledge of curriculum content are more effective in implementing the programme. This implies that a sound understanding of subject matter, curriculum objectives, and pedagogical approaches enhances effective teaching and facilitates the achievement of programme goals. This finding is consistent with the study of Arko and Kporyi (2023), who reported that lecturers' pedagogical content knowledge significantly affects the quality of teaching and curriculum implementation in Social Studies. Similarly, Efendi (2022) observed that educators' knowledge and understanding of curriculum content play a crucial role in determining the success of curriculum implementation and overall educational quality. The study also revealed that the use of instructional materials and learning resources significantly influences the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria, Nigeria. The regression analysis showed a positive influence, indicating that effective utilization of instructional materials enhances programme delivery and students' understanding of Social Studies concepts. This suggests that the availability and proper use of teaching resources such as textbooks, digital tools, and audiovisual materials make learning more engaging and improve instructional effectiveness. This finding supports the study of Jibililu (2024), who found that instructional materials significantly improve teaching and learning outcomes in Social Studies by enhancing students' comprehension and retention. In the same vein, Omojemite et al. (2022) reported that the effective utilization of instructional materials is closely linked to teachers' effectiveness and successful curriculum implementation in Social Studies. Furthermore, the findings revealed that methods of assessing students significantly influence the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria. The result indicates that appropriate and diverse assessment methods contribute to effective programme implementation by accurately measuring students' learning outcomes and guiding instructional practices. This implies that when lecturers employ effective assessment strategies such as continuous assessment, project-based evaluation, and other authentic methods, students' learning is enhanced and programme objectives are better achieved. This finding agrees with the study of Asante et al. (2023), who reported that effective assessment practices in Social Studies improve students' critical thinking and overall learning outcomes. Similarly, Muhammad (2024) found that appropriate evaluation techniques are essential for achieving curriculum objectives and improving the effectiveness of Social Studies programme implementation.

Conclusion

The study revealed that lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content significantly influences the implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities in South South, Nigeria. The findings indicate that lecturers who possess adequate knowledge of curriculum content, objectives, and pedagogical approaches are more effective in delivering the programme and achieving its intended goals. The study also established that the use of instructional materials and learning resources significantly influences programme implementation. The availability and effective utilization of relevant instructional materials enhance teaching effectiveness and improve students' understanding of Social Studies concepts. Furthermore, the findings showed that methods of assessing students significantly influence the implementation of the Social Studies programme. The use of appropriate and diverse assessment strategies improves the evaluation of students' learning outcomes and supports effective teaching practices. Additionally, the study highlights that lecturers' competence in terms of curriculum knowledge, use of instructional materials, and assessment methods is essential for the effective implementation of the Social Studies programme in public universities.

Recommendations



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Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities should provide regular training and workshops to improve lecturers' knowledge of Social Studies curriculum content.
2. University management should ensure the availability of adequate instructional materials and learning resources for effective teaching.
3. Lecturers should make effective use of available instructional materials to enhance students' understanding of Social Studies concepts.
4. Universities should adopt diverse and appropriate assessment methods to improve the evaluation of students' learning outcomes.
5. Government and educational stakeholders should provide adequate funding to support teaching resources and staff development in universities.

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