# Challenges against Effective Teaching and Learning of Geography in Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract: - This study was designed to assess the Challenges against Effective Teaching and Learning of Geography in Senior Secondary Schools in Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State. The descriptive survey method was used for analyzing the data due to its uniqueness. The population of the study comprises of all the senior secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis of kwara state and the total of one hundred and ninety nine (199) SSS2 geography students were selected from eight (8) different schools. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. Frequency count was used to answer research questions one (1) and two (2) while t-test was used to test the hypothesis using SPSS. The finding of the study revealed that there are several challenges to effective teaching and learning of geography and that there are no available instructional resources for the teaching and learning of geography in Ilorin metropolis. The finding revealed further that there is no significant difference in the assessment of challenges against effective teaching and learning of geography based on gender. Recommendation for the provision of adequate and qualified teachers, instructional resources, provision of fund among others were made Suggestion for extending the research study to cover the whole state was also made by the researcher.

Key words: challenges, effective teaching and learning, Senior Secondary Schools

# I. INTRODUCTION

Geography as an academic discipline is a recent development in Nigeria, compared to other nations of the world like Germany, France, United States of America (USA), United Kingdom, among others. Before the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war, geography was a popular discipline in Nigeria only at the elementary and secondary level. The geographic ideas were transmitted to various parts of Nigeria through textbooks of some well-known British geographers like Doubling Stamps, Stambridge, to mention but a few (Olawepo, 2004).

However, it was not, until after the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war (1939 – 1945) that the proper foundation of geographic thought was laid in Nigeria. The base year for the post World War II geography foundation in Nigeria was 1948, when the department of geography was established in the University College, Ibadan. Since then, there had been rapid changes in both philosophical orientation and the context of the discipline. The development of geography in Nigeria can be succinctly grouped into three (3) phases; the foundation phase

(1948 - 1960); the indigenization phase (1960 - 1970); and the consolidation phase (1970- date)

The foundation phase was dominated by expert rate British personnel, both in philosophy and context. All the teachers were British with the exception of Lawrence Mabogunje. The indigenization phase was when some Nigerian scholars whom were trained by the expert rate British personnel took over from the British teachers. By 1968, geography was already been taught in all Nigerian Secondary Schools.

The consolidation phase witnessed great development due to the need to reinforce education after the Nigerian civil war (1967 – 1970). By this time, many more Nigerian geographers were trained at both the first generation and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation universities and teachers were successfully made at home (Nigeria). This phase also witnessed the change in the curriculum from British and European centered curriculum to Nigerian and African centered curriculum.

The study of geography in Nigeria has gone through chain of revolutionary changes, ranging from idiographic (basing explanations on qualitative expressions), to regionalism or environmental determinism, to critical geography and presently modern geography or quantification (nomothetic), which started during the 1950s and 1960s but till date, it has not been done effectively as it is still facing several challenges like increased failure rate by students, decreased number of students offering the subject at secondary school level, lack of instructional resources, specialist teachers' examination authority's related problems, and with some schools even making it optional. Okpara (2010) stated that over the years students have shown high rate of mass failure in geography as shown in their SSCEs (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) with pass rate ranging from C4, C5,C6,D7,E8 who are all friends to F9.

The government, parents, policy makers, geography educators geographical and all educational stakeholders as well as different organizations are bothered about what could be responsible for these challenges against effective teaching and learning of geography as these challenges glaringly manifest in the performance of these students at the Senior School Certificate Examination(SSCE), their choice of the

courses in tertiary institutions and even thereafter and this is the lacuna this study is designed to fill.

# II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Geography is one of the school subjects been taught in our senior secondary schools and beyond but there are pull and push factors (challenges) affecting or militating against its effective teaching and learning (Aderogba 2012). The challenges against effective teaching and learning of geography include amongst others the following;

### Specialist Teachers' Problem

Despite the fact that the quantity or number of geography teachers is lacking, most of the teachers employed to teach geography in these senior secondary schools are nonprofessional or non-expertise teachers. They are not graduates of geography education and or graduates who have an educational related knowledge. As a result, they lack the skills, methods, techniques and all that it takes to be a qualified geography teacher, (Aimoko, in Obasi 2011). The teacher is an important force in school learning. personality and methods has direct and cumulative impacts on the lives and learning habits of the learners, he added. In fact, psychologists have identified the teacher as an important agency which can make or mar any successful learning within the formal system of education (Nigerian Educational Research Development Council in Obasi 2011). For example, Obasi (2011) stated that, the largest and greatest factor in educating pupils is the qualified teacher. Awoniyi also remarked in Obasi (2011) that there is a direct relationship between the quality of teaching personnel and the quality of educational process. No wonder, the National Policy on Education underscored the importance of teachers as stated in one of its clauses "no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers..." (FRN, 2004). The geography teacher of today is not only seen as an expert in his own right but expected to function as a facilitator and a catalyst to education in general. We need dedicated and qualified geography teachers in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis and in Nigeria at large hence its shortage is contributing to the poor enrolment of geography candidates into the tertiary institutions of learning.

### Lack of Instructional Materials or Field Studies

Geography is a creative problem solving, practical and intellectually stimulating school subject. According to Federal Republic of Nigeria, experimentation in geography is best undertaken in the field which is the geographers' laboratory. This corroborates the view of Ajibade and Raheem (2009) that "the only true geographical laboratory is the world outside the classroom". In other words, all classroom knowledge, no matter how meticulously designed and or delivered remains a model of which its reality resides in the field. However, inadequate supply and utilization of instructional materials such as textbooks, pictorials, maps (sketches and topographic or Atlases), real objects, a few to

mention, which can increase teachers' and students' awareness and reinforce learning is now an obstacle to the teaching and learning of geography in senior secondary schools. As a matter of reality, if geography is to be learned effectively, it must be experienced as geography by its very nature. Geography by its very nature requires active participation by both the teacher and the learner, added Aderogba.

Davis in Obasi (2011) maintains that, geography as a field centered course features discoveries or the generalities and principles which unify geography and makes it easier to understand. Cuttance in Obasi (2011) was of the view that, justifications in geography are deeply rooted from scientific methodology and educational psychology. This is true because the field or laboratory is a place where persons or group of persons engage in human enterprises of examining natural phenomena. Cuttance then concluded that, field trip or study is part and parcel of teaching and learning geography.

Dennis as quoted in Obasi (2011) states that, field studies is organized to convey a sense of geography as an inquiry and that many field studies serve the traditional purpose of making clear and vivid the materials explained by textbooks. To that effect, practical work should form the basis of teaching and learning geography. Dennis added that since the field studies is the best instructional procedure, the geography teacher should assume the position of a manager of learning, with the field as a place where learning is discovered. He concluded that, the essence of teaching resources is to bring the teachers and students into close contact with the subject matter.

#### Inappropriate or Poor Teaching Methods

Through geography, one can participate actively in the problems of his surroundings and make a better and united Nigeria. For example, the control of natural disasters such as desert encroachment, soil erosion, ozone layer depletion, among others. The realization of these numerous objectives of geography can be achieved if teachers apply the needed or appropriate methods of teaching geography which include project method, assignments, excursion, among others. Among all the methods of teaching geography, project or active method, otherwise called participatory method is the most recommendable (Obiero 2012). Professor Kilpatrick defined project as a purposeful activity which proceeds in a social environment. Stevenson who perfected it as a method of teaching said "It is a problematic art carried to completion in its natural setting". To Good, a project is a significant unit of activity, having educational value and aimed at one or more definite goals of understanding (Guari, 2010)

Project may be individual or cooperative, large or small. It may be employed according to the mental age of the learners but always guided by an expert. Obiero (2012) stated the merits of project method as including keenness and accuracy, real nature of objects, producing inquiring spirit, develops confidence and self-discipline, amongst others.

Psychologically, project method is based on the 'learning by doing' principle which encourages maximum amount of purposeful activity on the part of the learners. In adopting this method, the heart, the head and the hand are to be functional. To Ajibade and Raheem (2009), by varying the study methods through careful selection of regional and systematic topics and particularly by focusing on the efficacy of field study as a method of learning, it will be possible to provide a basis from which a learner of geography can be led to draw conclusions and develop an understanding of geographical interrelationships.

The Problem of Geography as an Academic Discipline in Senior Secondary Schools

This is otherwise called subject matter related problem. The discipline of geography as good as it is serves as a threat or problem to some teachers and learners. For instance, there are some concepts or topics in geography that both the teachers and learners have been finding them difficult to comprehend from time immemorial. Prominent among other of such topics include map work (interpretation, sings and symbols, measurement, bearing and direction), elements of physical geography, to mention but a few. As it tends to be difficult to them, they find it difficult to clearly answer questions on them in examinations and some even show no interest in them even though they are inseparable part of the discipline.

Hence many geography teachers themselves find it difficult to teach some concepts in geography, it makes some students to turn their topographical sheets on the day of examination to almanac and others just tick their objectives blindly praying that their creator should help them out (Obasi, 2011). This is simply because, the foundation was not properly laid and there is no magic other than effective teaching of these concepts that can help the students to pass them effectively or answer those questions in examinations like WAEC, NECO and NABTEB without phobia. Olawepo (1999) also sees definition, objectives, map reading and interpretation, enrolment, attitudes and changes in content and innovation as problems of effective teaching of geography which are related to subject matter.

#### Examination Authorities' Related Problems

This is otherwise seen as unstable curricula. Because of the needs for schools to meet the requirements of certain examination bodies, the senior secondary school system of education in Nigeria has to experience some changes in their syllabus from time to time, (Daramola, as in Abiri and Jekayinfa, 2010). Even when the schools national subject curricula are stable for sometimes and or years, the school subject syllabuses are subject to changes or modifications by teachers, especially in schools where subject teachers are frequently changed or transferred.

This scenario is particularly common to the private secondary schools, though not also absent in government owned or public senior secondary schools. It is common to the private schools due to their poor administrations, especially lack of consideration for the teachers such as poor remunerations. This makes them to change and be changing teachers frequently and thus making the newly employed teachers to be modifying the syllabi to suit their knowledge and skills. In most cases, they employ the services of corps members, most of whom are not trained as specialist and in most cases cannot stay for more than a year or at most two (2) years.

#### Educational Authorities' Related Problems

The system of education presently practiced in Nigeria is the 9-3-4 system of education which the three (3) years are meant for senior secondary system of education where geography is been taught, (NPE, 2004).

Geography being a subject that is concerned with the study of man, his activities on earth and his interaction with his environment (immediate and extended) ought to have been made or considered one of the core subject like Mathematics, English Language and Nigerian language (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba), due to its immense contribution and importance to human life. However, it is not considered as the aforementioned subjects like Mathematics, English Language and Nigerian language (WAEC syllabus, 2012).

To that effect, most students neglect the discipline of geography and other students just study it to complete their number of credits required to gain admission in a tertiary institution (Okunloye, in Jekayinfa et'al, 2009)

## Poor Management or Managerial Problems

The school system in Nigeria is often influenced by the constant changes that are occurring in the or within the political institutions. The ability of stakeholders and actors within the educational system to adapt to the organizational changes has attracted attention in the last decades, (Adesina, 2005). Presently, there is a controversy as to the nature, pattern and method of training teachers in the country. At the centre of the controversy is the confusion over the role of educational administrators in the secondary school. Other managerial related issues are; playing hanky-panky with the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) for teachers' salary, poor infrastructures, which brings about overcrowding, poor remuneration, among others.

It is common to see cases of more than fifty (50) students per teacher. Under these conditions, the teaching and learning process have not and cannot be effective since the outcome has always been below expectation (UNICEF, 2012). This problem of facilities, though has been a threat from time immemorial but has worsened since the introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 2004, hence the number of teachers and school facilities has been seriously lacking.

The National Policy on Education teacher to students' ratio is 1 to 15 or maximum of 1 to 25 but the policy has never been effective in Nigerian schools, (NPE, 2004).

Lack of Seminars, Workshops and Conferences

Well organized seminars, workshops and conferences provide opportunities for interaction, learning and teaching. It also caters for the appropriate reception of information and instruction on issues and problems. However, the absence of or lack of these conferences, seminars and workshops among geography teachers in the senior secondary schools has now being seen as a serious challenge to teaching effectiveness in geography hence the teachers hardly meet among themselves in an organized or formal way to learn and correct themselves where ever possible. And the end losers are the learners and the entire society hence there has been no improvement in our environment.

#### Students' Related Problems

This can also be seen as lack of interest or lack of motivation. Bajah (2002) asserted that, a major determinant factor affecting the study of social sciences subjects especially at the senior secondary school level in the developing countries like Nigeria is the learners themselves. Even when the conditions for under which learning can take place are adequate, the performance is still directed to the learners. According to Balogun (1999), interest in geography is influenced by students in their aptitude for liking geography. He stressed that under students' preferences in choosing a subject in a broad sense subjects like history, music, economics, agriculture are mostly chosen by students on the account that geography is difficult. Thereafter, lack of motivation for students by teachers has also contributed a lot in the effective teaching and learning of geography. Motivation can simply be seen as the process of arousing movements in organisms or human beings. Hennery and William (2001) refer human motivation to the process by which a behavior is mobilized and sustained in the interest of meeting individual needs in achieving organizational objectives.

Scholars like Adesina (2005) suggested that the teachers should motivate the students to learn more through skillful questioning. Since a situation where the teacher fails to motivate the students, there is likely to be a poor performance and even lack of interest in the teacher and the subject by the learner as time goes on. Ball (2007) stated that, lack of motivation makes subject matter meaningless, unattractive and time wasting to students.

# Poor Funding

In a survey of geography teaching resources in Kwara state senior secondary schools and in an analysis of the problems of students-teachers, Olawepo(1993;1999) discovered that, several schools did not have the needed equipments and resources for teaching and learning

Geography and when asked, they all singled out money as the main cause.

#### III. METHODOLOGY

The researcher employed the descriptive research survey method. The population of the study comprises of all secondary school Geography students and teachers in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State. The needed sample was drawn, using the simple random sampling method. There are students of geography in the senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis (SSS2 precisely) were selected from eight (18) out of seventy four (74) senior secondary schools. A researcher designed questionnaire entitled "challenges against effective teaching and learning of geography" was used to gather information from respondents with a reliability index of 0.79 was used to elicit the needed data from the respondents. Mean rating, percentage and t-test were the statistical tools used to answer the research questions and test the hypothesis respectively at alpha = 0.05 significance level.

# IV. RESULTS

# Demographic Data

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	109	55
Female	90	45
Total	199	100

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of male and female students. 55% of the respondents are male while 45% of the respondents are females. This shows that the males' respondents were more than females' respondents.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by number of Geography teachers in the school

Number of teacher	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	40	20
2	97	49
3	62	31
Total	199	100

Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage of respondents based on the number of Geography teachers in their schools. From the table, 20% of the respondents claimed they have one Geography teacher, 49% had two Geography teachers while 31% had three Geography teachers. This shows that most of the school has two or three Geography teachers.

Research Questions

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Position
Item 1	72 (36.2%)	98 (49.2%)	16 (8.0%)	13 (6.5%)	12th
Item 2	100(50.3%)	88 (44.2%)	5 (2.5%)	6 (3.0%)	14th
Item 3	32 (16.1%)	61 (30.7%)	67 (33.7%)	39 (19.6%)	5th
Item 4	89 (44.7%)	61 (30.7%)	28 (14.1%)	21 (10.6%)	8th
Item 5	55 (27.6%)	96 (48.2%)	27 (13.6%)	21 (10.6%)	9th
Item 6	27 (13.6%)	64 (32.2%)	47 (23.6%)	61 (30.7%)	4th
Item 7	92 (46.2%)	71 (35.7%)	26 (13.1%)	10 (5.0%)	11th
Item 8	29 (14.6%)	57 (28.6%)	58 (29.1%)	55 (27.6%)	3rd
Item 9	39 (19.6%)	79 (39.7%)	43 (21.6%)	38 (19.1%)	7th
Item10	15 (7.5%)	28 (14.1%)	62 (31.2%)	94 (47.2%)	2nd
Item11	6 (3.0%)	11 (5.5%)	67 (33.7%)	115(57.8%)	1st
Item12	61 (31.7%)	99 (49.7%)	18 (9.0%)	21 (10.6%)	10th
Item13	37 (18.6%)	76 (38.2%)	39 (19.6%)	47 (23.6%)	6th
Item14	116(58.3%)	59 (29.6%)	6 (3.0%)	18 (9.0%)	13th

Table 3: Factors hindering effective teaching and learning of Geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis

Table 3 shows the respondents' responses to the questionnaire items on the factors hindering effective teaching and learning of Geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. 91.5% of the respondents (1<sup>st</sup> position) disagreed that there is a functional geographical laboratory in their schools, 78.4% (2<sup>nd</sup> position) disagreed that there is a functional geographical garden in their schools, 56.8% (3<sup>rd</sup> position)disagreed that there are available instructional resources for teaching and learning of Geography in their schools while 94.5% (14<sup>th</sup> position) of the respondents agreed that they like Geography as a school subject, 87.9% (13<sup>th</sup> position) like their geography teacher and 85.4% (12<sup>th</sup> position) agreed that there are available teachers for teaching Geography in their schools. There are five factors hindering effective teaching and

learning of Geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis:

- Lack of functional geographical laboratory in the schools
- ii. Lack of functional geographical garden in the schools
- iii. Lack of available instructional resources for teaching Geography in the schools
- iv. Inability of the Geography teacher to always organize excursion for his students
- v. Geography teachers usually rush to complete the examinations' syllabi

Table 4: Availability of instructional resources for effective teaching and learning of Geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Position
There are available instructional resources for teaching and learning Geography in my school.	29 (14.6%)	57 (28.6%)	58 (29.1%)	55 (27.6%)	3rd
My teacher always use instructional resources when teaching me Geography.	39 (19.6%)	79 (39.7%)	43 (21.6%)	38 (19.1%)	4th
There is a functional geographical garden in my school.	15 (7.5%)	28 (14.1%)	62 (31.2%)	94 (47.2%)	2nd
There is a functional geographical laboratory in my school.	6 (3.0%)	11 (5.5%)	67 (33.7%)	115 (57.8%)	1st

Results in table 4 show the availability and use of the instructional resources for effective teaching and learning of Geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. From the table, the respondents disagreed to the availability of: functional geographical laboratory; functional geographical garden and instructional resources for teaching and learning Geography. Also, they disagree that their Geography teachers always use instructional resources while teaching them Geography. This implies that there are no

instructional resources for effective teaching of Geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis.

Testing of Research Hypothesis

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the male and female students' assessment of challenges against effective teaching and learning of Geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis

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Gender	No	Mean	Std.	Т	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Male	109	37.57	5.879				
				-0.231	197	0.818	Do not reject
Female	90	37.74	4.614				

Table 5: t-test analysis for students' assessment of challenges against effective teaching and learning of Geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis based on gender

The results in table four show that the calculated significant level is 0.818 which is greater than the alpha level of 0.05, therefore, hypothesis one is not rejected. This means that male and female students do not differ in their assessment of challenges against effective teaching and learning of Geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis.

#### V. DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed that there are several challenges affecting the effective teaching and learning of geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis, kwara state, Nigeria. This finding then corroborates the view of Obasi(2011) who sees lack of qualified teachers, appropriate instructional resources among others in the field and Olawepo(1999) who sees the following as problems of effective teaching and learning of geography in Ilorin metropolis; problem of definition of geography, problems with the objectives of the school geography, problems of reading and interpreting maps, problems of poor geography results and students enrolment, problems of students attitudes and the problems of change in the content and innovation

Findings also revealed that there are no available instructional resources for effective teaching and learning of geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis of kwara state. This finding is in tandem with the survey of geography teaching resources in senior secondary schools in kwara state by Olawepo (1993; 1999) which discovered that most schools lack; good geographical garden and laboratories, equipments for surveying, topographical maps, stock of recommended textbooks, atlases, charts, models, and real objects (realia) which makes the teaching and learning of geography to be rob.

Finally, findings also revealed that there was no significant difference in the assessment of challenges against effective teaching and learning of geography in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis based on gender

#### VI. CONCLUSION

Teaching and learning of geography in senior secondary schools has never been effective due to some challenges and geography as a school subject has some vital contributions to the development of the society hence it encourages the acquisition of skills understanding of the environment and people of other areas, among others

A thorough study of the preceding chapter revealed that there are several challenges affecting the effective teaching and learning of geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis, kwara state, Nigeria Based on that, the following conclusions were drawn; lack of instructional resources, inability of teachers to organize excursion, and many others are the factors hindering the effective teaching and learning of geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis, kwara state, Nigeria. From the foregone, or based on the findings of this study, it can be deduced that the greatest challenge to effective teaching and learning of geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis is lack of instructional resources and qualified or expertise teachers hence most of the respondents agreed that their teachers don't he appropriate method and or instructional resources to teach geography.

#### VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 1. There should be provision of instructional resources for effective teaching and learning of geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis and instructional resources should be used or improvisation should be made by the geography teachers for the teaching of geography in senior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis
- 2. There should be provision of adequate and qualified geography teachers in the various schools for the effective teaching of geography by recruiting them where they are not.
- 3. Excursions or field trips should be organized by the geography teachers to supplement the theoretical work done in the classroom as this corroborates the views of FRN and Board as in Ajibade and Raheem(2009) that "the true geographical laboratory is the world outside the classroom"
- 4. Teachers of geography should try to vary in their methods of teaching so as to motivate the students through skillful questioning, and many others
- 5. Seminars, conferences and workshops should always be organized for the dissemination of trending and contemporary issues among the geography teachers in senior secondary schools
- 6. There should be provision of fund or financial backings from the appropriate persons or agencies like parents through payment of school fees, and

other levis as well as donations and the government at the local, state and federal levels as the survey by Olawepo (1999) revealed that all the schools singled out lack of money as their problem

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