
**EXPERIENTIAL TEACHING STRATEGY AND THE TEACHING
/LEARNING OF ECONOMICS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
ABIA STATE.**

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ABSTRACT

The research is intended to awaken the consciousness of teachers on recent developments in the business of teaching and learning by examining experiential teaching strategy and its effect in the teaching /learning of Economics. The sample of study comprises of a 149 economics students purposively and randomly selected from four senior secondary schools II students in Aba education zone of Abia state. The study adopted pre-test and post- test control group research design. Economics Achievement Test was used for data collection and were developed by the researcher. One research question and one hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. The research question was answered using mean and standard deviation while analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that students taught economics using the experiential teaching method performed better than those taught using the conventional method. Hence, the researcher recommended that teachers should endeavour to adopt and utilize Experiential teaching strategy in teaching /learning of economics as this method will enhance the overall achievement of economics students in senior secondary schools in both internal and external examinations.

Keywords: Experiential teaching strategy and teaching of economics

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The job of human capital development is very onerous as education involves imparting knowledge, skills and values in individuals for growth, progress and survival of any society. To achieve these, teachers and educational administrators need to develop creativity and introducing innovative ideas/strategies for effective teaching and learning to take place. There is always

constant brain-storming to bring out innovative teaching strategies or methods to enhance the art of sending and receiving information (transferring knowledge) from the teacher to the learner and among learners as well as learner to the teacher i.e cross fertilisation of knowledge. This calls for the utilization of strategy such as Experiential Innovative Teaching Strategy (EITS) which is the process of gaining knowledge or skill through seeing and doing things rather than through studying.

The experiential innovative teaching strategy is a teaching method whereby students' are taught a given concept through an experiment, which gives room for students to explore or do things by themselves and consequently will develop their interest in the subject matter under consideration. According to Brinia, Kalogari and Stravakodi, (2016) Experiential learning is a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposely engage with students in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, and clarify value.

There is this general assumption that teaching methodology significantly determines the level of effectiveness in the learning outcomes. And this explains why creativity in developing teaching strategies to achieve the desired learning outcomes became very imperative. Experiential innovative teaching strategy if properly utilized by the teachers can be helpful and more effective when used in teaching certain concepts or topics especially in economics. Thus, the need to carry out this research paper to ascertain the influence of utilizing experiential innovative strategy in the teaching and learning of economics in senior secondary schools in Abia state.

According to Davis (2011) the focus of experiential teaching strategy is placed on the process of learning and not on the product of learning. The Proponents of experiential learning state that students are going to be more motivated to learn when they have a personal experience regarding the subject rather than being assigned to study and review a topic or read a textbook chapter. In Experiential learning strategy, the phases of experiencing (doing), reflection and applying must be present. In addition, the stages of reflection and application are what make experiential teaching strategy different and more powerful than other models commonly referred to as "learn-by-doing" or "hands-on learning" (Davis, 2011).

Accordingly El-Komi (nd) Experiential teaching strategy is effective in the teaching of some concepts in Economics such as Introduction to Economics, Intermediate Microeconomics, Equilibrium, et cetera. According to him, the objective behind experiential teaching strategy is to see how practice deviates from or conform to the theory, this he illustrated with how the market reaches equilibrium by dividing the class into buyers and sellers carrying out real market operations.

The purpose of this strategies is to promote efficiency in education by improving the quality of teaching and learning process. Experiential teaching strategy contributes to the efficiency, depth

and variety of learning. This is because this strategy simplify learning by using the senses of hearing and sight as well as sense of touch. Supporting this statement, Hurrichs (2008) indicated that 50% of people learn and retain information when they see and hear, while their learning and retention increases drastically to 90% when they say and do those visual things through drama, discussion, demonstration, stimulating real experiences, et cetera.

Based on this ideology, teachers needs to select appropriate teaching strategies and process as well as relevant teaching materials in order to carter for the needs of the learners; this helps to prevent gaps in learning and provides necessary support for achieving curriculum goals by laying emphasis on key points that needs to be retained. Therefore, the need for the researcher to embark on the study to ascertain the extent to which utilization of experiential teaching strategy will help to enhance students' performance in the teaching/learning of economics in senior secondary schools in Abia state

Economics is a challenging subject, filled with all the mysteries of other sciences. Economics appeals to the curious and rational elements present in all of us. It helps us finds answers to such questions as: What to produce; how to produce; for whom to produce as well as how to allocate our scarce resources to ensure that every needs is fulfilled.

However, National Policy on Education (2008) outlined the objectives of the post-economics curriculum as to enable students:

- understand basic economic principles and concepts as well as the tools for sound economic analysis.
- contribute intelligently to discourse on economic reforms and development as they affect or would affect the generality of Nigerians
- understand the structure and functioning of economic institutions.
- appreciate the role of public policies on national economy
- develop the skills and also appreciate the basis for rational economic decisions
- become sensitised to participate actively in national economic advancement through entrepreneurship, capital market and so on
- understand the role and status of Nigerian and other African countries in international economic relationships
- Appreciate the problems encountered by developing countries in their effort towards economic advancement.

Economics is very interesting and enterprising subject that equipped the recipients to make rational decisions and to contribute meaningfully to national economic discourse but despite the laudable objectives of this subject, students' poor performances in both internal and external examinations calls for concerns to both the government and general public. Hence, the need to

arouse the interest of the students as well as to enhance their dismal performance led to this study; experiential teaching strategy and the teaching/learning of economics in senior secondary schools in Abia state.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the effect of experiential teaching strategy on the mean achievement scores of students taught economics

1.3 Research Question

i. What are the mean scores of students taught economics with experiential teaching strategy and those taught using the conventional instructional method in economics

1.4 Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant difference between the mean achievement scores of student taught economics using with experiential teaching strategy and those taught using the conventional instructional method

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The design of the study is pre-test post-test control group research design. The target population of the study consisted of all senior secondary school II students in Abia state. Four senior secondary schools were purposively and randomly selected for used in the study. Economics teachers from these selected schools sampled participated in the study as research assistance.

Intact classes were assigned to experiential and control groups. Four intact classes, two for experimental group and two for the control group. One hundred and forty-nine students consisting of 77 students for experimental group while 72 students for the control group

The instrument used for the collection of data for the study was titled: "Multiple Choice Economics Achievement Test" (MCEAT).which was developed by the researcher. The instrument was validated by three experts; two in Economics and one from measurement and evaluation who validated the instrument in term of clarity, content and coverage, item discrimination, distractors and item difficulty index. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Kuder-Richardson (K-R 20) which yielded a reliability co-efficient of 0.77. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question posed for the study while the t-test statistic was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

2.1 Experimental Procedure

Senior Secondary II students were used for the study due to their exposure to most contents in economics unlike the SS I students who are yet to be exposed to most of economics concepts and SSIII students are involved in their preparations for external examinations. The teaching lasted for 6 weeks of 2 lessons weekly. The experimental and control groups were both pretested one week before the study. The regular economics teachers of the selected schools were trained and used for the study to avoid halo effect and to achieve internal validity.

The teachers from each of the schools assigned to experimental group taught their students using experiential teaching strategy, while those from the schools assigned control group taught using the conventional instructional method. At the end of the 6 weeks of the teaching, the regular teachers administered the posttest (MCEAT). Data were collected from these tests and used to answer the research question and tested hypothesis formulated to guide the study.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Research Question 1

What is the level of influence of experiential teaching strategy in the performance of male and female students achievement score?

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of students taught economics using experiential teaching strategy

VARIABLE	: N	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST		MEAN GAIN
		X	SD	X	SD	
Experiential	77	19.17	6.90	65.35	9.06	21.48
Conventional	72	18.96	6.65	43.87	11.09	

Result in Table 1 revealed that the students taught using experiential teaching strategy had a mean of 19.17 in the pre-test achievement and a standard deviation of 6.90. In their post-test achievement scores, the students had mean scores of 65.35 and standard deviation of 9.06. While the students taught using the conventional method had a pre-test achievement scores of 18.96 and standard deviation of 6.65 with a post-test mean achievement scores of 43.87 and a standard deviation of 11.09. This resulted to a mean gain of 21.48. This further indicated that the mean gain in the mean scores of the groups is solely attributed to the effect of experiential teaching strategy,

3.2 Hypothesis one:

Ho: There is no significant difference between the mean achievement scores of student taught economics using with experiential teaching strategy and those taught using the conventional instructional method

Table 2: Analysis of covariance of the mean achievement scores of student taught economics using with experiential teaching strategy and those taught using conventional instructional method

Source of variation	Sum of square	Df	Mean of square	F _{Cal}	F _{Crit}
Covariates	13151.095	1	13151.095	109.442	
Pretest	13151.095	1	13151.095	109.442	
Main effect	450.181	2	225.090	1.873	
Method	447.960	1	447.960	10.038	3.84
2-way interaction	775.361	1	775.361	6.452	
Explained	15924.855	2	3981.214	33.131	
Residual	13819.012	147	120.165		
Total	29743.867	149			

In the ANCOVA table, hypothesis 1, shows that the F- calculated (10.038) is greater than the f-critical value (3.84) at an alpha level of 0.05. Since the decision rule is to reject the null hypothesis when the calculated value is greater than the f-critical value at a given alpha level, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected by the researcher and concluded that there is significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught economics using experiential teaching strategy and conventional teaching method.

3.3 CONCLUSION

It has been demonstrated that experiential teaching strategy is an innovative teaching method that can be used to effectively to teach Economics in senior secondary school level as it affords the learner the opportunity to learn by experimenting and to demonstrate in real sense practical way by making difficult concepts or topics very easy to comprehend. This finding is supported by Brinia et al who asserted that experiential teaching is a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposely engage with students in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, and clarify values unlike the traditional method when student are just passive and re not allow to discover knowledge on their own. In line with the assertion of Brinia, Also, Hurrichs claimed that the use of experiential teaching strategy enables the learners to retain learning experiences up to 90% of what they are taught and utilize the information to solve real life situations.

3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Economics teachers in senior secondary schools should be encouraged to explore different innovative teaching strategies like experiential in conjunction with other traditional teaching strategies so as to be able to effectively impart knowledge to the learners.
2. Regular workshops and seminars should be organized to sensitive teachers of economic on innovative teaching strategies especially experiential method with a view to updating their knowledge and skills in teaching seemingly difficult concepts or topic to make understanding clearer to learners.
3. Curriculum planners and developers should include innovative teaching strategies in the curriculum of teacher training institutes like Universities and Colleges of Education to prepare would-be teachers to adapt to the changing innovations in teaching methodology.

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