

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Socio-cultural diversity as determinant of Social Studies students' academic performance in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria**

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**Students' academic performance in Social Studies has been poor for the past years. Blame has been levelled on teacher factors, students' attitude towards the subject, and lack of learning materials. This study therefore seeks to find out if socio-cultural diversity among students is responsible for their poor performance in Social Studies. The purpose of this study is to examine learners' socio-cultural diversity as determinant of academic performance in Social Studies in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of this study, two hypotheses were formulated as a guide. Literature was reviewed based on the two identified variables of social and cultural diversity. Both theoretical and empirical review was carried out. Survey research design was adopted and a sample of 488 students was selected through simple random technique from a population of 5,039. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was face validated and the reliability estimate was established through the Cronbach Alpha method with coefficient of 0.75 and 0.72. Kuder Richardson formula -20 was used for social studies achievement test with a reliability coefficient of 0.81. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Independent t-test were employed to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that, social and cultural diversity significantly influence Social Studies students' academic performance in Calabar Education Zone. It was recommended that, socio-cultural diversity of learners should be considered while teaching so that every learner will benefit from the instruction.**

**Key words:** Learner, social, cultural, diversity, academic performance.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is an instrument for national development and social change. It is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria. It maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfilment and general development of the society. It is therefore, meant to be

qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society. Thus, Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) stated that, education is the bed rock of any nation, which is the reason for government's heavy investment in education of her citizens. Education is the

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**Table 1.** Learners' performance in Social Studies in the JSCE 2014-2016.

Year	No Enrolled	Credit (1-6)	Fail (f-9)
2014	929,271	269,767(29.03%)	514,187(55.33%)
2015	833,204	252,271(30.28%)	523,879(62.88%)
2016	1,073,537	272,922(25.42%)	593,201(55.26%)

Source: Obtained from the Department of Planning Research and Statistics, Calabar April, 2017.

key to a nation's development. For a nation to achieve her educational, scientific, and technological goals, her citizens must have skills, aptitude, ability, and creative potentials needed for the achievement of these goals and this can also be actualised through effective study of Social Studies

Mezieobi and Mezieobi (2013) opine that Social Studies is an integrated field of study covering social sciences and the humanities. It is a field of study that focuses on man and his environment taking into consideration relationships or interactions that equip man with skills and knowledge to conquer himself and the environmental problems. Also, Odey (2019) maintained that Social Studies is a subject that equips students with skills and knowledge and the development of positive attitudes towards Nigerian cultural heritage. Kazi (2017) refers to Social Studies as representing and portraying of oneness and indivisibility of knowledge and the reality of man's interaction with the environment. Social Studies primarily is an integrated subject area designed to help students acquire the necessary skills, norms, knowledge and ideals of the society to enable them function adequately in the society. Furthermore, Coe (2014) views Social Studies as a discipline that helps students become responsible citizens in a culturally diverse, democratic society within an interdependent world. This is why students in a Social Studies classroom had to perform well in order to show that appropriate skills have been acquired.

Over the years, academic performance of students in Social Studies has been poor in Calabar municipality. Many efforts have been made by the teachers and the government to improve students' performance but to no avail. A quick check on the academic performance of junior secondary school examination report in Social Studies indicates that, there is poor performance in the subject by the students from 2014-2016. The result is seen in Table 1.

As indicated in Table 1, the failure rate of 55.33 % was recorded in 2014, showing that the failure rate was high, in 2015 the percentage of failure was 62.88%, and in 2016 the percentage of failure rate was 55.26%. This is a clear indication that the failure rate of learners in Social Studies has declined steadily through the years.

The academic progress of children, adolescents and adults determines the quality and quantity of manpower

that will be available for the much desired break-through of Nigeria in science, technology, arts, and entertainment (Abam, 2019). Education provides the human capital that will initiate, plan, direct and execute the development processes and activities that are critical for the economic growth and development of a nation

But if students continue to fail, the objectives of the introduction of Social Studies would not be fulfilled. Odey (2019) carried out a study on socio-cultural practices and academic performance in Social Studies students in Ogoja Education Zone. A sample of 2000 Social Studies students were randomly selected from a population of 21,022. Survey research design was adopted and questionnaire was the instrument used to gather data. Simple regression analysis was used to determine the influence. It was found that socio-cultural practices significantly influence students' academic performance in social studies.

Biriye (2011) carried out a study to investigate the social-cultural factors that affect the academic performance of secondary school students in Garrissa District. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study. The study employed descriptive research design. The sample comprised 8 head teachers, 145 teachers and 351 students. Data were collected with questionnaires and interview guide. The findings revealed that, there were several social-cultural factors that affected students' performance. For example communities' strong attachment to their culture and cultural conflicts was also seen as factor that affected performance. Based on the findings, it was concluded that social-cultural factors had effect on students' performance. Schools however should use different strategies to enhance students' performance among secondary school students in Garrissa District.

Odey (2019)'s finding on poor performance in Social Studies was as a result of socio-cultural practices while Biriye (2011)'s study revealed that socio-cultural factors were responsible for poor academic performance. These authors did not investigate the influences of socio-cultural diversity on academic performance. It is on this premise that this study seeks to find out whether some socio-cultural factors in terms of social and cultural diversity have any relationship with academic performance of students in Social Studies. The socio-cultural factors identified include; language, race, customs, interaction

patterns, religion, mode of dressing and eating, ethnicity, background, attitudes etc. In the context of this study, we are looking at culture in terms of customs and social diversity in terms of interaction patterns.

A group of people who share things such as language, values, tradition, and ways of doing things are said to possess a common culture. When most people share that culture, it is called the majority or dominant culture. The ability to give every child a chance to succeed in school depends upon a full understanding of culture and learning. This is because, according to Odey (2019) culture and education are closely related; while culture provides the content to learn, education preserves and transmits the cultural values. Culture influences many aspects of our lives. Kauchak and Eggen (2011) maintained that students come to school with a history of learning influenced by the cultures of their homes and neighbourhoods and that some attitudes and values complement learning and others do not. For instance, if a child is raised in a culture where children do not respond when adult is talking or make decision, such a child may feel withdrawn and will not be bold to ask or answer questions in the class unlike his/her counterpart who come from a democratic home and speak freely. This may be a hindrance to the child's progress in school.

According to Kauchak and Eggen (2011) cultural diversity refers to the different cultures encountered in classrooms and how these cultural differences influence learning. Konan et al. (2010) reviewed literature of several studies which have attempted to examine the effects of cultural diversity on performance and discovered that diversity is associated with both positive and negative outcomes. The authors found that negative impacts of diversity concern group cohesion and conflict and that the positive impact of diversity relates to superior group performance. The review also indicated that racial diversity has positive effects on complex thinking and further found that racially diverse groups performed better on an idea-generation task than did racially homogeneous groups. This review was done in the United State. In the Nigerian context, it may not be different; hence children come from different cultures in terms of child rearing customs and interaction patterns in the numerous cultures in Nigeria and in Calabar in particular. Culturally, it is believed that children from disparate cultural backgrounds perform differently in cognitive tasks- for instance, their understanding of how knowledge is gained. Also parents encourage children to communicate with others in different ways depending on their cultural background. For example, parents in some African cultures, especially, Nigeria often encourage their children to be silent unless they are directly spoken to, not to argue with adult and not to speak their minds (Shahaeian, 2014). This is in contrast with most Western cultures where children are given opportunity to speak at will. This attributes of remaining silent except when spoken to may often be regarded as exhibiting shyness and not so

highly valued in the Western culture. This in African culture can influence a child's academic performance. Socio-cultural factors of language, law, values, religion, family background are the largest scale forces within societies that affect the thoughts, behaviours and feelings of individuals (Njok and Edinyang, 2014).

Also, Essien et al. (2016) investigated the influence of cultural inhibitions on students' academic performance in Social Studies. One hypothesis was formulated to guide the study and Expost-Facto research design was adopted. A cultural inhibition questionnaire was used to obtain the data and Pearson product moment correlation was employed to analyze the data. The result revealed a significant positive relationship between cultural inhibitions and students' performance in Social Studies.

On the contrary, Whipps-Johnson (2016) carried out a study on teachers' awareness of cultural diversity and academic achievement in ninth grade academics and senior high schools and found that there was no significant relationship between teachers' awareness of cultural diversity and perceived academic achievement growth or perceived persistence in school as measured by perceived dropout rates. No statistically significant differences were found between ninth grade schools

Social difference is an important determinant of students' academic performance. Because social differences are the key part of the developmental process, they may have a negative effect on young people due to peer pressure and peer conformity

As children socialize, interact, and work with themselves, such relationship influences them positively or negatively. Diversity constitutes a crucial aspect of functionalism in areas of educational performance (Kauchak and Eggen, 2011). Learner diversity encompasses a broad range of educational concepts, including the social setting, the psychological environment created through social contexts, and numerous instructional components related to teachers' characteristics and behaviours.

Human beings live in groups; sociologists have advanced several reasons in support of group living. Living in groups which begins with childhood peer interaction has influence on each other. Every child in school is a member of a very important group in his class (Kauchak and Eggen, 2011); how he gets on with his class members affects his social difference towards school hence his learning.

In consonance with this, Roberts (2013) studied a group of girls whom he taught English composition using group method. The author grouped the subjects for the study into different groups. The investigation found that learners who worked in groups achieved significantly higher than those who worked individually. Since student-student relationship affects the learning of Social Studies; every school child must be fully adjusted to the classroom work group for effective participation.

In the classroom grouping, children are expected to

play their roles in the process of learning and are encouraged to interact positively with each other. This is because the more learners participate in the study group, the more they learn from it. Ogletree (2012) who asserted that a child who is socially rejected develops feelings of insecurity and inferiority because it seems to him he is not worthy of peer love and is evidently worthless. Learners are more positive about having youngsters as work partners. In a socio-metric study of two school communities, Jones (2011) noted that in a regular classroom, socio-metric acceptance scores increased as much as 2.0, while rejection scores decreased as low as 1.0. The study showed that reasons for rejection are because of un-acceptance behaviour such as bullying, fighting, showing-off and an apparent inability or desire to conform to group stands or behaviour. Student-student social relationship serves as an organizer and motivator of learners (Kauchak and Eggen, 2011). This is because when students interact with one another, they become more motivated to learn and build relationships.

Inner thought, wishes, ability to understand the needs and feelings of others, contribute to this shift in interaction patterns. According to the investigator, a determination in the social acceptance level of children has negative effect on the behaviour of the individual learners. According to Ferguson (2002), a child with high ability who is socially maladjusted in school often develops negative social differences toward school rules and regulations. Such social differences are evidenced by the way he/she completes assignments and voluntarily participates in learning activities.

Social difference in terms of how people interact with one another is a notable force that influences the life of an adolescent more than any other single force. According to Prashant (2017) social diversity is the feature of the society which is determined by caste, class religion, occupational pattern and general customs. Adolescence period has been identified to be a time individuals desire to find themselves more frequently in the midst of peers rather than staying with adult members of the family through interaction. Adolescents form peers on symbolic foundation involving intelligent members, physically strong members and financially buoyant members (Mezieobi and Mezieobi, 2013: 15). However, such group usually has group norms, ideals and goals. The need to interact with people who can see things in their own frame of interest is uppermost among the factors that make adolescents go for peer membership. At adolescent age, parents do not understand why their children view things the way they do.

In a study carried by Achinstein and Ogawa (2012) on study habit, social difference and achievement of primary school learners in Science in the Southern Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria showed that social difference contributed substantially more than other variables in the study to predict achievement. This shows that a student's social difference towards Science subjects is a very important

factor in achievement. This implies that, social skills difference of interaction of the student, be it with fellow students or parents or others around him is significant in the student's achievement in school.

Social interaction which differs among students as an outcome of learning process is very vital because it conditions other variables that can make the study of Social Studies worthwhile. Granted that social difference interaction is a necessary ingredient for learning, many studies have proved that it is not an end in itself but rather a means to an end. According to Alfaro and Umaña-Taylor (2010) a student claimed to have studied well for an examination, the study is not the cause of his success, rather it is the social interaction. To support the matter further, for instance, a student who possesses a positive social difference towards schooling, will help him to develop a good or effective study habit, which in turn improves the learners' level of studying. In this case Alfaro and Umaña-Taylor (2010) maintained that though positive social difference towards the subject is instrumental to his academic success but nevertheless, it is not the direct cause rather it conditions the effective study habit, which is the direct cause.

According to Alfaro and Umaña-Taylor (2010) the social interaction difference of learners and their parents to education significantly correlate. To him, children gradually develop positive social difference to learn; if they are not motivated in school they develop negative social difference to learning which influence their academic performance in a negative way. In human modelling, the parent or any other member of the child's family may be the learner's model, and if the model for instance, is the academic type who do not only make sound efforts but also derive pleasure in pursuing his or her academic interest, the chances are that the child would want to be like his or her model. This admiration for his model may motivate him into activities and once the right or positive social difference has been formed, the child will naturally derive pleasure in working hard in order, to achieve success in his academics.

Alfaro and Umaña-Taylor (2010) maintained that, learners with negative social interaction difference towards a subject or a teacher do not learn with the same degree as learners with more positive social interaction difference. The author further maintained that the importance a student attaches to a subject will determine the extent and amount of efforts he or she puts into studying the subject. In other words teachers should present and handle their subject in a way that will not generate negative social interaction difference on the part of the student.

Russell and Russell (2014) carried out a study to survey the general social difference of Nigerian learners toward Physics. The survey was confined to Physics major who were in their third and fourth year in the Nigerian Universities. Approximately, 200 learners drawn from all the Nigerian universities participated in the study

by completing 15-item questions. Responses were made voluntarily and anonymously. Findings from the survey revealed that very few learners love to study physics and those who opted for physics do so because they meant to earn a job ticket; other results showed that student were not satisfied with the research activities and the teaching of Physics in the universities.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Socio-cultural theory of cognitive development was propounded by Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky (1978). This theory stresses the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition. The author believed strongly that community plays a central role in the process of “making meaning” (1978, p. 90). Socio-cultural approach to cognitive development states that cognitive growth occurs in a socio-cultural context that influences the form that it takes, and many of a child’s most noteworthy skills evolve from social interactions with parents, teachers, and other elders.

Vygotsky proposed that infants are born with a few elementary mental functions which consist of attention, sensation, perception, and memory that are eventually transformed by the culture into new and more sophisticated mental processes which are called higher mental functions. For example, young children’s early memory capabilities are limited by biological constraints to the images and impressions they can produce. However, each culture provides its children with tools of intellectual adaptation, which is Vygotsky’s term for methods of thinking and problem-solving strategies that children internalize from their interactions with more competent members of the society.

Vygotsky argues instead they learn through guided participation. This is a kind of apprenticeship in thinking. The idea of an apprenticeship or guided participation may seem reasonable in cultures where children are integrated early into the daily activities of adult life, like African countries whose hunting-and-gathering lifestyle has remained virtually unchanged for thousands of years. Guided participation is the adult-child interaction in which children’s cognitions and modes of thinking are shaped as they participate with or observe adults engaged in culturally relevant activities. In order to gain an understanding of Vygotsky’s theory of cognitive development, one must understand two of the principles of Vygotsky’s work: the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

The More Knowledgeable Other refers to someone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner; a child’s peers or an adult’s children may be the individuals with more knowledge or experience. The Zone of Proximal Development refers to the difference between what a child can achieve independently and what a child can achieve with guidance and

encouragement from a skilled partner. It is the range of abilities that an individual can perform a task with assistance, but cannot yet perform independently.

The relevance of this theory to this study is that, children are seen as active participants in their education so they need to be active in all activities they undergo during learning. In many cultures, children do not learn by going to school with other children, nor do their parents formally teach such lessons as weaving and hunting, this theory puts the teacher in the role of a mentor who ensures the transmission of the social values of diverse culture from one generation of learners to another. Socio-cultural theory looks at the important contributions that society makes to individual development. This theory stresses that interaction between developing people and the culture in which they live play a significant role in the social and cultural development of the young generation.

To Vygotsky, adults are important source of cognitive development. Vygotsky believed that much important learning by the child occurs through social interaction with skilful tutor who can inculcate the socio-cultural values on the children. The tutor may model behaviours and or provide verbal instructions for the child. This according to Vygotsky refers to cooperative dialogue. But where the interaction does not yield positive results then such behaviour modelled and or interaction should not be retained so that it does not lead to poor performance in academics.

Vygotsky’s theory is reciprocal teaching used to improve learners’ ability to learn from text. In this method, teachers and learners collaborate in learning and practicing four key skills: summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting.

Also, Vygotsky’s theory is relevant to instructional concept such as scaffolding and apprenticeship in which a teacher or more advanced peer helps to structure or arrange a task so that a learner can work on it successfully. The theory also feeds into the current interest in collaborative learning, suggesting that group members should have different levels of ability so more advanced learners can help less advanced members operate within their zone of proximal development that is, less advanced learners learning with more advanced learners in a similar situation before they can attempt it alone.

It is believed that for children to be able to socialize and learn effectively at home, school, and outside school, it is dependent on the kind of lifestyle they live, the people they interact and mingle with. Some learners find it difficult to ask question in class neither do they answer question nor do they associate with those who are more knowledgeable than they are because of the way they are raised. In some cultures children are not allowed to speak their minds at home even when they are affected. These can influence them negatively or positively at school. This theory stresses that parents, care-givers, older siblings and peers are responsible in the training

**Table 2.** Cronbach alpha reliability estimate of research instrument (N=50).

Variables	Number of items	$\mu$	SD	Cronbach Alpha
Cultural Diversity (Custom)	6	17.82	2.75	0.75
Social Diversity (Interaction pattern)	6	16.80	2.52	0.72

**Table 3.** Reliability coefficient of Social Studies Achievement test (SOSAT) using Kuder Richardson Formula-20.

Parameter	K	$\Sigma PQ$	$S^2$	R
SOSAT	60	11.64	59.44	0.81

and developing higher order functions in the younger ones so they should inculcate in children positive moral values that will help mould them positively.

According to Vygotsky, learning has its basis in interacting and sharing views of what is learnt with learners from different family, social and cultural backgrounds. Once this occurs, the information is then integrated in the individual level, but where there is poor interaction from these diverse families, social and cultural groups, learning may be hindered which may lead to poor academic performance.

### Purpose of the study

The main purpose was to examine the relationship between socio-cultural diversity and learners' academic performance in Social Studies in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State. Specifically, this study sought to:

- 1) Determine whether cultural diversity (customs) of learners relate with their academic performance in Social Studies
- 2) Find out the relationship between social diversity (interaction pattern) of learners and their academic performance in Social Studies.

### Null Hypotheses

- 1) Cultural diversity (customs) does not significantly relate to learners' academic performance in Social Studies
- 2) Social diversity (interaction pattern) does not significantly relate to learners' academic performance in Social Studies

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between socio-cultural diversity as determinant of academic performance among junior secondary school learners in social studies in Calabar education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The survey research

design was adopted for the study; a sample of four hundred and eighty-eighty (488) learners was used for the study from a population of five thousand and thirty nine (5,039). Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were employed. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Learner Diversity Questionnaire (LDQ) and Social Studies performance Test (SOSPT). The instrument was validated and reliability coefficient of internal consistency was obtained; the indices were 0.75 to 0.72. The performance test was 0.81 (Tables 2 and 3).

## RESULTS

### Hypothesis one

This hypothesis stated that, there is no significant relationship between cultural diversity of learners and their academic performance in Social Studies. The independent variable in this hypothesis is cultural diversity of learners; while the dependent variable is academic performance in Social Studies. To test this hypothesis, learners' academic performance was correlated with their cultural diversity using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4.

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 4 reveals that the calculated r-value of 0.378 is higher than the critical r-value of .062 at .05 level of significance with 486 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between cultural diversity of learners and academic performance in Social Studies was rejected. This result indicated that, cultural diversity of learners has a significant positive relationship with their academic performance in Social Studies. This implies that cultural diversity of learners has a positive or negative impact on their academic performance. This is because learners whose culture allows them to speak up and share their idea are likely to ask questions in class and answer questions, while those who are inhibited are shy and this may affect their academic performance.

**Table 4.** Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between cultural diversity of learners and Academic performance in Social Studies (N=488).

Variables	$\bar{x}$	SD	r-value	Sig
Cultural diversity(customs) of learners	20.4590	2.19725	0.378	
Academic performance	17.9262	1.77210	Sig .000	

\*Significant at .05, critical r = .062, df = 486.

**Table 5.** Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between social diversity of learners and Academic performance in Social Studies (N=488).

Variables	$\bar{x}$	SD	r-value	Sig
Social diversity(interaction pattern) of learners	21.5307	1.58764	r-value 0.939	
Academic performance	17.9262	1.77210	Sig .000	

\*Significant at .05, critical r = .062, df = 486.

## Hypothesis two

This hypothesis stated that, there is no significant relationship between social diversity of learners and their academic performance in Social Studies. The independent variable in this hypothesis is social diversity of learners; while the dependent variable is academic performance in Social Studies. To test this hypothesis, learners' academic performance was correlated with their social diversity using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 5

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 5 reveals that the calculated r-value of 0.939 is higher than the critical r-value of 0.062 at 0.05 level of significance with 486 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between social diversity of learners and academic performance in Social Studies was rejected. This result indicated that, social diversity of learners has a significant positive relationship with their academic performance in Social Studies. This indicates that learner's social life has positive or negative effect on their academic performance because learners with good social lifestyle can interact freely with their peers and exchange academic ideas than learners that are not social.

## DISCUSSION

### Cultural diversity and academic performance

The result of the first hypothesis indicated that cultural diversity in terms of customs on how parents raise their children has a significant positive relationship with their academic performance in Social Studies. This finding lends credence with the view of Kauchak and Eggen

(2011) who said that students come to school with a history of learning influenced by the cultures of their homes and neighbourhood and that some attitudes and values acquired complement learning while others do not. The finding of this hypothesis is also supportive of Odey (2019) who found that socio-cultural practices significantly influence student's performance in Social Studies.

This finding also aligned with Vygotsky (1978) who propounded socio-cultural theory. He said that infants are born with a few elementary mental functions which consist of attention, sensation transformed by their culture into new sophisticated mental processes. It is believed that for children to learn effectively in the school depend largely on the lifestyle acquired from home and the people they interact with. Some learners find it difficult to ask questions or answer questions in the classroom nor do they associate with more knowledgeable others because of the way they were raised in their culture. This may be a hindrance to their progress in school. To Vygotsky, learning has its basis in interacting and sharing views of what is learnt with learners from varied family, social and cultural backgrounds.

Again, the finding is in support of Shahaieian (2014) who maintained that parents always encourage children to communicate with others in different ways depending on their cultural background. For instance, parents in some African cultures especially Nigeria often encourage their children to be silent unless they are directly spoken to, not to argue with adults and not to speak their minds. This type of custom is capable of making children shy in class and this may affect their academic performance.

Furthermore, this finding lends credence to Essien et al. (2016) who investigated the influence of cultural institutions on students' academic performance in Social Studies and found a significant positive relationship

between cultural institutions and students' academic performance in Social Studies. This shows that a culture where children are not allowed to air their views, inhibit their active participation when they are out of home.

On the contrary, the finding is in contrast to Whipp's-Johnson (2016) who carried out a study on teachers' awareness of cultural diversity and academic achievement in Ninth grade academic and senior high schools and found no statistical significant differences between the ninth grade. This implies that cultural diversity is not a significant factor affecting academic performance

### **Social diversity and academic performance**

The result of the second hypothesis showed that there is a significant relationship between social diversity in terms of interaction patterns and students' academic performance in Social Studies. This is an indication that poor social interaction between the learners and the teacher and among peers may hinder the learners' academic performance. On the other hand if the interaction is cordial and productive; it will enhance students' academic performance.

This is in consonance with Njok and Edinyang (2014) who opined that socio-cultural factors of language, law, values, religion, and family background are the largest scale forces within societies that affect the thoughts, behaviours and feelings of individuals. This implies that these factors may hinder or enhance students' academic performance.

This finding further aligned with the proponent of socio-cultural theorist Vygotsky (1978) who maintained that students' cognitive growth occurs in a socio-cultural context that influence the form that it takes and many of a child's noteworthy skills evolve from social interactions with parents, teachers and other elders (interaction).

Again the finding is in line with Kauchak and Eggen (2011) who maintained that as children interact and work among themselves, such relationship influences them positively or negatively and that diversity constitutes a crucial aspect of functionalism in areas of educational performance.

The finding further supports Achinstein and Ogawa (2012) who carried out a study on social skills differences of students and achievement in primary school and found that social differences contribute substantially more than any factor in the study to predict achievement. This shows that social skill differences in terms of interaction patterns of students can enhance student's achievement in school.

Also, the finding is in terms with Alfaro and Umafia-Taylor (2010) who believed that children gradually develop positive social skills in their diverse nature to learn, but if not motivated in school, they will develop negative social skills of disliking teachers and their subjects which will influence their academic performance

in a negative way. The authors went further to say that learners with negative social interaction difference towards a subject or a teacher do not learn with the same degree as learners with positive social interaction pattern.

The finding again lends credence to Vygotsky's theory where he stated that adults are important source of cognitive development and believed that much important learning by a child occurs through social interaction with skillful tutors who can inculcate the socio-cultural values on the child.

Learners who worked in groups achieved significantly higher than those who worked individually. Since student-student relationship affects the learning of Social Studies, every school child must be fully adjusted to the classroom work group for effective participation.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it has been revealed that socio-cultural diversity is a strong determinant of students' academic performance in social studies. After carrying out the analysis, the result showed that social diversity significantly relate to students' performance. This is an indication that, if students have good social standing with themselves and the society, they will certainly do well in Social Studies but if in the process of socialization, they develop deviant behaviours, it will as well affect them in school outcomes. The same is applicable to the cultural differences. If students are from a culture where, they are not allowed to respond to adult, speak out their minds and take informed decisions, it will affect their performance negatively. However, if the reverse is the case, it will help them positively in their academic performance.

### **Recommendations**

The cultural variations among learners especially the differences within subcultures should be taken into consideration by teachers while teaching.

Also, learners should be encouraged to interact with one another even though they are diverse, since they exist among learners the introvert, and the extrovert. This is because the way a student gets on with his class members affects his learning.

### **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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