EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF INNOVATIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES (ITS) ON LEARNING OUTCOMES IN SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

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Abstract

In recent years, integrating Innovative Teaching Strategies (ITS) has become increasingly vital in enhancing learning outcomes across educational disciplines. This study investigates the impact of innovative teaching strategies on learning outcomes in Social Studies among students in the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin. The study evaluates the effectiveness of innovative strategies in Social Studies instruction, their impact on student engagement, academic performance, and attitudes towards the subject. A descriptive survey research design was used. The population comprises all undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education enrolled in Social Studies courses. A sample of 150 students was selected using stratified random sampling technique to ensure balanced representation across all academic levels. The study focused on using innovative teaching strategies in Social Studies, indicating high usage. The teaching methods allowed students to participate and explore ideas independently and actively, frequently including problem-solving and critical thinking activities. The study also examined the impact of innovative teaching strategies on students' academic understanding in social studies. The study revealed that innovative teaching methods positively affected students' engagement, interest and motivation. The study highlights the importance of creative teaching strategies in enhancing student engagement and motivation in Social Studies .The conclusion emphases the need for broader adoption of dynamic, learner-centered instructional methods. The study contributes to educational practice by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of innovative teaching in Social Studies, which has implications for curriculum design, teacher training, and policy development.

Keywords: Innovative teaching strategies, Learning outcomes, Social Studies Education, Student engagement, Higher education pedagogy

Introduction

Social Studies Education in Nigeria is designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for effective citizenship and national development (Adeyemi & Onigiobi, 2020). The curriculum aims to foster an understanding of Nigerian history, culture, government, and economy, as well as global issues and challenges. However, the effectiveness of Social Studies Education in achieving these goals is often hindered by traditional teaching methods prioritizing rote memorization and passive learning over critical thinking and active engagement (Fakhridinovna, 2025). The Faculty of Education at the University of Ilorin plays a vital role in training future Social Studies teachers who will shape the educational experiences of countless students across Nigeria. As such, the Faculty must adopt and promote innovative pedagogical approaches that can enhance student learning outcomes and prepare graduates to meet the demands of the 21st-century classroom.

The self-reported frequency and extent to which Social Studies teachers

employ specific pedagogical approaches deviate from traditional lecture-based methods, as students perceive (Gesta et al., 2023; Miller et al., 2013). These strategies aim to foster active learning, critical thinking, and relevant application of knowledge. Ilhan and Oruc (2016) stated that students perceive how often their Social Studies teacher uses multimedia tools (videos, animations, interactive simulations) during lessons. Le et al (2018) revealed that students perceived the frequency with which they engage in group discussions and collaborative projects in class to have assisted more students in the understanding of various concepts treated. Modern technology and online platforms are often used to deliver or support classroom instruction (Sofi-Karim et al., 2023). The study measures the degree to which students report feeling actively involved, intellectually stimulated, and personally connected to their Social Studies. The teaching methods allow them to participate and explore ideas independently and actively. Problem-solving and critical thinking activities are frequently part of classroom tasks. Pettenger et al. (2014) stated that students' perception of interactive exercises, such as role-plays, simulations, and class exercises, significantly influence their participation in these activities. They feel empowered to ask questions and share opinions during Social Studies lessons, indicating a high level of engagement in these interactive activities.

Academic understanding in Social Studies is a crucial factor influencing students' self-reported comprehension of concepts and their perceived ability to apply this knowledge. The perceived improvement in conceptual understanding is a key factor, as students express improved understanding of Social Studies concepts due to innovative teaching strategies (Ilter, 2014). Ibrahimoğlu (2019) stated that student perception in Social Studies is influenced by their perceived ability to apply concepts and express their understanding. They feel confident in their ability to apply concepts to real-life situations, demonstrating their ability to apply knowledge effectively. Their confidence in understanding Social Studies topics contributes to their overall success. Students' attitudes and interest levels influence motivation in social studies. Enthusiasm to attend classes is key, as students express high anticipation in class attendance and learning. Moreover, increased participation in class discussions can lead to a more engaging and practical learning experience. Therefore, understanding students' motivation towards Social Studies is crucial for effective learning.

Several contextual factors within the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin, and the broader Nigerian Educational System may influence the relationship between innovative teaching strategies (ITS) and student learning outcomes in Social Studies. The availability and accessibility of essential resources, including technology (computers, projectors, and internet access), multimedia equipment, textbooks, and other instructional materials, can significantly impact the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing ITS (Ezeodo & Aroh, 2024). The extent to which classrooms are equipped with functional technology and internet connectivity could boast the learning capacity of the learners. Limited resource availability may constrain teachers' ability to implement ITS effectively, leading to weaker relationships between ITS and student outcomes. Additionally, mentorship programmes provide experienced teachers with guidance and support for new teachers in implementing ITS. Insufficient teacher training can lead to inconsistent or ineffective implementation, highlighting the importance of practical training.

University of Ilorin's Social Studies Curriculum should be aligned with ITS principles, promoting active learning, critical thinking, and real-world application of knowledge. This includes ensuring curriculum objectives that promote student-centered learning, assessment methods that focus on higher-order thinking skills, and flexibility that allow teachers to adapt teaching methods. A curriculum not aligned with ITS may create barriers for teachers to implement these strategies, limiting their effectiveness (Pandey, 2018).

The implementation of Innovative Teaching Techniques (ITS) depends on the support provided by the Faculty and University administration, including financial resources, administrative support, and recognition of innovative teaching practices (Spaska et al., 2025). The availability of grants and support from administrative policies and leadership support from faculty leaders can influence the adoption of ITS. Lack of institutional support may discourage educators from adopting ITS. The average class size and student-teacher ratio in Social Studies courses can significantly influence the implementation of ITS, especially for those requiring individualised attention or small group work (Bondebjerg et al., 2023). Large class sizes may make it challenging for teachers to effectively implement ITS, requiring them to adapt their strategies or limit student interaction (Whisenhunt et al., 2019). Socio-economic backgrounds and prior educational experiences can impact students' readiness for Information Technology (IT). The percentage of students from low-income families and those with access to technology at home can also influence their readiness (Katz & Gonzalez, 2016). Disadvantaged students may face challenges in participating fully in ITS activities, necessitating teachers to provide additional support and resources. Therefore, understanding these factors is crucial for effective ITS implementation.

Social Studies Education in Nigeria has a complex history, evolving alongside the nation's political, social, and economic development. Understanding its current state requires examining its origins, curriculum, challenges, and ongoing efforts to improve its effectiveness.The British colonial education system influenced Social Studies in Nigeria's formative years (Sofadekan, 2012). The focus was often on transmitting knowledge about the British Empire and its values, with limited attention given to Nigerian history, culture, and social issues (Spear, 2017).Following independence in 1960, there was a growing recognition of the need for a curriculum that reflected Nigerian identity and promoted national unity. Social Studies emerged as a distinct subject, designed to foster citizenship, national consciousness, and an understanding of Nigerian society (Muritala & Balogun, 2021).Developing the Social Studies curriculum in Nigeria has been an ongoing process, with revisions and updates reflecting changing national priorities and educational philosophies. The National Policy on Education outlines the goals and objectives of Social Studies Education in Nigeria at different levels of the education system (Shuaibu & Shaibu, 2020). Generally, the aims include understanding Nigerian history, culture, and social institutions and promoting citizenship, national unity, and patriotism.Fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Encouraging responsible participation in community and national affairs and developing an awareness of global issues and challenges.

Social Studies Curriculum covers Nigerian history, geography, culture, government, civics, economics, social development, environmental issues, global issues, and international relations (Adeyemi & Onigiobi, 2020).At the tertiary level, Social Studies Education focuses on preparing future teachers and researchers in

the field. The curriculum emphasizes pedagogical knowledge, research methods, and critical analysis of social issues. Social Studies Education in Nigeria faces several challenges, including inadequate resources, limited access to technology, funding constraints, lack of specialized training, and limited professional development opportunities (Adeniyi et al., 2024). Teachers often lack specialized training and face challenges in motivation and morale due to low salaries and challenging working conditions. Large class sizes make it difficult for teachers to provide individualized attention and implement student-centered learning activities. Traditional teaching methods often prioritize rote memorization over critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Assessment methods may not adequately measure students' understanding of Social Studies concepts or ability to apply this knowledge to real-world situations. Socio-cultural factors, such as cultural diversity, socio-economic disparities, and political interference, also challenge teaching Social Studies inclusively and respectfully for all cultures. These factors can affect students' access to resources and opportunities for learning, leading to instability and undermining the quality of Social Studies Education in Nigeria.

Innovative Teaching Strategies (ITS) in Social Studies Education are based on constructivism, social constructivism, and cognitive learning theories. Constructivism emphasizes the role of learners in their understanding of the world through experience and reflection (Bada & Olusegun, 2015). In contrast, social constructivism emphasizes the role of social interaction and collaboration in the learning process (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Cognitive learning theory focuses on cognitive processes involved in learning, such as attention, memory, and problem-solving (Çeliköz et al., 2019). Effective classroom management is essential for successful implementation, especially in large classes. Innovative Teaching Strategies (ITS) face challenges such as resistance to change, lack of resources, large class sizes, assessment difficulties, and student readiness (Lasisi et al., 2024). Teachers who are enthusiastic and passionate about Social Studies can inspire students and make the subject matter more engaging. Teachers can enhance engagement by adapting their instruction to meet students' needs. Students' prior knowledge and experiences, as well as their learning preferences, play a significant role in their engagement. Inquiry-Based Teaching is a teaching method that encourages active student involvement in the learning process (Rafiq et al., 2023). It can enhance interest and motivation by making Social Studies more relevant to students' lives. It can also foster a stronger emotional connection to the subject matter by allowing students to explore personally meaningful topics.

Academic understanding in Social Studies is a comprehensive approach that goes beyond memorizing facts and dates. It involves a more profound comprehension of concepts, the ability to analyze and interpret information, the capacity to apply knowledge to new situations, and the skill to evaluate different perspectives critically (Zevin, 2015). This understanding is crucial for students to engage with complex social issues and make informed decisions. Academic understanding in Social Studies is influenced by various factors, including students' existing knowledge, cultural background, personal experiences, learning styles, cognitive abilities, attention and focus, intrinsic motivation, relevance and value, teacher quality and instructional practices, classroom management, and learning environment (Omolara & Adebukola, 2015). Teacher quality and instructional practices, such as subject matter expertise, pedagogical skills, classroom management, and a supportive

and respectful learning environment, can influence student understanding. Opportunities for collaboration and access to resources, such as textbooks, computers, and the internet, can also enhance students' understanding.

Integrated Teaching Strategies (ITS) encourages students to engage with the material, think critically, and apply their knowledge to real-world situations (Drake & Reid, 2018). It enhances critical thinking skills by requiring students to analyze information, evaluate evidence, and form opinions. It also helps students solve complex problems through project-based learning and simulations. It also helps students develop a deeper conceptual understanding of Social Studies by connecting learning to real-world experiences. It also improves long-term knowledge retention by making learning more meaningful and memorable. ITS can be used in various ways, such as inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, simulations, and role-playing. Research consistently shows that ITS can improve academic understanding in social studies, with students who participate in inquiry-based learning activities achieving higher scores on content knowledge and critical thinking tests (Grant et al., 2022; Dewi et al., 2021; Nurhayati et al., 2020).

Several studies in Nigeria have explored cooperative learning techniques in Social Studies and related disciplines. Yusuf et al. (2018) found that students who participated in cooperative learning activities in a civic education course demonstrated improved academic performance and social skills. Research has examined active learning strategies, such as discussions, debates, and role-playing, to enhance student engagement and learning in Social Studies (Omojemite, 2025). Nelson and Crow (2014) found out that students who participated in active learning activities in a history course reported higher interest in the subject and demonstrated

improved critical thinking skills. The effectiveness of ITS in Nigeria is often constrained by factors such as inadequate resources, large class sizes, and a lack of teacher training (Adamu et al., 2022). More research is needed to explore the use of technology-enhanced ITS in Social Studies in Nigeria. Most studies have focused on general education or other disciplines, with limited attention given to Social Studies specifically. More research is needed to understand how ITS impacts student attitudes, motivation, and engagement within the Nigerian Social Studies context. While some studies have explored the use of cooperative learning and active learning strategies, there is a significant lack of rigorous, context-specific research on the effectiveness of ITS in Nigerian universities (Agbaje, 2021). Existing research has identified several promising ITS, that have the potential to enhance student learning in social studies. The literature emphasizes the importance of active learning strategies, which can promote student engagement and critical thinking.

The literature acknowledges the importance of contextual factors in the implementation and effectiveness of ITS. While existing research has explored innovative teaching strategies in various educational contexts, a significant gap remains in understanding their specific impact on student learning outcomes in Social Studies Education within the unique context of the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. This study fills this gap by providing empirical evidence on the impact of ITS on student learning outcomes in Social Studies at the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. By examining the extent to which ITS are being implemented, their influence on student engagement and academic understanding, and their effect on student attitudes and motivation, this study seeks to inform curriculum development, teacher

training programmes, and educational policy within the Faculty and potentially contribute to broader improvements in Social Studies Education in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, Social Studies Education is crucial in fostering civic responsibility, national identity, and understanding societal issues among students. However, traditional teaching methods, characterized by rote memorization and teacher-centered instruction, dominate many Nigerian classrooms, including at the tertiary level (Agbaje, 2021). This approach often fails to cultivate the critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and active engagement necessary for students to participate actively in a rapidly changing global society effectively (Adeoye et al., 2023; Okolie et al., 2022; Okpara & Ezeador, 2024). At the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin, while there is a recognized need to prepare future educators with innovative pedagogical approaches, the extent to which these strategies are consistently being implemented in Social Studies instruction remains unclear. Anecdotal evidence suggests that traditional lecture-based methods are still prevalent, potentially limiting students' opportunities for active learning, collaborative engagement, and higher-order thinking skills (Hopper & Brake, 2018). This is particularly concerning given the Faculty's mission to produce highly qualified and innovative teachers who can effectively address the challenges of the 21st-century classroom.

Furthermore, limited research exists on the specific impact of innovative teaching strategies on Social Studies learning outcomes within the Nigerian higher education context. While some studies have explored the use of technology in education, Nwuke and Yellowe (2025) and Ajadi (2024), opined that there is a need

for more comprehensive investigations into the effectiveness of a broader range of innovative pedagogical approaches, such as student-centered learning, collaborative projects, and inquiry-based activities, in enhancing student engagement, academic performance, and attitudes towards social studies. This study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by examining the impact of innovative teaching strategies on learning outcomes in Social Studies among undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin. By investigating the extent to which these strategies are being employed, their influence on student engagement and academic understanding, and their effect on student attitudes and motivation, this study seeks to provide empirical evidence that can inform curriculum development, teacher training programmes, and educational policy within the Faculty and potentially contribute to broader improvements in Social Studies Education in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study:
1. How much are innovative teaching strategies employed in teaching Social Studies Education?
2. How do student-centered learning approaches influence student engagement in Social Studies?
3. How do innovative teaching strategies impact students' academic understanding in Social Studies?
4. How do innovative teaching methods affect students' engagement, interest and motivation?

Materials and Methods

This study employs a quantitative research method to investigate the impact of Innovative Teaching Strategies (ITS) on student learning outcomes in Social Studies Education at the Faculty of Education,

University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The object of this research is the relationship between implementing specific Innovative Teaching Strategies (ITS) and student outcomes (academic understanding, engagement, attitudes, and motivation) in Social Studies Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin. The focus is on quantifying the impact of these strategies.The target population for this study consists of all undergraduate students enrolled in Social Studies Education programmes at the Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. A sample of 150 undergraduate students was selected for this study. The sample was drawn from intact classes of Social Studies Education courses offered at the Faculty of Education. The primary data for this research was collected directly from the participants through an instrument called Attitudes towards social studies, which was obtained from a validated questionnaire measuring students' attitudes towards social studies, encompassing cognitive, affective, and behavioural components. Information on student demographics (e.g., age, gender)

were collected from university records. Access to such data was subject to ethical approval and data protection regulations. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques.

Results and Discussion
Table 1: Demographic distribution of the respondents based on gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	55	36.7
Female	95	63.3
Total	200	100.0

Table 1 above reveals the demographic distribution of the respondents based on gender. Fifty-five (36.7%) were male, while 95 (63.3%) were female. This implies that male and female respondents participated in the study, and more females participated.

Research Question 1: How much are innovative teaching strategies employed in teaching Aocial Studies Education?

Table 2: *Innovative teaching strategies employed in teaching Social Studies*

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
	Use of Innovative Teaching Strategies		
1	My Social Studies teacher often uses multimedia tools like videos and animations during lessons.	3.15	1.14
2	I regularly engage in group discussions and collaborative projects in class.	3.40	0.82
3	My lessons are tailored to accommodate different learning styles and preferences.	3.40	0.86
4	Modern technology (e.g., online platforms) is often used to deliver or support classroom instruction.	3.49	0.81
	Weighted Mean	3.36	

Decision: Low: 1.00 – 1.99, Average = 2.00 – 2.99, High = 3.00 – 4.00.

Data from Table 2 reveals the extent to which innovative teaching strategies are employed in teaching social studies. The weighted mean of 3.00 is higher than the cut-off point of 2.50, which implies that the extent to which innovative teaching strategies are employed in teaching Social Studies is high. Specifically the respondent

agreed that Social Studies teacher often uses multimedia tools like videos and animations during lessons (mean = 3.15), I regularly engage in group discussions and collaborative projects in class (mean = 3.40), My lessons are tailored to accommodate different learning styles and preferences (mean = 3.40), and Modern

technology (e.g., online platforms) is often used to deliver or support classroom instruction (mean = 3.49).

Research Question 2: How do student-centered learning approaches influence student engagement in Social Studies?

Table 3: *The influence of student-centered learning approaches on students' engagement in Social Studies*

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1	The teaching methods used allow me to participate and explore ideas independently and actively.	3.55	0.73
2	Problem-solving and critical thinking activities are frequently part of our classroom tasks.	3.41	0.81
3	I often participate in role-plays, simulations, or interactive class exercises.	3.10	0.99
4	I feel empowered to ask questions and share opinions during Social Studies lessons.	3.27	0.98
	Weighted mean	3.33	

Table 3 above revealed the influence of student-centered learning approaches on students' engagement in Social Studies. The weighted mean of 3.33 is greater than the weighted mean of 2.50; this implies that the student-centered learning approaches positively influence students' engagement in social studies. The respondent agreed that the teaching methods used allow me to participate and explore ideas independently and actively (mean = 3.55), Problem-solving and critical thinking activities are frequently part of our classroom tasks (mean = 3.41), I often participate in role-plays, simulations, or interactive class exercises (mean = 3.10) and I feel empowered to ask questions and share opinions during Social Studies lessons (mean = 3.27).

Research Question 3: How do innovative teaching strategies impact students' academic understanding in Social Studies?

Table 4: *The impact of innovative teaching strategies on students' academic understanding in Social Studies*

S/N	Item	Mean	SD
1	I understand Social Studies concepts better since the use of innovative teaching strategies began.	3.45	0.78
2	My performance in tests and assignments has improved due to the teaching methods used.	3.47	0.79
3	I can easily recall and apply concepts learned in Social Studies to real-life situations.	3.40	0.80
4	I am more confident in expressing my views and understanding of Social Studies topics.	3.39	0.92
	Weighted mean	3.43	

Table 4 above reveals the impact of innovative teaching strategies on students' Social Studies academic understanding. The weighted mean of 3.43 is greater than the cut-off point of 2.50, implying that innovative teaching strategies positively impacted students' academic knowledge in social studies. The respondent's agreed with the following items, Social Studies concepts better since the use of innovative teaching strategies began (mean = 3.45), My performance in tests and assignments has improved due to the teaching methods used (mean = 3.47), I can easily recall and

apply concepts learned in Social Studies to real-life situations (mean = 3.40). I am more confident in expressing my views and understanding of Social Studies topics (mean = 3.39).

Table 5: *Innovative teaching methods affect students' engagement, interest and motivation.*

	Attitude and Engagement Towards Social Studies	Mean	SD
1	I look forward to attending Social Studies classes.	3.52	0.66
2	I participate more actively in class discussions than I did before.	3.28	0.93
3	The way Social Studies is taught makes the subject more interesting to me.	3.56	0.72
4	I am motivated to study Social Studies beyond the classroom.	3.47	0.82
	Weighted mean	3.46	

Table 5 above revealed how innovative Teaching methods affect Students' engagement, interest, and motivation. The weighted mean of 3.46 is greater than the cut-off point of 2.50, which implies that innovative teaching methods positively affect students' engagement, interest, and motivation.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed a high level of employment of innovative teaching strategies in Social Studies instruction. Specifically, respondents agreed that their Social Studies teachers frequently use multimedia tools, engage them in group discussions and collaborative projects, tailor lessons to accommodate different learning styles, and integrate modern technology into instruction. This finding suggests a positive trend towards adopting innovative teaching methods in Social Studies at the University of Ilorin. This aligns with calls for a shift from traditional, teacher-centered approaches to more student-centered and engaging pedagogies (Shafi & Masood, 2023). Multimedia tools are consistent with research highlighting the effectiveness of visual aids and interactive simulations in enhancing student understanding and retention (Afify, 2020). Similarly, the emphasis on collaborative learning aligns with social constructivist theories, which posit that

learning is a social process enhanced through interaction and collaboration (Isaacs, 2013). Studies have found that while teachers may report using innovative strategies, their classroom practices may not fully reflect these approaches (Silver et al., 2019). This discrepancy could be due to lack of training, limited resources or institutional constraints. Further qualitative research, such as classroom observations, would be needed to confirm the extent to which ITS are being implemented effectively. The study found out that student-centered learning approaches positively influence student engagement in Social Studies. Respondents agreed that the teaching methods allow them to participate and explore ideas independently, engage in problem-solving and critical thinking activities, participate in interactive exercises, and feel empowered to ask questions and share opinions. This finding supports the well-established link between student-centered learning and increased engagement (Murtonen et al., 2024). When students are given opportunities to actively participate in the learning process, explore their ideas, and contribute to classroom discussions, they are more likely to feel interested in their learning and motivated to succeed. The emphasis on problem-solving and critical thinking aligns with research highlighting the importance of developing these skills for success in the 21st century

(Ahmed, 2024).Studies have suggested that student-centered learning may not be equally effective for all students or in all contexts. Students with weaker academic backgrounds or those accustomed to more structured learning environments may struggle to adapt to student-centered approaches (Riad, 2015). Additionally, the effectiveness of student-centered learning may depend on the teacher's ability to facilitate and manage these activities effectively. The study revealed that innovative teaching strategies positively impact students' academic understanding in social studies. Respondents agreed that they understand Social Studies concepts better since innovative teaching strategies began; their performance in tests and assignments have improved, they can easily recall and apply concepts learned to real-life situations, and they are more confident in expressing their views which was aided and facilitated through group discussion strategy. This finding provides empirical evidence for the effectiveness of innovative teaching strategies in enhancing academic understanding in social studies. The reported improvements in conceptual understanding, performance, and application of knowledge suggest that ITS are helping students to develop a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the subject matter. The increased confidence in expressing views is also a significant outcome, as it indicates that students develop communication skills necessary to participate effectively in civic discourse. While the study positively impacted academic understanding, it is important to acknowledge that the relationship between teaching methods and academic outcomes is complex and multifaceted. Factors such as student motivation, prior knowledge, and learning styles can also play a significant role (Halif et al., 2020). Additionally, the study relied on student self-reports, which may be subject to bias. Further research using objective measures of academic performance, such as standardized tests, would be needed to confirm these findings. The study indicated that innovative teaching methods positively affect students' engagement, interest, and motivation. Respondents agreed that they look forward to attending Social Studies classes, participating more actively in class discussions, finding the subject more interesting, and being motivated to study Social Studies beyond the classroom. This finding underscores the importance of creating engaging and motivating learning environments. When students are interested in the subject matter and feel motivated to learn, they are more likely to invest their time and effort in their studies, leading to improved outcomes. The increased enthusiasm for attending classes and active participation in discussions suggests that ITS are creating a more positive and stimulating learning experience for students. Some research suggests that cultural factors may influence the relationship between teaching methods and student motivation. Students from collectivist cultures may be more motivated by teacher-centered instruction, emphasizing group harmony and respect for authority (Lam, 2023). Therefore, it is important to consider the cultural context when interpreting these findings.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that ITS positively correlates with students' engagement, academic understanding, and attitudes/motivation towards Social Studies. Specifically, the study revealed that Social Studies Lecturers at the University of Ilorin are employing innovative teaching strategies such as multimedia tools, collaborative learning activities, differentiated instruction, and technology integration, to a considerable extent, as perceived by the students. These strategies positively influenced student

engagement by providing active participation, critical thinking, and interactive learning opportunities. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that ITS positively impacted students' academic understanding, as evidenced by improved conceptual understanding, performance in tests and assignments, and the ability to apply knowledge to real-life situations. Finally, ITS enhanced students' attitudes and motivation towards social studies, leading to increased enthusiasm for attending classes, active participation in discussions, and a greater interest in the subject matter. The findings of this study have several important implications for Social Studies Education in Nigeria and beyond: The study reinforces the importance of adopting innovative teaching strategies in Social Studies classrooms. The positive impact of ITS on student learning outcomes suggests that these approaches should be widely promoted and supported. The findings highlight the need for adequate teacher training and professional development in the design, implementation, and assessment of ITS. Teachers must have the knowledge and skills to use these strategies effectively. The study suggests that the Social Studies curriculum should be aligned with ITS principles, encouraging active learning, critical thinking, and real-world application of knowledge. The findings underscore the importance of providing institutional support for ITS, including financial resources, administrative support, and recognition of innovative teaching practices. The study reinforces the value of student-centered learning approaches. Educators can foster a deeper and more meaningful understanding of Social Studies by creating engaging, interactive, and relevant learning environments relevant to students' lives.

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

1. Lecturers should be provided with adequate training and professional development in the design, implementation, and assessment of ITS.
2. Social Studies curriculum should be aligned with ITS principles, encouraging active learning, critical thinking, and real-world application of knowledge.
3. Institutional support for ITS, including financial resources, administrative support, and recognition of innovative teaching practices should be provided.

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