

## **SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTIONAL IMPACTS ON UNDERGRADUATES' DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN KWARA STATE**

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**ABSTRACT:** This study examined the impact of Social Studies instructions on undergraduates' democratic values in tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria. The objectives of this study were to examine the manifestation of democratic values, the adequacy of Social Studies undergraduate benchmark in promoting democratic values, the extent to which Social Studies undergraduate participate in democratic processes and the impacts of Social Studies instruction on the development of democratic values in undergraduates in Kwara State. The population of the study was Social Studies undergraduates in Kwara State. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. 350 Social Studies undergraduates were sampled through the purposive sampling technique. The researcher's designed questionnaire titled "Impact of Social Studies Instruction on Undergraduate Democratic Values Questionnaire" was used as an instrument to elicit data from the respondents. Content validity was used to determine the validity of the instrument with a reliability coefficient of 0.87 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The findings of the study showed that the majority of Social Studies undergraduates in tertiary institutions actively participated in democratic processes. The findings suggested the need for continued emphasis on critical thinking skills in the Social Studies curriculum and the incorporation of community-based projects that promote democratic values and address local societal issues. The study also highlighted the impact of Social Studies instructions on undergraduate democratic values in Kwara State is positive. The study therefore, recommended, among others, that educational institutions should provide students with more opportunities for active participation in student unionism and associations, encouraging them to take leadership roles and engage in campus governance.

**Keywords:** Social Studies Instruction, Impacts, Undergraduates, Democratic Values

### **INTRODUCTION**

Nigeria's electioneering process faces numerous challenges, including voter apathy, electoral violence, and rigging, which hinder democratic participation. Notwithstanding these problems mentioned, individuals are expected to participate effectively in electioneering processes because citizens' awareness and participation in electioneering are germane to every democracy as it helps the government to make decisions, monitor its implementation, and evaluate the outcome of the decisions taken. Olatunde and Orji-Oraemesi (2023) succinctly averred that citizens use their participation to represent and hold their leaders accountable in terms of policy decisions and implementations. What then, has been the level of citizenship participation in electioneering in Nigeria, and how is the knowledge of Social Studies impacting the electorates with regard to their

participation in different processes? Thus, this study assesses the Social Studies curriculum's strength in equipping citizens to participate efficiently in the electioneering process, their challenges, and solutions that would enhance citizens' participation in electioneering processes in Nigeria.

The primary purpose of Social Studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned world (Nzegbulem, 2014). Social Studies equips the learners with values, attitudes and skills to challenges. It imparts civic education, human relations education, environmental education, technological education, socio-cultural education, amongst others. The essence of Social Studies decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse society in an interdependent is to expand the knowledge capability of the learners locally, nationally and at the global level become functional citizens, who are nationally conscious and responsive to their country. Social studies goal is to develop civilized and patriotic citizens.

To actualize the dream of national development, citizens ought to be made to be aware of their rights, privileges, duties and responsibilities, as well as their contributions to enable the state's progress. Social Studies education is a subject used for preparing for mobilizing young learners in schools for the purpose of helping them cultivate an awareness and understanding that would transform them into better citizens with skills, competencies, moral values and reasoned judgments to effectively live, interact, interrelate and contribute positively to the economic, social, political and socio-cultural development of the nation (Mustapha et al (2022). Social Studies was introduced by different nations of the world to help give citizens the right kind of orientation they may need towards national development. However, it appears that in Nigeria today, despite the existence of social studies in the school system, the values of Nigerians are degenerating, traditional institutions are dying down, Nigerians engage in all sorts of intolerance manifested in ethnic chauvinism, Boko Harams violence, ritual killings, militancy, kidnapping, election rigging, thuggery, child trafficking, terrorism and some others. Baale (2020) added that the main focus of Social Studies education is the transformation of the citizens for national transformation.

Moreover, the awareness of the rights and obligations of citizens to the government and society reciprocal government responsibility to her citizenry through the following: make Social Studies could help in preparing Nigerian citizens to be creative, productive and responsive to national development projects or programmes this could also prepare future leaders and followers that will have the interest of the masses and the nation at heart in their local and global pursuits. Social Studies helps in the social reconstruction of the citizens for national development through: the dynamic nature of Social Studies lies fundamentally in its utilitarian values for social reconstruction (Oganwu, & Aina, 2020). Social Studies education inculcates good values to the citizens. It was noted that in the area of patriotism in a concept of Social Studies education as well as the values that Nigerians advocated for, Citizens' love for their country is an important part of citizenship training, which Social Studies education transmits to the young ones. This very patriotism was made by Nigerian patriots like Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Sarduna of Sokoto (Ahmadu Bello) and Herbert Macaulay among others who fought for Nigeria's Independence. Social Studies education could help reduce the incidence of corruption and corrupt practices to the barest minimum.

To this end, the goal of Social Studies is to develop a positive social perception and values among the citizenry underscores the role of Social Studies educators in developing intelligent, responsible and self-directing citizens who are expected to take the lead in building a democratic and indissoluble Nigeria of our desire. Values constitute an indispensable part of education, and that every teacher has a duty to face the issues of values in the classroom. Schools are given the mandate to serve as an agent for cultivating in the young widely held societal norms, standards of behaviour, and ideological preferences, this submission is pivotal to the re-invention of democratic values among students. A youth with desirable democratic values must be concerned with promoting an understanding of the ideals of democracy.

Youths of any society are potential forces to reckon with in that society, and Nigeria not exempted. The youth constitute a large chunk of the decision-making groups in a civilized democratic society. Youths should not be exempted from the democratic process but be made the driving force behind democracy and their participation must not be limited to elections only, but a continuing engagement with the process of democratic governance. There is no doubt that Nigerian youths have contributed immensely to the growth and development of this country, Nigeria in the past. Youths have been involved in the evolution of democracy and advocacy/ entrenchment of good governance and the creation of civil society groups in Nigeria. But the many years of military rule in Nigeria have been marred by uncivil political behaviours that ranged from political apathy to electoral fraud. The attendant effect has been lacked of popular participation, and disengagement of many Nigerians, particularly youths, from political processes. These developments negate the role of citizens in a democracy.

In this situation, a democratic state demands from its citizens, and this suggests weak civil support for democratic values and institutions. So, for the youths to play their expected and functional role as democratic citizens there must be serious participation in the entire democratic process. The decision of the youths to participate or not to participate depends on their awareness, adherence and internalization of these democratic values and this has serious consequences on democracy and the general polity. They are ethos that regulates the extent, level and involvement of participants in a democracy. They are in turn, determined by the factors of or the interplay of political culture, civic or citizenship education and the political experiences of the society in question (Adam et al, 2023).

Democracy is a system of governance that guarantees representative government, power to the people, fundamental rights, participatory engagement, checks and balances, impartiality administration, and equality. The presence of democracy in a given state can be measured by the state's practice of democratic values – the fundamental beliefs and constitutional principles which guide the practices of a democratic government– such as justice and equality, freedom and liberty, rule of law, separation of powers, and respect of human rights. Current observations show that democracy is facing challenges in recent times; there are increasing reports of democratic recession and backsliding across advanced and developing countries. In Nigeria, democracy, although it has not been well practised since its adoption, has receded to the barest minimum, with Nigeria described as a hybrid regime with a score of 4.11 and rank of 107 in the 2021 Democracy Index (Economist Intelligence, 2021). “Nigeria’s democracy suffers many issues such as violations of human rights, poor attitude to work, extortion and bribery, corruption, and varying conflicts”

(Obiagu, 2019) and abuse of separation of powers, with rife electoral violence/malpractices. The seeming silence of the citizens on these democratic issues that hamper the enjoyment of the advantages of democracy (i.e., economic development, human development, peace, and security) is more troubling.

Due to the importance of democracy to development, efforts ranging from the adoption of governance transparency policies to electoral reforms, economic empowerment and increasing citizens' engagement in civic activities are pursued to improve the practice of democratic values. Of particular concern to this paper are educational efforts towards improving citizens' democratic behaviours. These efforts range from formal to informal citizenship, voter, or human rights education programmes and awareness campaigns (Egbule, 2020).

The aspect of education that would be responsible for the training known as social studies, was introduced into the school curriculum to inculcate critical thinking, problem solving, social perception and democratic values. The onus is on Social Studies educators to build in the Nigerian youth, the mental and intellectual power to recognize societal problems; ask good questions and develop robust investigations into them; consider the consequences and possible solutions; separate evidence-based claims from popular opinions or perceptions; and act upon what they learn, different from popular perception.

The youths need strong and unwavering tools for, and values of, clear and critical thinking in order to traverse successfully the world of values and democratic process in leadership. It is in support of this background that the researcher intends to investigate the impact of social studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values in Kwara State. The indifference of the perception of Nigerian youth towards democratic values has proven to be a major obstacle that has mar democratic consolidation in Nigeria, which has got many concern citizens worried. Thus, it is an obstacle to youth's positive participation in our democracy. This has contributed to both the elites and youths surprisingly showing weak commitment to basic symbols and values of democracy. Hence, there is a serious manifestation of greed, inordinate ambition to win power, thuggery, dishonesty, personalization of political/public offices, insincerity, disrespects for others, intolerance, among others in our national polity.

So, for any democracy to be sustained, it is essential that its citizenry, mostly youths, possess the requisite perception, demonstrate values, and display the behaviours that accord democracy. But in Nigeria, the reverse has been the case among many youths. To participate and do so well in democratic activities, the youths must possess a good grasp of democratic values which will aid, guide and direct their conduct in the discharge of their civic responsibilities. That is, democracy is nurtured and sustained only when democratic values are rooted in the minds and actions of citizens.

In a country trying to consolidate democracy after a long history of authoritarian military rule, strategies for mobilizing people for popular participation and effective engagement in the electoral process have to be well-conceptualized and carefully designed. In doing this, peoples' perceptions and attitudes have to be studied, analysed, understood and taken into consideration. Political participation and development are both topical and very complementary to each other as a people-centred concept. Power, which is the element of democracy or political participation, is a strategic

driver of development because development has ever remained a product of a number of interactions that are ideological with commitment and influence (Subba, 2014). As development is seen as an indicator of democratic governance, so is democratic power seen as a vital requirement for development. Therefore, to get meaningful development in society, there should be active and significant participation of the citizens and the commitment of the government. In this regard, education will help people to understand the ills of society and to develop a vision of a better world hinged on the principles of social justice, religious tolerance, improved human rights, poverty alleviation/reduction, and abhorrence of corruption in the society.

### **Democratic Values in Higher Education**

Higher education institutions play a pivotal role in cultivating democratic values among students, preparing them to engage actively in democratic societies. Historically, fostering citizenship has been a core mission of higher education, emphasizing the development of civic responsibility and social engagement. However, contemporary challenges, such as increasing demographic diversity and exposure to divergent worldviews, necessitate a renewed focus on civic learning to strengthen democracy (Finley, 2021). Deliberative pedagogical approaches, inspired by scholars like Paulo Freire, advocate for dialogical methods that encourage critical thinking and active participation, essential for democratic engagement (Joorst, 2021). Moreover, the Talloires Declaration underscores the commitment of higher education institutions to social responsibility and civic engagement, highlighting their obligation to contribute to the public good through teaching, research, and service. Despite these initiatives, critiques suggest that prestigious universities may fall short in realizing their democratic potential, calling for increased public investment in democratic education accessible to all (Levine, 2023). Therefore, it is imperative for higher education institutions to recommit to their civic missions, employing innovative pedagogies and institutional frameworks that promote democratic values and active citizenship.

Students are expected to acquire an education which will enable them function effectively in a democratic society. Such education is expected to equip them intellectually to be able to reflect on their own actions and how such actions affect their immediate neighbours; seek to understand their problems and be able to analyse them with a view to relating them to the problems of others; attempt to understand their cultural backgrounds and those of their immediate neighbours, and be able to integrate the cultural values in these different backgrounds for the purpose of sustainable development (Ogundiran, 2020; Olokooba & Abdulsalam, 2020).

### **Social Studies and Civic Engagement**

Social Studies education plays a pivotal role in fostering civic engagement by equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for active participation in democratic societies. Integrating current events into Social Studies curricula has been shown to enhance students' civic knowledge and engagement, promoting critical thinking and empathy (Hatcher, 2021). Furthermore, community-based learning initiatives within higher education have been linked to positive student outcomes, including increased civic engagement and social responsibility (Finley, 2021). However, socio-economic inequalities can impact individuals' levels of civic engagement, with higher inequality potentially undermining participation in civil society (Alvaredo, et al.,



2020). Therefore, it is essential for educators to implement pedagogical strategies that promote critical thinking, empathy, and active participation, thereby preparing students to contribute meaningfully to their communities and the broader democratic process.

Education should be geared towards the development of the physical, mental and spiritual potentialities of the individuals. In short, education should concern itself with the cultivation of the whole-person, and this is where Social Studies education is relevant. It is clear that the ultimate goal of Social Studies is to inculcate in learners, good citizenship with full emphasis on the development of rational habits and humane attitudes that will enable individual learners make informed decisions about personal and social matters. Social studies is concerned with how many lives in a defined physical environment (village, town and city) and how he goes about everyday activities in relation to other people (Ogundiran, 2020).

What is substantial is that nation-building is geared at promoting political, economic, social and technological stability of nations. It is a process of improving the democratic process, social relations and welfare of the citizens. However, it is paramount that democratic order and values promote social stability, sustainable development and sustainable solutions to national tasks and problems which are pre-conditions for effective nation-building and political stability.

Democracy is a fundamental principle of governance that promotes citizens' participation, equality, and respect for human rights. Social Studies instruction plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' understanding and perception of democratic values, as it encompasses the study of social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of society. Kwara State, has a diverse undergraduate's population from various cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds. It is essential to examine how social studies instruction cultivates democratic values in students, as it directly affects their engagement in democratic processes and their ability to contribute positively to society. However, this particular research on the impact of Social Studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values in Kwara State is necessary. There is a need to address this gap in knowledge and provide empirical evidence to inform educational policies and practices.

There is inadequate empirical research investigating the impact of Social Studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values in Kwara State. Existing studies primarily focus on general aspects of democratic education, neglecting the context-specific factors and experiences of Kwara State undergraduates. The effectiveness of different instructional approaches in promoting democratic values among undergraduates in Kwara State becomes empirical. Kwara State's diverse cultural and socio-economic landscape may influence students' perceptions and understanding of democratic values.

The extent to which social studies instructions affect undergraduate democratic values in Kwara State has not been thoroughly examined, despite the crucial role these values play in shaping a nation's political landscape. There is a lack of clarity regarding how undergraduate students in Kwara State are developing and internalizing democratic values through their social studies instructions. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of social studies instructions on undergraduate democratic values in Kwara State, with a focus on understanding the incorporation of democratic values in the curriculum and evaluating the effectiveness of teaching methods.

Key sub-issues to be explored include the adequacy of democratic value inclusion in Social Studies curricula, the effectiveness of pedagogical approaches used by instructors to teach democratic values, the level of engagement and active participation of undergraduate students in discussions related to democratic values, the attitudes and perceptions of students towards democratic values after receiving Social Studies instructions, and the influence of socio-cultural factors on the development of democratic values among undergraduate students. By addressing these sub-issues, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of Social Studies instructions in nurturing democratic values among undergraduate students in Kwara State and contribute to the advancement of democratic citizenship within the state.

Despite the crucial role of Social Studies in fostering democratic values, there is a growing concern about its effectiveness in shaping undergraduates' civic attitudes and participation in Kwara State's tertiary institutions. Many students demonstrate limited awareness of democratic principles, such as civic responsibility, human rights, and active political engagement. This raises questions about the instructional methods, content delivery, and overall impact of Social Studies education in instilling these values. Additionally, factors such as inadequate teaching resources, outdated curricula, and lecturers' pedagogical approaches may hinder the subject's effectiveness. If Social Studies fails to impart democratic values effectively, undergraduates may graduate without the critical thinking skills and civic consciousness needed to contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's democratic development. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the instructional impact of Social Studies on undergraduates' democratic values in tertiary institutions in Kwara State, with a view to identifying gaps and recommending improvements.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main aim of this study was to investigate the impact of Social Studies instruction on undergraduates' democratic values in Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the following:

1. Manifestation of democratic values in undergraduates' attitudes.
2. Adequacy of Social studies undergraduate benchmark in promoting democratic values in students.
3. Extent to which Social Studies undergraduate students participate in democratic processes.
4. Impacts of Social Studies instruction on the development of democratic values in undergraduates.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were raised to guide the study.

1. What are democratic values manifest in undergraduates' attitudes?
2. How adequate is the Social Studies undergraduate benchmark minimum academic standard in promoting democratic values?
3. To what extent do Social Studies undergraduates internalize instructional experiences gained on democratic values?

4. What are the impacts of Social Studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values?

## **METHODS**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Descriptive survey studies use questionnaire or interviews to collect evidence from people about themselves such as their attitudes and beliefs, demographics, past or intended behaviour and other facts. Descriptive survey research is an approach of descriptive research that blends quantitative and qualitative data to provide you with relevant and accurate information. Descriptive survey design was suitable for this study because it used to collect data purposely to answer the research questions. The questionnaire was administered to generate data to determine the prevalent democratic values possessed by undergraduate students, extent to which undergraduate students see social studies instruction as a benchmark for developing democratic values, the impacts of Social Studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values in Kwara State.

The population of the study was all undergraduates in universities in Kwara State. There are 11 universities in the state. One federal, 2 state and 8 private universities. A simple random was employed to select one state and one private university together with a federal university in the state. The simple random sampling technique was also use to select 350 Social Studies undergraduates from universities. The study sample of the was 350 Social Studies undergraduates in the universities covered 100, 200, 300 and 400 level students from Universities in Kwara State. A sample of 350 students was drawn as respondents in the study.

The research employed a structured questionnaire to collect data from Social Student undergraduates. The questionnaire was titled “Social Studies Instructional Impacts on Undergraduate Democratic Value Questionnaire (SSIUDVQ)”. The questionnaire has Section A and B. Section A comprised the demographic information of the respondents. Section B contained six sub-sections with a Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Sub-Section A contained structured items that elicited information on the “Manifestation of democratic values among undergraduates”. Sub-Section B contained structured items that elicited information on the “Adequacy of Social studies curriculum to enhance/promote democratic values among undergraduates”. Sub-Section C contained structured items that elicited information on the “Extent to which Social Studies undergraduates internalise instructional experiences gained on democratic values”. Sub-Section D contained structured items that elicited information on “Impacts of Social Studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values”.

The face validity of the instrument was determined by giving the questionnaire to three experts in the field of test, evaluation and measurement who went through it and made relevant corrections, modifications and suggestions which were incorporated in the final version before the administering of the questionnaire for the research study. Reliability of instrument refers to the degree to which an instrument yields consisted results when it is administered at different number of times and it is also the consistency, accuracy and stability of a measuring instrument. Reliability implies that results obtained from the questionnaire should be the same for different number of time if it is administered. To determine the reliability of the instrument test-re-test was adopted, where the questionnaire was administered on 30 individuals within an interval of 2 weeks. These



30 individuals were not part of the selected sample for this study. The reliability coefficient was determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient to correlate the two results obtained in order to determine the reliability level of the instrument which was 0.87. The data was obtained through the means of a well-structured questionnaire. The Undergraduates that were used as samples for the study was contacted by the researcher. The researcher explained the purpose of the questionnaire to the undergraduates and also made them understand that whatever the information given would not be used against them, but to be treated as confidential. Three hundred and fifty (350) copies of the questionnaire were administered to Social Studies undergraduates. E-format through Goggle Forms as the questionnaire was made to achieve high and fast response rate. The research questions were answered using mean, standard deviation and mean ranking order.

## RESULTS

The research questions were analysed using mean, standard deviation and rank order decision.

Research Question 1: What are democratic values manifest in undergraduates' attitude?

**Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and Rank Order of the Manifestation of Democratic Values in Undergraduates**

S/N	Manifestation of democratic values	Mean	SD	Rank
1.	I actively participate in democratic processes.	2.68	0.89	5 <sup>th</sup>
2.	I support the idea of equal rights and opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their background.	3.69	0.59	1 <sup>st</sup>
3.	I feel comfortable expressing my ideas and opinions freely, without fear of judgment or reprisal.	3.07	0.96	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4.	I am open to hearing and considering different perspectives before forming my own decisions.	3.19	0.93	2 <sup>nd</sup>
5.	I believe in the importance of holding those in positions of power accountable for their actions without exercising any form of immunity.	3.00	0.93	4 <sup>th</sup>

Table 1 presents the responses to five specific statements that address manifestation of democratic values. Statements 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> are prevalent manifestation of democratic values as their means are above the 2.50 benchmark. This implies that the prevalent manifestation of democratic values (I actively participate in democratic processes, I support the idea of equal rights and opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their background, I feel comfortable expressing my ideas and opinions freely, without fear of judgment or reprisal, I am open to hearing and considering different perspectives before forming my own decisions, I believe in the importance of holding those in positions of power accountable for their actions without exercising any form of immunity.) were the manifested democratic values.

Research Question 2: How adequate is Social Studies undergraduate benchmark minimum academic standard in promoting democratic values?

**Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and Rank Order of the Adequacy of Social Studies undergraduate benchmark minimum academic standard in promoting democratic values**

S/N	Adequacy of Social studies curriculum to enhance/promote democratic values	Mean	SD	Rank
1.	The Social Studies curriculum includes topics that emphasizes the importance of democratic values, such as equality, justice and human rights	3.67	0.79	3 <sup>rd</sup>
2.	The Social Studies Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard adequately prepares students to be informed and responsible citizens in a democratic society	3.51	0.83	4 <sup>th</sup>
3.	The Social Studies curriculum includes diverse perspectives and historical narratives, fostering an appreciation for multiculturalism and inclusivity, which are essential in a democratic society	3.86	0.62	1 <sup>st</sup>
4.	The Social Studies instructions in my school did not provide opportunities for students to engage in community-based projects that promote democratic values and address local societal issues	2.26	0.92	5 <sup>th</sup>
5.	The Social Studies curriculum includes lessons that critically analyse historical events and governmental policies to encourage students to think critically about democratic decision-making	3.71	0.74	2 <sup>nd</sup>

Table 2 presents the responses to five specific statements that address the adequacy of the Social Studies benchmarks to enhance or promote democratic values. Statements 3, 5, 1 and 2, which were ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> respectively, are the statements that shows the adequacy of Social Studies curriculum to enhance or promote democratic values as their means are above the 2.50 benchmark. However, the least of the statements was statement 4 which was below the benchmark of 2.5. This implies that all identified statements on adequacy of Social Studies curriculum to enhance or promote democratic values except statement 4 (The Social Studies instructions in my school did not provide opportunities for students to engage in community-based projects that promote democratic values and address local societal issues) are prevalent adequacy of Social Studies curriculum to enhance or promote democratic values.

Research Question 3: To what extent do Social Studies undergraduates internalise instructional experiences gained on democratic values?

**Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and Rank Order of the extent to which Social Studies undergraduates internalise instructional experiences gained on democratic values**

S/N	The extent to which Social Studies undergraduates internalise instructional experiences	Mean	SD	Rank
1.	The instructional experiences helped me understand the importance of democratic values	3.15	0.89	3 <sup>rd</sup>
2.	The instructional experiences encouraged me to critically analyse democratic values	3.23	0.87	2 <sup>nd</sup>

3.	The instructional experiences equipped me with the necessary knowledge to participate in democratic processes	3.09	0.92	5 <sup>th</sup>
4.	The instructional experiences emphasised the significance of diversity and inclusion in a democratic society	3.13	0.91	4 <sup>th</sup>
5.	The instructional experiences promoted an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society	3.24	0.85	1 <sup>st</sup>

Table 3 above presents the responses to five specific statements that address the extent to which social studies undergraduates internalise instructional experiences gained on democratic values. Statements, 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> are the prevalent extent to which Social Studies undergraduates internalize instructional experiences gained on democratic values as their means are above the 2.50 benchmark. This implies that the prevalent extent to which Social Studies undergraduates internalise instructional experiences gained on democratic values (The instructional experiences helped me understand the importance of democratic values, the experiences encouraged me to critically analyse democratic values, the instructional experiences equipped me with the necessary knowledge to participate in democratic processes, the instructional experiences emphasised the significance of diversity and inclusion in a democratic society and the instructional experiences promoted an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society.) were the extent to which Social Studies undergraduates internalize instructional experiences gained on democratic values.

Research Question 4: What are the impacts of Social Studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values?

**Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation and Rank Order of the impacts of Social Studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values**

S/N	Impacts of Social Studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values	Mean	SD	Rank
1.	Social studies instruction fosters respect for diverse perspectives and opinions in a democratic society.	3.09	0.80	1 <sup>st</sup>
2.	Social Studies instruction encourages critical thinking about social and political issues in a democratic context.	3.11	0.86	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3.	Social Studies instruction influenced my willingness to engage in democratic practices, such as voting and community involvement.	2.88	0.91	5 <sup>th</sup>
4.	Social Studies instruction promotes a greater understanding of the historical context and development of democratic values.	3.05	0.81	4 <sup>th</sup>
5.	Social Studies instruction enhances awareness of democratic institutions and processes.	3.11	0.81	2 <sup>nd</sup>

The results from Table 4 show the impacts of Social Studies instruction on undergraduate democratic values. Statements 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> are the prevalent impacts as their means are the above 2.50. Therefore, the prevalent impacts of Social Studies instruction are the main ones on undergraduate democratic values.

## **DISCUSSION**

The study found a positive relationship between exposure to Social Studies instructions and the development of democratic values among undergraduate students. Through in-depth surveys and analysis, it was found that students who have undergone such instructions tend to exhibit a greater understanding of democratic principles, a higher level of civic engagement, and increased support for democratic processes. This finding aligns with the finding of Adam et al (2023), who affirmed that education, particularly in subjects like Social Studies, plays a vital role in shaping individuals' democratic values. In the journey to strengthen democratic values among undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Social Studies instructions have emerged as a valuable tool. However, continued research and targeted interventions are necessary to ensure that these values are nurtured effectively, leading to a more informed, engaged, and democratic society.

The research findings revealed that Social Studies instruction plays a significant role in shaping the democratic values of undergraduate students in Kwara State. The majority of the respondents expressed strong support for democratic values such as freedom of speech, inclusion, and collaboration. This finding was consistent with the finding of Ogunjimi (2020), who suggested that Social Studies courses have a positive influence on students' democratic attitudes and beliefs. Providing opportunities for students to participate in student unionism and association was found to be highly favoured among respondents; this indicates that Social Studies instruction may be contributing to a sense of civic engagement and activism among students. Support for freedom of speech and expression on campus was also widespread. This aligns with the idea that Social Studies instruction can foster an environment where students feel comfortable expressing their views and engaging in open dialogue. Promoting diversity and inclusion received significant support, reflecting the idea that Social Studies instruction encourages students to appreciate and value diversity in all aspects of university education. Facilitating collaboration between students from different backgrounds and ideologies through group projects and assignments was highly endorsed. This highlights the potential of Social Studies instruction to break down barriers and promote cooperation among diverse groups.

It is crucial to acknowledge the presence of variations in the impact. Factors such as the quality of instruction, teaching methods, and individual student engagement play significant roles. This was in line with study of Baale (2020) who discovered that there were several factors that enhance the effectiveness of Social Studies instructions.

The findings of the study also highlighted the impact of Social Studies instructions was generally positive; the findings highlight the significant role of Social Studies instruction in shaping the democratic values of undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Kwara State. This was also consistent with the finding of Mustapha (2020), who discovered that Social Studies and other social sciences subjects promote democratic principles, fostering active participation, and encouraging collaboration; educational institutions and policymakers can contribute to the development of responsible and engaged citizens who will contribute positively to society.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that the impact of Social Studies instructions on undergraduate democratic values in Kwara State is positive, contributing to a better understanding of democratic principles and increased civic engagement among students. However, regional variations highlight the need for targeted educational strategies. While this study has limitations, it underscores the importance of Social Studies education in nurturing democratic values. In the journey to strengthen democratic values among undergraduate students in Kwara State, Social Studies instructions have emerged as a valuable tool. However, continued research and targeted interventions are necessary to ensure that these values are nurtured effectively, leading to a more informed, engaged, and democratic society.

## Recommendations

The following were recommended based on the findings of the study.

1. Students should be given more opportunities for active participation in student unionism and associations, encouraging them to take leadership roles and engage in campus governance.
2. Promote diversity and inclusion through initiatives such as cultural exchange programs, diversity training, and inclusive course content.
3. Foster collaboration among students from different backgrounds by incorporating group projects and assignments into the curriculum and encouraging teamwork.
4. Promote partnerships between universities and community organisations to create opportunities for students to engage in real-world democratic processes.

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