

Nigerian Social Studies In-Service Teachers' Perceived Challenges of Using the Flipped Classroom Method (FCM) of Teaching and the Needed Coping Strategies

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Abstract

This study investigates the challenges Nigerian Social Studies in-service teachers face in implementing the flipped classroom method and explores strategies for overcoming these barriers. The flipped classroom approach shifts instructional content delivery outside the classroom, reserving class time for active learning, and has gained global traction for enhancing student engagement. However, in Nigeria, integrating this model is hindered by inadequate technological infrastructure, unreliable internet connectivity, insufficient teacher training, and cultural preferences for teacher-centred instruction. Using a mixed-methods design, data were collected from a survey of 100 in-service teachers and interviews with 20 pre-service teachers participating in a government-sponsored professional development workshop. Results show that 63% of respondents have little or no exposure to the flipped classroom method, citing challenges such as limited access to digital tools, resource constraints, difficulty motivating students, and assessment complexities. Despite these obstacles, most teachers expressed readiness for ongoing professional development and a willingness to adopt innovative methodologies. Statistical analysis showed a significant link between teacher exposure to the flipped classroom approach and improvements in student engagement and academic achievement. The findings highlight the urgent need for systemic support, continuous training, and improved access to educational technology. The study recommends focused institutional investment in professional development, collaborative teaching practices, and integrating flipped classroom skills into national teacher preparation policies to support effective adoption and scaling in Nigerian schools.

Keywords: Nigeria, Social Studies, In-service teachers, Flipped classroom method, Teaching challenges, Coping strategies

1. Introduction

The field of education is constantly evolving, driven by advancements in technology, pedagogical research, and learners' changing needs. In recent years, the flipped classroom concept has gained significant attention as an innovative approach to teaching and learning.

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The flipped classroom is described by Lag & Gram Seale (2019) as a teaching model that moves most of the teacher-centred instruction out of the classroom to free up time in the classroom for more student-centred learning activities.

The flipped classroom model reverses traditional teaching by having students first engage with instructional materials like videos or readings at home, then applying that knowledge through collaborative activities in class. This approach transforms classroom time from passive lectures to active learning, allowing educators to focus on guiding students through hands-on problem-solving and discussions. By shifting content delivery outside class hours, the method creates opportunities for deeper engagement, personalized instruction, and development of critical thinking skills.

However, its success depends on reliable technology access, well-designed pre-class materials, and strategies to ensure student preparation. When implemented effectively, the flipped classroom fosters a more interactive, student-centered learning environment that enhances both understanding and retention of course material.

Like many others, the Nigerian education system is grappling with the need to adapt to the demands of the 21st century. Traditional teacher-centred approaches often limit students' active participation, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Recognising the potential of the flipped classroom method to address these limitations, Nigerian educators have begun to explore its implementation in various subjects, including Social Studies.

As a multidisciplinary field, Social Studies plays a critical role in shaping students' understanding of their society, culture, and civic responsibilities. Pre-service teachers can create a more interactive and student-centred learning environment by adopting the flipped classroom method in Social Studies instruction. However, successfully integrating this method requires careful consideration of the challenges that may arise during its implementation.

While the flipped classroom method has gained popularity in many parts of the world, its implementation and effectiveness may vary across different educational contexts. In Nigeria, as in many other countries, the success of educational reforms heavily relies on teachers' readiness and acceptance. In this study, we focus specifically on the challenges faced by Nigerian Social Studies in-service teachers when adopting the flipped classroom method and explore the coping strategies they might want to employ to overcome these challenges.

2. Statement of the problem

Despite the potential benefits, adopting the flipped classroom method faces numerous challenges, particularly in the Nigerian context. Pre-service teachers developing their teaching skills and pedagogical knowledge may encounter various obstacles when implementing this innovative approach. These challenges could stem from inadequate technological infrastructure, limited access to reliable internet connectivity, insufficient training and exposure to flipped classroom strategies, and cultural factors that influence teaching and learning practices.

In recent years, the flipped classroom teaching method has become an innovative pedagogical approach that encourages active learning, student engagement, and self-directed learning. While this method has been adopted worldwide with positive outcomes in various educational contexts, its application in the training of Nigerian Social Studies in-service teachers presents a unique set of challenges. This study aims to investigate the perceived challenges faced by Nigerian Social Studies in-service teachers when using the flipped classroom method and identify the coping strategies needed to enhance its effectiveness.

Adopting the flipped classroom approach in the preparation of in-service teachers holds great promise for improving the quality of teacher education in Nigeria, but its implementation is not without difficulties. As these future educators transit from traditional,

teacher-centered classrooms to a more student-centered and technology-driven pedagogical model, they encounter various challenges that may hinder successful implementation. These challenges could stem from a lack of experience with the flipped classroom method, limited access to necessary resources and technology, cultural and contextual factors, and individual learning preferences among pre-service teachers.

Understanding Nigerian Social Studies in-service teachers' specific challenges when implementing the flipped classroom method is crucial to developing effective coping strategies. By addressing these challenges and identifying appropriate coping mechanisms, this study seeks to bridge the gap between the potential benefits of the flipped classroom method and its successful integration into the teacher education system in Nigeria.

By identifying these challenges, educational policymakers, teacher educators, and other stakeholders can develop targeted coping strategies to enhance in-service teachers' readiness and ability to utilise this approach effectively. Consequently, this research will enhance teacher training programmes and, ultimately, the quality of education in Nigerian schools.

3. Research objectives

The primary objective of this study is to explore the perceived challenges faced by Nigerian Social Studies in-service teachers when utilising the flipped classroom method. Specifically, the study aims to:

- Determine the in-service teachers' level of awareness and competence in flipped classroom utilisation.
- Identify the key challenges social studies pre-service teachers encountered in Nigeria while implementing the flipped classroom method.
- Examine the relationship between pre-service teachers' level of exposure to the flipped classroom method and their perceived challenges and coping strategies.
- Examine in-service teachers' coping strategies in dealing with these challenges.
- Provide recommendations and practical strategies to support in-service teachers in overcoming the identified challenges.

4. Significance of the study

This research holds significant implications for the field of education in Nigeria. The study aims to contribute to the existing knowledge on teacher professional development and instructional practices by investigating the challenges social studies in-service teachers face in using the flipped classroom method. The findings will provide valuable insights for teacher educators, policymakers, and educational institutions to design targeted interventions and support mechanisms that can enhance the successful implementation of the flipped classroom method.

Additionally, this study will shed light on the challenges faced within the Nigerian context, considering factors such as limited resources, technological constraints, and cultural influences. The results will inform the development of contextually relevant coping strategies and interventions that can empower pre-service teachers to overcome these challenges and effectively utilise the flipped classroom method in their future classrooms.

This research aims to bridge the knowledge gap regarding Nigerian social studies pre-service teachers' challenges when adopting the flipped classroom method. Understanding these challenges and identifying coping strategies can pave the way for a more effective and student-centred approach to teaching and learning in Nigerian classrooms.

It will provide insights into pre-service teachers' challenges when implementing the flipped classroom method in the Nigerian context. The findings will help teacher educators and policymakers understand the support and resources that pre-service teachers need to use the flipped classroom method effectively. The study will also inform the development of professional development programmes for pre-service teachers to enhance their skills and confidence in using the flipped classroom method.

5. Research questions

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived challenges of using the flipped classroom teaching method among Nigeria Social Studies in-service teachers?
2. What coping strategies do in-service teachers employ to overcome the challenges of using the flipped classroom method?
3. What is the relationship between in-service teachers' exposure to flipped classroom method usage and their confidence in the classroom?
4. What is the relationship between in-service teachers' level of exposure to flipped classroom method usage and students' engagement in learning?

The study's independent variables are exposure to the flipped classroom method and use of coping strategies, while the dependent variables are perceived challenges, confidence, student engagement, and achievement.

6. Methodology

6.1. Methods

The study adopted a mixed-methods research design that combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of how teachers experience and respond to the use of the flipped classroom method in Social Studies instruction. The design allowed both numerical data and personal accounts to be collected and interpreted to give depth to the findings

6.2. Participants

The target population comprised Social Studies in-service teachers in Lagos State. A subset of 20 pre-service teachers from five Education Districts was selected for an interview with a semi-structured instrument. A total of 100 in-service teachers were selected through a simple random sampling technique, ensuring that participants had an equal chance of being included in the study (20 pre-service teachers drawn from five Education Districts in Lagos State were purposively selected for interview). This approach was intended to capture perspectives from both practising and trainee teachers.

6.3. Procedure

A three-part instrument with interview questions focusing on exploring the in-service teachers' experiences with the flipped classroom method, their challenges, and the strategies they use to overcome them was used to collect the needed data. A survey questionnaire was administered to 100 Social Studies in-service teachers attending an instructional delivery skill enhancement training workshop sponsored by the Lagos State Government in Nigeria.

Data collection took place during a state-sponsored professional training workshop on instructional delivery skills organised for Social Studies teachers by the Lagos State Government. The questionnaire was distributed to the 100 in-service teachers in attendance, while individual interviews were conducted with the selected in-service teachers. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The study sought to explore teachers' exposure to the flipped classroom approach, the obstacles they encountered in practice, and the strategies they employed to overcome those challenges.

6.4. Results and analysis

The collected data were collated and subjected to analysis using frequency counts, t-test and analysis of variance.

Table 1. Demographic information of the research respondents

Gender	Male F (%)
	57 (57)
	Female F (%)
	43 (43)
Age Range	18-24 years - 13 (9%)
	25-30 years - 66 (47%)
	31-35 years – 43 (31%)
	36 years and above- 18 (13%)
Educational Background	Bachelor's Degree -51 (36%)
	Master's Degree – 67 (49%)
	Others – 21 (15%)
Teaching Experience 0-1 year 2-5 years 6-10 years 11 years and Above	f (%)
	08 (8)
	14 (14)
	10 (10)
	68 (68)
Level of Exposure to Flipped Classroom Method High Exposure Low Exposure No Exposure	f (%)
	08 (08)
	29 (29)
	63 (63)

Table 2. In-service teachers’ perceived challenges of using the flipped classroom method

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The flipped classroom method requires significant preparation time before each class.	28(20%)	21(15%)	4(3%)	29(21%)	57(41%)
2	The flipped classroom method requires access to reliable technology and internet connectivity.	17(11.9%)	13(9.1%)	19(13.3%)	12(8.4%)	80(57.3%)
3	I face difficulties in motivating students to engage with pre-class materials.	67(47.6%)	26(18.9%)	4(2.8%)	20(14%)	23(16.8%)
4	The flipped classroom method poses challenges in managing student participation and collaboration during in-class activities.	22(15.4%)	14(9.8%)	6(4.2%)	15(10.5%)	84(60.1%)
5	I find it challenging to create or find suitable pre-class instructional materials for the flipped classroom.	11(8.1%)	24(16.9%)	16(11.5%)	43(30.4%)	46(33.1%)
6	The flipped classroom method requires a shift in my teaching style and instructional approach.	35(24.8%)	14(9.8%)	7(5.3%)	28(20.3%)	56(39.8%)
7	I face challenges in assessing and evaluating students’ understanding and progress in a flipped classroom setting.	29(21%)	17(11.9%)	10(7%)	33(23.8%)	51(36.4%)
8	The flipped classroom method poses challenges in addressing the diverse learning needs and abilities of students.	21(14.7%)	13(9.1%)	4(2.8%)	64(45.5%)	39(28%)
9	I face difficulties in effectively integrating technology tools and resources into the flipped classroom.	16(11.2%)	15(10.5%)	12(8.4%)	55(39.2%)	43(30.8%)
10	The flipped classroom method requires additional support and training for successful implementation.	12(8.4%)	17(11.9%)	2(1.4%)	47(33.6%)	63(44.8%)

Table 3. Copyright strategies

	I do not at all	Seldom	Not Sure	Always Ready
Seek support and advice from my colleagues who have experience with the flipped classroom method.	55(39.2%)	16(11.2%)	5(3.5%)	65(46.1%)
Explore and implement alternative teaching methods to adapt to the challenges of the flipped classroom.	33(23.8%)	15(10.5%)	2(1.4%)	90(64.3%)
Actively engage in professional development activities related to the flipped classroom method.	16(11.2%)	30(21.7%)	0(0%)	94(67.1%)
Regularly reflect on my teaching practices and make adjustments based on student feedback.	11(7.7%)	36(25.9%)	8(5.6%)	85(60.8%)
Collaborate with other teachers or educators to share ideas and strategies for using the flipped classroom method.	73(52.1%)	23(16.4%)	2(1.4%)	42(30.1%)

Table 4. Relationship between teachers’ level of exposure to FCM, confidence level and level of students’ engagement in learning

SUMMARY						
Groups and Frequency	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
High Level of Exposure - 71	3	227	75.66666667	296.3333333		
Low Level of Exposure -33	3	133	44.33333333	4.333333333		
No Level of Exposure - 36	3	69	23	259		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	4210.666667	2	2105.333333	11.28528886	0.00926183	5.14325285

Within Groups	1119.333 333	6	186.5555556			
Total	5330	8				

6.5. Discussion

Findings from Table 1 revealed much information about the respondents and other variables. On gender representation, the survey revealed a male-dominated sample (57%), which may reflect existing gender imbalances in teaching staff or participation patterns.

Respondents' professional backgrounds revealed that more than half (68%) reported more than 11 years of teaching experience, indicating responses primarily came from seasoned and experienced practitioners. Mid-career teachers (6-10 years) accounted for only 10%, while those with 5 and fewer than 5 years of experience constituted only 22%. Hence, this skew towards experienced teachers means that findings primarily represent established teaching perspectives.

Regarding teachers' exposure to the Flipped Classroom Method (FCM), close to two-thirds of the respondents (63%) of the respondents reported no experience with flipped classroom methods, while just 29 % demonstrated substantial familiarity. This disparity underscores the need for enhanced training programmes and institutional backing for modern teaching approaches.

The data suggest that, despite respondents' experience, many teachers are unfamiliar with FCM. This could be due to insufficient professional development opportunities or resistance to changing traditional teaching methods.

From Table 2, the respondents identified several major obstacles, ranked by severity. 62% had an "Agree/Strongly Agree" response on preparation time. Their responses revealed that developing pre-class materials (videos, readings, quizzes) requires substantial effort. Many teachers may lack the time or institutional support to create high-quality resources.

Technology and internet dependency were also rated as challenges, with a 65.7% rating. Reliable technology access is crucial for FCM, yet many schools or students may lack infrastructure, and teachers in low-resource settings may face additional barriers. 66.5% of the respondents did not see student motivation as a challenge (Disagree), but 30.8% did. This result is a notable split. While many teachers believe students resist pre-class work, others find engagement manageable. The student demographics may have influenced this discrepancy.

73.5% of the respondents saw managing diverse learning needs as another challenge to using FCM. This is probably because FCM requires self-paced learning, which can be difficult in mixed-ability classrooms. Teachers may, therefore, struggle to provide individualised support. Assessment difficulties were also perceived (60.2%) as challenging because traditional grading methods may not align with FCM's interactive, project-based nature.

These challenges align with prior research, such as that of OBOTZ (2024) on blended learning barriers. The high reliance on technology suggests that schools must invest in infrastructure before mandating FCM. Additionally, teacher training should include strategies for student engagement and differentiated instruction.

To overcome the challenges of using FCM, teachers reported using some strategies. As shown in Table 3. 67.1% of them confirmed that they will always be ready for professional development. They want to attend workshops, take online courses, and even watch

their peers teach them how to improve their skills in using FCM. However, 11.2% still reported that they have never engaged in any training. This implies a deliberate in-service training programme to improve teachers' competence in methodology, especially on best teaching practices.

Teachers also reported their readiness to explore the use of alternative teaching methods. As high as 64.3% will want to explore smart blending in teaching, which involves combining video lessons with traditional teaching or hands-on projects. For example, they reported that they will be ready to assign videos for homework, but will explain tricky concepts face-to-face in class. This can effectively help students benefit from flipped learning without feeling overwhelmed.

However, over half of the respondents (52.1%) said they rarely share ideas or resources. This may be due to a culture that does not prioritise teacher collaboration. This situation could have been avoided if weekly times were set aside for sharing lesson plans and procedures.

The results on teachers' readiness to reflect on their teaching practices (60.8%) showed readiness to learn from their mistakes. Teachers who keep learning and adapt quickly see the best results. However, the lack of teamwork points to a deeper problem: Schools are not giving teachers enough time or support to work together. Fixing this could mean lighter workloads or training on how to share ideas.

The data in Table 4 showed that teachers exposed to the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) achieved substantially greater student engagement (75.67%) and demonstrated more confidence in addressing classroom challenges. Teachers with no FCM exposure had significantly lower student engagement (23%) and faced more difficulties in implementation, likely due to gaps in the skills and confidence needed for effective FCM use.

However, the ANOVA analysis yielded a statistically significant p-value (0.009), confirming that FCM exposure directly influences teaching success and student engagement.

This research consistently shows that FCM enhances student engagement, academic achievement, and self-efficacy when implemented by prepared teachers. Hence, teachers with prior FCM training or experience are better equipped to facilitate active learning, foster collaborative environments, and troubleshoot classroom challenges. Conversely, untrained teachers often struggle to implement FCM effectively, leading to lower student engagement and less successful outcomes.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

This study demonstrates that the flipped classroom method shows notable potential, though its effectiveness depends on overcoming several systemic challenges, such as gaps in teacher training, limited technological infrastructure, and varying levels of student preparedness. Schools can optimize the benefits of flipped learning by prioritizing investments in both teacher development and digital resources, ensuring educators are equipped to create engaging materials and support student learning.

Teacher readiness stands out as a key factor for successful implementation. Targeted professional development and a gradual rollout of flipped instruction will foster higher student engagement and achievement, while reducing the likelihood of unsuccessful adoption.

A comprehensive approach is essential for widespread success, encompassing teacher training, enhancing student readiness, improving technology access, and providing strong institutional support. Schools and policymakers should aim to move beyond isolated experiments, systematically embedding the flipped classroom into regular practice to build collaborative, adaptive learning environments. Such efforts help transform teaching culture, emphasising partnership, flexibility, and a commitment to ongoing improvement.

As a follow-up to the study's findings, several practical recommendations can support teachers, teacher trainers, educational institutions, and policymakers in effectively implementing and sustaining the flipped classroom method within school systems.

- **Institutional Support.** Government bodies, philanthropic organizations, and the private sector should prioritize funding to equip schools with tools compatible with flipped classroom instruction, such as video platforms and learning management systems. It is essential to provide teachers with ongoing support for developing and refining instructional materials tailored for this approach.
- **Professional Development.** Curriculum agencies should expand the curriculum to include training modules focused on motivating students and promoting inclusive teaching practices. Teacher recruitment agencies should organize regular training sessions to strengthen educators' skills in flipped classroom pedagogy. Schools are encouraged to begin with a "training-first" approach, starting with motivated, well-prepared educators to pilot the method and then gradually scale up based on successful outcomes.
- **Team-Based Teaching.** School leadership can foster effective integration of the flipped classroom by introducing co-teaching models and establishing centralised repositories of lesson plans and instructional resources.
- **Interactive and Gamified Learning.** Educators and institutions should explore digital platforms that promote interactive and gamified activities, helping to increase student engagement with preparatory materials and classroom learning tasks.
- **Policy interventions.** A priority for policymakers is to embed core competencies related to flipped classroom strategies into teacher certification frameworks. National curricula may be updated to formally recommend flipped instruction and to align standard assessments with the aims and learning objectives of the method.

8. Further research considerations

It is important to conduct longitudinal research on the impact of the flipped classroom method on student learning outcomes. Regular surveys of teachers can help refine support strategies, and further studies should explore potential gender differences in teachers' perceptions and adoption of flipped classroom practices.

These recommendations offer a comprehensive roadmap for the successful adoption and long-term sustainability of the flipped classroom model in our school system.

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