

EFFECT OF PLANNED ACCULTURATION ON RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AND PEACEFUL CO- EXISTENCE AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA NIGERIA

GODSON CHINEDUM IWUAGWU

Department of Science Education (Research, Measurement & Evaluation),
University of Nigeria Nsukka.

Email: chigods2013@gmail.com; +2347038878520

FELICITAS ONYEMAZUWA IWUAGWU (PhD)

Department of Educational Foundations University of Abuja, Nigeria

Email: meetfelicitas@gmail.com; +2348034385716

FELICIA ONYEKPAUWANAKA AKUTA (PhD)

Department of Educational Foundations University of Abuja, Nigeria

Email: ofigbokwe@gmail.com+234803438718

&

AGATHA CHINYERE NZERIBE (PhD)

Department of Educational Foundations University of Abuja, Nigeria

Email: chinyerebernard@gmail.com; +2348035351247

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the effect of planned acculturation on religious tolerance and peaceful co- existence among primary school pupils in Nigeria. A quasi-experimental research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all primary schools pupils Nigeria. While the sample size of the study comprised 400 public primary schools pupils in FCT, drawn from four Area Councils in FCT using multistage sampling techniques. Data was collection for the study using two instruments titled Pupils Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS) and Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS) developed by the researchers. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the two research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. Findings of the study revealed among others that the mean religious tolerance scores and peaceful co-existence scores of primary schools pupils exposed to planned acculturation were higher than that of those in control group who were not exposed planned acculturation but social studies. It was therefore concluded that introduction of planned acculturation in primary school curriculum will foster religious, peaceful co- existence and national unity among citizens. Based on the findings of this study it was recommended among others that federal ministry of education in conjunction with curriculum planners should develop and introduce planned acculturation in basic education in Nigeria.

Keywords: Planned acculturation, Religious Tolerance, Peaceful co- existence, Primary school, Pupils.

Introduction

Education is the priority sector for every well-meaning society. It is a process by which individuals acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is an instrument of change. Education is likened to computer operational software where other instructional software are loaded for flexibility, change and needed result. This is why in Nigerian, education is regarded as an instrument “per excellence” for effecting national development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2004). Danmole (2011) noted that education has remained an instrument of change and national development. Education is therefore a social process and medium for the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes for survival in a challenging and changing world.

Educational system in Nigeria has undergone different changes. In the recent era Nigeria adopted Universal Basic Education (UBE), which includes 9 years of basic education (6 years of lower basic, which is primary school; and 3 years of upper basic, which junior secondary school). However, primary school has remained relevant because it's expected functions. Primary school is the education given to children aged 6 to 12 years. According to National Policy on Education (2013), Primary school “is that education given to children aged 6 to 12 years”. Its objectives include: inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively; lay a sound basis for scientific, critical and reflective thinking; promote patriotism, fairness, understanding and national unity; instill social, moral norms and values in the child; develop in the child the ability to adapt to the changing environment and provide opportunities for the child to develop life manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity. Primary school in the context this study is therefore perceived by the researcher as the first level of formal education given to children within the age bracket of 6 to 12 years. It is the basic foundational level of formal education where other levels of education are built on, which aimed at inculcating the requisite knowledge, skills, abilities to function effectively in the society and a system where the required change in ideologies, behaviors, attitudes and health cultures are loaded.

Its strategic position as a level of education that precedes adolescence age of learners informs its usefulness as a tool for attitudinal, ideological, behavioural change. Schenkar & Nyirenda (2002) identified primary school as key setting for educating children the needed value required of them. Such values include national unity which is a function of religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence. Nigeria as multilingual, multi-tribal and multi-religious nation has face with the challenge of religious tolerance.

Upon realization of this challenge from the onset, the Nigerian constitution starting from the first republic till date has reorganized freedom of worship which means religious tolerance. Religious tolerance in the context of this study refers to a situation where citizens are at liberty to pledge allegiance to any religion of their choice without any form of antagonism, stigmatization, molestation, bullying and denial. However, irrespective of the constitutional stand on religion, religion has being the greatest source of treat to Nigerian unity and peaceful co-existence.

Peaceful co-existence simply refers to a state of acceptance of people in their difference. Peaceful co-existence manifests itself as ethnic tolerance. Therefore used interchangeably and taken to be of the same meaning in the context of this study. Recalling that Nigeria is a multi-

tribal and cultural nation, peaceful co-existence seems to be more of ideological than constitutional issue. Though the government of Nigeria has taken some bold steps to ensure peaceful co-existence, such include introduction of Nigeria youth service corps, establishment of federal colleges, federal universities among others, but observation from day to day activities in Nigeria proves that much has not been achieved in this regards. This may be because larger population of Nigerian children have their education in their villages or their tribes domicile area, some stop their education at primary school level, and may not have the opportunity of university education to go for youth service to socialize with other people of other cultures. Thus, conscious planning for acculturation at primary level of education may be of great advantage. For instance often time children come back from school with much new behaviour. Such behaviours include change in their language, dressing, food and even the type of film they watch. This is often as a result of acculturation.

Acculturation was first conceived in the fields of anthropology and sociology early in the 20th century (Park & Burgess, 1921; Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936). It has been used to explain dynamics involved when people from diverse cultural backgrounds come into continuous contact with one another. Acculturation is a process which occurs as the result of first hand contact between autonomous groups leading to changes in the original cultures of either or both of the cultures. In essence, acculturation is a way to describe the adaptation process of diverse individuals to the dominant culture (Redfield, Linton and Herskovits, 1936). According to Gordon's theory, cultural assimilation and acculturation is the first step of the absorption process that would take place and that would continue indefinitely even when no other type of assimilation occurred (Gordon, 1964). Gordon's theory of acculturation is based on the rationale that acculturation leads to assimilation of various types that would facilitate opportunities for inter-ethnic relationships which over time reduces prejudice, discrimination and promotes inter-group harmony.

In the bid to achieve inter-ethnic harmony, Berry (1980) in Ngo (2016), identified acculturation strategies individuals and groups use in their intergroup encounters. Such strategies are assimilation, separation, marginalization and integration. According to Berry, assimilation occurs when there is little interest in cultural maintenance combined with a preference for interacting with the larger society. Separation is the way when cultural maintenance is sought while avoiding involvement with others. Marginalization exists when neither cultural maintenance nor interaction with others is sought. Finally, integration is present when both cultural maintenance and involvement with the larger society is sought. On the context of integration strategy of acculturation the term planned acculturation is born.

Planned acculturation is an innovation of the term acculturation. It simply means conscious and planned organization of environments, learning experiences, interactions that brings about conscious understanding and acceptance of other peoples culture including religion. This involves any purposeful or conscious programme initiated by an individual, government body or NGOs that brings about good knowledge and understanding and acceptance of other peoples culture. Its rationale is to ensure inter-ethnic relationships, reduces prejudice, discrimination and promotes intergroup harmony, peaceful co-existence and religious tolerance and national integration.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria as a multi-ethnic, multi-tribal, multi-lingual and multi-religious nation has suffered a lot in the area of discrimination along ethnic and religious bisects. This seems to be as a result of lack good knowledge of the cultures of various ethnics group in Nigeria though the government has in her various ways such as using the media (radio, television among others), collection of learning experiences on cultures and youth service among others.

However, evidence has shown that these efforts have not yield the needed result as ethnic discrimination and religious intolerance is the order of the day, while the national unity is threatened. The researchers are of the view that integrating planned acculturation in the curriculum of basic level of education such as primary and junior secondary schools; while the learners are young as their early experience constitute larger part of their ideology in life, will yield a better result in fostering peaceful co- existence and religious tolerance. Notwithstanding, this remains a mere speculation, hence the basis to carry out this study on: Effect of planned acculturation on religious tolerance and peaceful co- existence among primary school pupils in Nigeria.

Purpose of study

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of planned acculturation on religious tolerance and peaceful co- existence of primary school pupils in FCT, Abuja.

Specifically, the study seeks to determine:

1. The mean religious tolerance scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were not measured by Pupils' Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS).
2. The mean peaceful co-existence scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were not measured by Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS).
3. Whether the mean religious tolerance scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were not, defer.
4. Whether the mean peaceful co-existence scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were not, defer.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What are the mean religious tolerance scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were as not measured by Pupils' Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS)?
2. What are the mean peaceful co-existence scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were not as measured by Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS)?

Hypotheses

1. **H₀₁:** There is no statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference between the mean religious tolerance scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were as not measured by Pupils' Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS)

2. **H₀₂:** There is no statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference between the mean peaceful co-existence of public primary school pupils exposed to planned acculturation and those that were as not measured by Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS)

Method

A quasi-experimental research design was adopted for the study in line with Nworgu (2015), which referred to quasi-experimental research design as a type of experimental research design where the researcher uses intact class in lieu of randomization in assigning research subjects into treatment and control group. The treatment or the experimental groups are exposed to the treatment while the control group is not given treatment rather used to monitor the effect of the treatment given to the experimental group. The population of the study comprised all public primary school pupils in FCT Abuja. The sample size comprised 400 public primary school pupils (Pri.5) drawn using multistage random sampling techniques.

At the first stage, the researchers used simple random sampling techniques to sample four area councils in FCT which include Abuja Municipal Area Council, Gwagwalada Area Council, Kwali Area Council and Abaji Area Council. In the second stage, the researchers used stratified simple random sampling technique to select one primary school from each of the four sampled Area Councils FCT, which amounted to four primary schools. At the third stage, the researchers used purposive sampling technique to select primary five A and B of the four primary schools. 50 pupils were randomly selected from class A and 50 from class B across the four primary schools which amounted to sample size of 400 pupils that responded to the two instrument of data collection (PRTS & PETS). Class A was used as the experimental (planned acculturation) group; while class B was used as control group in each of the four schools. The experimental group was labeled Planned Acculturation Experimental Group (PAEG), while control was labeled Non-Planned Acculturation Group (NPAG).

Data were collected using Pupils' Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS) & Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS) developed by the researchers. PRTS and PETS consisted of 10 items structured into a 2 points scale respectively, rated as follow Agree (A) = 2 and Disagree (D) = 1, ticking Agreed to the positive structured items attracts 2 points while ticking Disagreed attracts 1 point. Thus, the reverse is the case for negative structure items. The 2 point scale adapted was in consideration of educational level of pupils, it may be difficult to differentiate between strongly agreed, agreed and disagreed and strongly disagreed PRTS and PETS was face validated by four experts; one psychologist, one measurement and evaluation expert sociologist and a childhood education expert, all from the Faculty of Education University of Nigeria Nsukka. The corrections and suggestions of the validators guided the final copy of the instruments. 20 copies of the PRTS and 20 copies PETS were administered 20 primary 5 pupils in FCT who were not part of the sample of the study. Data collected were subjected to reliability test using Cronbach alpha which yielded a reliability index of 0.81 and 0.78, for PRTS and PETS respectively.

Before the treatment, the researchers with the help of curriculum experts and primary school teachers planned a pilot curriculum on acculturation for primary 5 pupils was developed, reflecting the content, learning experience instructional resources, teachers and pupils, objective and modes of evaluation. The content learning experience were planned to be covered in three months. The researchers with permission of the head-teachers of the school

trained the various teachers in primary 5A of the four sampled primary schools for four nonworking days (Saturdays) on the pilot acculturation curriculum. The teachers were also trained on how to organize the instructional materials to trigger acculturation. These include how to creatively select instructional resources, how to use attitude and words to encourage acculturation among others. Also the 400 pupils sampled for the study were pre-tested using PRTS and PETS, there various scores were documented.

The treatments given to the experimental group (PAEG) was that the pupils were exposed to learning experience from planned acculturation scheme and the pupils were encourage to come to discuss their religion and it belief; and their culture before the class and entertain questions from other student. While the control group (NPAG) was not, but exposed to social studies at period (twice a week) mapped out for acculturation in the time table during the school hours. The treatment lasted for two months, then, PRTS and PETS were re-administered to both experimental and control groups under the same conditions (post- test) and the post-test scores were documented.

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the two research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the two hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In testing the null hypotheses, the following decision rules were used: (i) When the associated probability value obtained is less than 0.05 (that is, $p < 0.05$) the null hypothesis was rejected and (ii) When the associated probability value obtained is greater than 0.05 (that is, $p > 0.05$) the null hypothesis was accepted.

RESULTS

1. **Research Question one:** What are the mean religious tolerance scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were not as measured by Pupils' Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS)?

Table 1: Pretest and posttest difference in the mean religious tolerance scores of Pupils exposed to planned acculturation (PAEG) and those unexposed (NPAG) as measured by PRTS

Group	N	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean Gain
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	
PAEG	200	4.97	1.76	8.96	1.27	3.99
NPAG	200	4.94	1.99	7.13	1.65	2.19

The result in Table 1 shows the difference in the mean scores of pupils exposed to the planned acculturation (PAEG) and those unexposed (NPAG) as measured by PRTS. The result shows that pupils exposed to planned acculturation (PAEG) which was the treatment /experimental group had a pretest mean score of 4.97 with a standard deviation of 1.76 and a posttest mean score of 8.96 with a standard deviation of 1.27. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores was 3.99. Whereas, pupils unexposed to planned acculturation (NPAG) which was the control group had a pretest mean score of 4.94 with a standard deviation of 1.99 and a posttest mean score of 7.13 with a standard deviation of 1.65. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores was 2.19. For both groups, the posttest mean scores of the pupils were greater than the pretest scores, with pupils exposed to planned acculturation (PAEG) having a higher mean scores gain than those unexposed but were taught social

studies (NPAG) as measured by Pupils' PRTS. This therefore implies that Pupils' exposure to planned acculturation seems to increase Pupils' religious tolerance than when they are exposed to social studies.

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference between the mean religious tolerance scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were not as measured by Pupils' Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS).

Table 2: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) of the significant difference in the mean Religious Tolerance scores of primary school pupils exposed to planned acculturation and those that were not as measured by Pupils' Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS).

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	394.378	2	197.189	97.270	.000
Intercept	2474.712	1	2474.712	1220.734	.000
Pre religious tolerance	59.488	1	59.488	29.345	.000
Group	332.615	1	332.615	164.073	.000
Error	804.812	397	2.027		
Total	27088.000	400			
Corrected Total	1199.190	399			

a. R Squared = .329 (Adjusted R Squared = .325)

The result in Table 2 shows that an F-ratio of 164.073 with an associated probability value of 0.000 was obtained with respect to the difference in the mean scores of primary school pupils exposed to planned acculturation and those not exposed as measured by Pupils' Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS). Since the associated probability of 0.000 when compared with 0.05 set as the level of significance for testing the hypothesis was found to be significant, the null hypothesis 1 (H₀₁) was therefore rejected. Hence, it was concluded that there was a significant difference in the mean Religious Tolerance scores of primary school pupils exposed to planned acculturation and those not exposed but on social studies as measured by Pupils' Religious Tolerance Scale (PRTS).

Research Question Two: What are the mean peaceful co-existence scores of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were not as measured by Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS)?

Table 3: Pretest and posttest difference in the mean peaceful co-existence scores of Pupils exposed to planned acculturation (PAEG) and those unexposed (NPAG) as measured by PETS

Group	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean Gain
	N	$\bar{x}$ SD	$\bar{x}$ SD		
PAEG	200	8.66 1.66	13.90 1.61		5.24
NPAG	200	7.89 1.92	10.12 1.72		2.23

The result in Table 3 shows the difference in the mean peaceful co-existence scores of pupils exposed to planned acculturation (PAEG) and those unexposed (NPAG) as measured by Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS). The result shows that pupils exposed to planned acculturation (PAEG) which was the experimental group had a pretest mean score of 8.66 with a standard deviation of 1.66 and a posttest mean score of 13.90 with a standard deviation of 1.61. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean peaceful co-existence scores was 5.24. While, pupils unexposed to planned acculturation, (NPAG) but were taught social studies, which was the control group had a pretest mean score of 7.89 with a standard deviation of 1.92 and a posttest mean score of 10.12 with a standard deviation of 1.72. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean peaceful co-existence scores was 2.23. For both groups, the posttest mean scores of the pupils were greater than the pretest scores, with pupils exposed to planned acculturation (PAEG) having a higher mean peaceful co-existence score gain than those unexposed (NPAG) as measured by PETS. This therefore means that exposure of pupils to planned acculturation improve Pupils' peaceful co-existence than social studies.

Hypothesis 2

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference between the mean peaceful co-existence of public primary school pupils expose to planned acculturation and those that were as not measured by Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS).

Table 4: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) of the significant difference in the mean peaceful co-existence scores of primary school pupils exposed to planned acculturation and those that were not as measured by Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS).

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1832.991	2	916.495	518.312	.000
Intercept	973.828	1	973.828	550.736	.000
Pre -peaceful co-existence	400.368	1	400.368	226.423	.000
Group	1075.296	1	1075.296	608.120	.000
Error	701.987	397	1.768		
Total	60207.000	400			
Corrected Total	2534.977	399			

a. R Squared = .723 (Adjusted R Squared = .722)

The result in Table 4 shows that an F-ratio of 608.120 with an associated probability value of 0.000 was obtained with regard to the difference in the mean peaceful co-existence scores of primary school pupils exposed to planned acculturation and those not exposed as measured by PETS. Since the associated probability of 0.000 when compared with 0.05 set as the level of significance for testing the hypothesis was found to be significant, hence the null hypothesis 2 (H₀₂) was rejected. Therefore, inference drawn was that there was a significant difference in the mean peaceful co-existence scores of primary school pupils exposed to planned acculturation and not exposed but were taught social studies, as measured by Pupils' Ethnic Tolerance Scale (PETS).

Discussion of findings

The findings of the study have shown that pupils exposed to planned acculturation have higher religious tolerance scores and peaceful co-existence scores than those in the control group that were taught social studies. The study found out that the mean difference between the two groups (experimental and control group) were statistically significant at 0.05 level of significant in favour of group exposed to planned acculturation in term of improving religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence. Thus, these finding are in support of Gordon's theory that explains that acculturation is based on the rational that acculturation leads to assimilation of various types that would facilitate opportunities for inter- ethnic relationships which over time reduces prejudice, discrimination and promotes intergroup harmony (Gordon, 1964). These findings imply that planned acculturation is veritable tool for improving religious tolerance, peaceful co-existence which is a function of ethnic tolerance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In general, the study concluded that introduction of planned acculturation into Nigeria curriculum at the basic educational level will help to boost religious tolerance and peaceful co- existence among Nigerians. Given that Nigeria is a multi-lingual, multi- ethnic, and multi-religious country.

In view of the findings of the study, it was recommended that: Federal Ministry of Education in conjunction with curriculum planners should develop and introduce planned acculturation into basic education curriculum in Nigeria to foster religious tolerance and ethnic tolerance among learners of basic educational age hence their experience at this stage form large part of their life ideology.

References

- Berry, J. W. (1974). Psychological aspects of cultural pluralism. *Cultural Learning*, 2, 17-22.
- Berry, J. W. (1980). *Acculturation as varieties of adaptation*. In A. M. Padilla (ed.), *Acculturation: Theory, models and some new findings*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Damole, B.T. (2011). Emerging issues on Universal Basic Education curriculum in beyond curriculum design and implementation. *Essay in Education*. 22. 24-31.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2013). *National Policy on Education*. Abuja: NERDC
- Gordon, M. (1964). *Assimilation in American life*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gordon, M. (1978). *Human nature, class, and ethnicity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ngo, H. (2016). A Critical Examination of Acculturation Theories. Retrieved from <http://www1.uwindsor.ca/criticalsocialwork/a-critical-examination-of-acculturation-theories>
- Nworgu, B.G. (2015). *Educational measurement and evaluation: Theory and practice* (2nd .Ed). University Nsukka, Enugu: Trust Publishers.
- Nzeribe, B.C. A. (2004). *Introduction of childhood education*: Yola Nigeria: Pleasant Places Publishing (AM publishing House).
- Schenkar, I. & Nyirena, M. J. (2002). *Preventing HIV/AIDS in schools*. Paris International Academy of Education. Paris: France