



Teachers' Perceptions of Multicultural Approaches in Addressing Socio-Cultural Challenges Among Junior Secondary School Students in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study sought to investigate teachers' perceptions of multicultural approaches in addressing socio-cultural challenges among junior secondary school students in selected schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The study used a survey research design with a sample of 150 teachers selected using stratified random sampling technique. Instruments developed for the study was a teacher perception questionnaire scale titled "Multicultural Approaches for Addressing Socio-Cultural Challenges among Students" (MAASCS). Teachers' gender, qualification, school type and teaching experience were also examined to determine their level of influence on teachers' perceptions. Data collected were analysed using percentage and independent t-test. The study found teachers' to strongly favour diverse cultural content integration, knowledge construction in linguistic skills, prejudice reduction, empowering a reformed school culture, as well as reduction of behaviours, concepts; and attitudes. The study also found gender and school type to significantly influence teachers' perception with $t(148) = 2.02, p < .05$; and $t(148) = 3.01, p < .05$. Recommendations were made accordingly

Keywords: Teacher Perceptions, Multicultural Concepts and Education, Socio-Cultural Challenges, Approaches to Multicultural Reforms

Introduction

Multicultural education is a necessary policy in a heterogeneous society which is tailored to cater for, respond to, and manage ethnic and cultural diversities in any given society. Multicultural education is an ideal educational approach in reforming multicultural challenges in societies based on free access to; and equal opportunity for all learners, irrespective of gender, ethnic or religious affiliations, socio-economic status, disability or exceptional abilities in that society. Therefore, multicultural education is an all-inclusive education policy for all learners in a multicultural society to have access to education and freedom from discriminations in schools. In any nation's educational system, multicultural education refers to inclusivity of all learners, people and cultures in society as well as gender, people living with disabilities and those possessing exceptional abilities in society.

Multicultural education in Nigeria therefore upholds societal values of cultural inclusion, religious freedom and tolerance, in the midst of diversity; aimed at reducing socio-cultural challenges in society. These values are meant to keep students in Nigeria united in spite of what ethnic groups they belong to. Multicultural education in Nigeria's educational system was necessitated by ethnic, political, religious and socio-economic conflicts resulting from cultural diversities and

miscommunication amongst students of various ethnic groups. These conflicts usually endanger the peace and security of the school ambience. Thus, socio-cultural diversities among students have created conflicts and discriminating attitudes in schools; which require teaching of multicultural values in order to reduce prejudice.

Most of these conflicts and rivalries among students in Nigeria were ethnically aggravated as children from diverse and multicultural societies experience miscommunication in these disabling conflicts (Adesugba & Temitope, 2019). However, cultural diversity need not be regarded as a problem in society but the way people relate to it; and others on account of it, is the problem. It is often asserted that there is a fragment of multiculturalism inherent in all societies; which can translate into various challenges where diversities are not well managed. These challenges have the potential to undermine the overall academic achievements of students and engagement in schools. Some of these challenges tend to interfere with multicultural projects established by federal authorities such as the unity schools project and the National Youths Service Corps (NYSC) in all states of the federation. Multicultural education therefore requires relevant approaches to teaching children from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds to enable them learn about other students' cultures and attributes, such as language, songs, dance culture, dress code, marriage culture, political system as well as the food they eat. People tend to fear less of what they know, so multicultural education will provide the information students need to understand other people's cultures and become more receptive to them.

Some of these challenges have been identified severally as language barrier, ethnic discrimination, ethnocentrism, cultural domination, prejudice, marginalisation, religious bigotry, insecurity, injustice, weak institutional framework, cultural misconceptions and groups' stereotype (Adeyemi & Agboola, 2016; Godwin & Essien, 2025; Obiagu et al., 2025; Paulley & Gibson, 2020; Tanimu et al., 2025). Thus, some scholars have expressed concern over professional teachers' training programmes in Nigeria; which they believe calls for inclusion of appropriate multicultural concepts, knowledge, attitudes and values in the multicultural education curriculum for schools (Alismail, 2016; Hariyadi & Rodiyah, 2023).

1.1 Research Objectives

The study sought to examine teacher perception of multicultural approaches for reducing socio-cultural challenges among junior secondary school students in Bayelsa state, south-southern, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine what multicultural concepts are taught in secondary schools
2. Examine teachers' perception of multicultural approaches appropriate in addressing socio-cultural challenges in schools
3. Examine the extent to which teachers perceive multicultural approaches as appropriate in addressing socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools

1.2 Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What multicultural concepts are taught in secondary schools?
2. What multicultural approaches do teachers perceive as appropriate in addressing socio-cultural challenges in schools?
3. To what extent do teachers perceive multicultural approaches as appropriate in addressing socio-cultural challenges in schools?

1.3 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to test significance of findings on teachers' perception of appropriate multicultural approaches addressing socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools at .05 level of significance:

1. Teachers' perception of multicultural approaches addressing socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools do not significantly differ between male and female teachers
2. Teachers' perception of multicultural approaches addressing socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools do not significantly differ between public and private secondary school teachers
3. Teachers' perception of multicultural approaches addressing socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools do not significantly differ between national certificate of education (NCE) and Bachelor of Education degree (B.ED) qualification.

2. Review of Related Literature

Multicultural education in schools is aimed at teaching multicultural concepts, values and competences which characterise tolerance and respect for other people and cultures in schools. Eyisi and Ibrahim (2021) posited that multicultural education is a tool for identifying the different socio-cultural challenges which occur overtime in society. Obiagu et al. (2025) therefore identified these challenges as low understanding of multicultural concepts, low tolerance for diversity; cultural erosion among youths, social conflicts, ethnocentrism, pride, language barrier; and teacher incompetence in interpreting other cultures.

To ascertain appropriate multicultural content and attitudes of teachers, Obiagu et al. (2025) examined the contents, attitudes, practices and challenges of multicultural education in secondary schools in Enugu, Nigeria using descriptive research design and multistage sampling comprising convenience and random sampling to select 6 schools, 31 teachers and 267 students for the study. Data was collected using a self-developed questionnaire instrument comprising three subscales titled 'Teachers' Multicultural Education Questionnaire' (TMEQ) to measure teachers' attitude, "Multicultural Education Practice Observation Checklist' to measure teachers' multicultural attitudes (MEPOC) and 'Students' Multicultural Education Questionnaire (SMEQ) to measure students' perception of teachers' multicultural practices. Findings of the study showed positive teacher attitudes towards multicultural education, multicultural awareness and responsibility among students in secondary schools as well as tolerance and appreciation for diversity. The study also revealed statistically significant differences between male and female teachers' attitudes, with low multicultural content knowledge, and many multicultural challenges. Thus, teacher perception of approaches to teaching multicultural concepts in schools is a necessary investigation through which the school system can ensure that teachers provide supportive environments for students to learn multicultural values of respect and tolerance in schools.

Research therefore supports multicultural pedagogy which includes native language instruction and a curriculum reflecting various cultures, quality control, multicultural competency, civic rights, cultural inclusion, equity pedagogy, identity recognition and diversity acceptance (Effime & Essien, 2025; Eyisi & Ibrahim, 2021, Kumi-Yeboah, 2016). Some researchers therefore maintain that teachers' lack of knowledge about other people's cultures do create marginalisation and discrimination among students; and therefore advocate for the infusion of inquiry based, cooperative and collaborative learning, dialoguing, open discussion, peaceful conflict resolution strategies, cultural inclusiveness, civic driven multicultural curriculum content to enable students acquire the required multicultural knowledge and competences (Kumi-Yeboah & Smith, 2016; Kuppens et al., 2018; Salako, 2017; Salako & Ojebiyi, 2019; Tanimu et al., 2025).

Kumi-Yeboah and Smith (2016) therefore examined factors enhancing critical multicultural citizenship education among black immigrant youths in the United States using a survey research and a sample of 18 purposively selected black immigrants from across the globe. Data were collected using a questionnaire instrument comprising 5 subscales based on Banks'1993 constructs and structured interview developed by the authors, as well as home observation. It was

found that students learned multicultural concepts through inquiry-based-learning, projects, social and media-based technology and classroom discussion groups.

Similarly, Kuppens et al. (2018) investigated teachers' perception of multicultural education in Kenya and found teachers to be positively disposed to multicultural education with diversified content but reported lack of equity in cultural pedagogy. The authors adopted a cross-sectional survey research design and multistage sampling comprising random selection of 925 school teachers, stratified random selection of municipalities and random selection of 64 schools. Data were collected using a 10-point questionnaire instrument comprising five subscales measuring four of Banks' 1993 constructs on five dimensions of multicultural education. Analysed data showed teacher effective teaching of multicultural concepts helped improve students' knowledge of multicultural education and their attitudes towards it. The results also showed teachers' use of cooperative and collaborative learning strategies, lack of complete knowledge of other people's cultures as well as teaching diversity acceptance to counter prejudice and stereotypes in Kenyan schools. Many teachers were found to exhibit low multicultural equity knowledge.

Co-operative learning has gained popularity among scholars of multicultural education as an effective teaching approach in education (Foster, 2024; Gibson et al., 2019; Kuppens et al., 2018; Salako, 2017; Salako & Ojebiyi, 2019). Salako (2017) investigated effectiveness of teaching multicultural education concepts among Social Studies students in South-Western Nigeria and found significant effects of co-operative learning on students' attitude towards multicultural education concepts and significant difference between co-operative learning and conventional teaching. The author adopted pretest, post-test, quasi-experimental control group design and a sample of purposively selected schools and randomly selected 352 students. Cooperative learning approach was used as treatment with religion and ethnic origin as moderator variables. Data were collected through observation and inventory lists which showed that cooperative strategy significantly improved achievements of students in their knowledge of multicultural concepts.

In a portrayal of how multicultural approaches could be used in teaching Social Studies and achievement of transformative practices in education, Salako and Ojebiyi (2019) examined outcomes of teaching Social Studies from a multicultural perspective using practical approaches in South-Western Nigeria. The authors adopted a pretest, post-test quasi-experimental, control group design with a 2x2x2 factorial design and randomisation of subjects into both groups. A sample of 251 students was selected using random selection. In the study, the researchers used cooperative learning as treatment for the experimental group and conventional learning method for the control with attitude as moderator variable. An attitude questionnaire and a Social Studies test were used to collect data. The results of the study revealed significant effects of co-operative learning on students' achievement and attitude towards multicultural concepts; and significant differences between mean scores of students exposed to treatment and those who were not. The study found significant effects of treatment on students' multicultural knowledge and attitude towards learning multicultural concepts in schools.

Multicultural approaches for addressing socio-cultural challenges in schools also calls for inquiry-based learning and social and emotional learning as a means of developing mindsets for dialogue and peaceful conflict resolutions among learners. Thus multicultural education could be used to reduce aggressive and disruptive behaviour among students in schools. Social and emotional learning can be included in multicultural education in a bid to reduce disruptive behaviour among students in schools. To substantiate this claim, Gibson et al. (2019) investigated effects of using social and emotional learning strategies as an intervention for disruptive behaviour in schools using quasi-experimental, pretest, post-test, correlated group design and a sample of 40 purposively selected students with disruptive behaviour. Data was collected with a Rutter-type 'Students' Behavioural Scale' and a Students' Social Studies Achievement (SSA) test before and after intervention with result showing significant effects of treatment on students' disruptive behaviour as well as their achievement in Social Studies.

Thus teachers' perceptions of teaching multicultural concepts, values, diverse cultures, teacher preparation, instructional methods and approaches and their relevance in addressing multicultural challenges in secondary schools is significant to successful multicultural education in classroom discourse (Adeyemi & Agboola, 2016; Foster, 2024; Hariyadi & Rodiyah, 2023; Mazi, 2020). Adeyemi and Agboola (2016) thus investigated stakeholders' perception of the relevance of multicultural education in south-western Nigeria using survey research and a sample of 690 participants comprising 300 teachers, 300 parents and 90 civil servants, using multistage sampling comprising systematic and random sampling. A "Stakeholders' perception of relevance of multicultural education' questionnaire scale was developed and used to collect data. Findings of the study revealed that stakeholders perceived respect and appreciation for other people and cultures to be highly relevant to nation building and equip students with knowledge, values and skills to cope with driven complex conflicts in society. The study also found content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction and equity pedagogy as appropriate approaches to teaching multicultural concepts and values in schools,

Some researchers purport that the foundation to successful multicultural education in schools lies in how professional teachers are trained at the very beginning (Alismail, 2016; Foster, 2024). To ascertain this claim, Foster (2024) investigated new teachers' perception of multicultural education preparation of teachers in Texas, USA and found that teachers' professional training to include comprehensive skills for navigating diverse classrooms, cultural competences in culturally relevant pedagogy, values and perspectives of different culture. The author adopted a case study research design and a sample of purposively selected 25 certified teachers for the study. Instruments for collecting data were observation checklist, interview and questionnaire scale instrument to collect data through social media channels and emails. The study also found significant number of teachers incorporating multicultural concepts into the teaching-learning process.

Similarly, Hariyadi and Rodiyah (2023) investigated teacher perception of multicultural education and diversity values in school environments using a case study design and a sample of 10 purposively selected teachers based on experience and willingness to participate. Data for the study were collected using observation list, structured interview instrument, consent and demographic forms. Analysed data showed that most teachers believed multicultural education enabled students respect cultural differences and the creation of unified and peaceful classrooms. The study found teachers willing to teach multicultural education concepts and values in schools but fear the negative influence of parents on children learning about other cultures and socio-cultural crises of large class sizes.

In a similar study, Mazi (2020) examined multicultural education perceptions of teachers in Hatay city, Turkey using descriptive design and a sample of randomly selected teachers and a 'Multicultural Perception Scale (MPS) and a demographic information form were used to collect data on teachers' multiculturalism perceptions. Results of the study revealed significant differences between preschool and primary school teachers' perceptions, age and insignificant differences by gender.

This is an indication that gender does not make any difference in teacher perception of the relevance of infusing multicultural concepts and values into the school curriculum content. Multicultural education therefore requires acceptable approaches to its successful practice. This starts with the teachers and how they are willing to create supportive environments for multiculturalism to thrive in schools. Thus teachers will have to be willing to acquire knowledge of all cultures, values and competences in these cultures as well as use appropriate multicultural approaches capable of creating the unified school environment and classrooms required in an heterogeneous society such as Nigeria's. The gap in literature indicates that most multicultural

research are qualitative in nature and require more quantitative designs for more empirical analysis.

3. Methods

3.1 Participants

The population for this study comprised all junior secondary school II social studies teachers in selected secondary schools in Yenagoa Metropolis with a population target of 300 subjects. Multistage sampling is used to select sample, comprising random sampling for selecting Local Government areas, and purposive sampling for selecting 30 secondary schools, stratified sampling for selecting private and public schools, as well as male and female teachers into gender categories. The sample for the study therefore comprised 150 teachers aged between 25 and 49 years with at least between 2 and 10 years of service; selected from 15 co-educational public and 15 private secondary schools. All ethical issues were put into consideration as the participants only include those willing to take part in the study.

Bayelsa State is located in central Niger Delta and in the south-southern geo-political area of Nigeria. It is flanked by Delta State on the West and Rivers State on the East and the Atlantic coastline on the south. The state came into existence on the 1st of October, 1996 and officially has eight Local Government Areas (LGAs) and covers a landmass area of 9415.7 km² and a population 2,277,961 million people (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Population Census, 2016).

3.2 Measures and Instruments

The design used for this study is the survey research design. Variables of the study examined were teachers' perception of multicultural approaches for addressing socio-cultural challenges in junior secondary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria measured by Gender, school type, qualification and teaching experiences to determine their influence on teachers' perception of multicultural approaches addressing socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools.

The instruments used for data collection was a 25-item 6-point questionnaire instrument titled 'Multicultural Approaches Addressing Socio-Cultural Challenges in Schools' (MAASCS) questionnaire and an observation checklist titled "Observation of Multicultural Concepts Taught in Junior Secondary Schools" (OMCTJSS). The MAASCS instrument required responses to questions generating demographic data on teachers such as years of experience and gender in section A and teacher perception of approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in section B; comprising the 25 questionnaire items based on adaptation of Banks' 2004 five dimensions of approaches to multicultural curriculum reform which proposes how multicultural education can be implemented in multicultural school environments. Section B of the MAASCS instrument therefore comprised 6 constructs which are content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, empowering school culture, equity pedagogy; and reduction of antisocial and discriminatory and disruptive behaviour; rated on a 6-point scale. The MAASCS and OMCTJSS instruments were validated for face and content validity and their reliability ratios established with a Cronbach of 0.81 and 0.74 for the MAASCS and OMCTJSS respectively. The instruments were administered to the participants at the selected schools by the researcher and collected data was analysed using percentage and independent t-test.

4. Results

Analysis of the following data based on the following research questions raised to guide the study yielded the following results:

1. What multicultural concepts are taught in secondary schools?

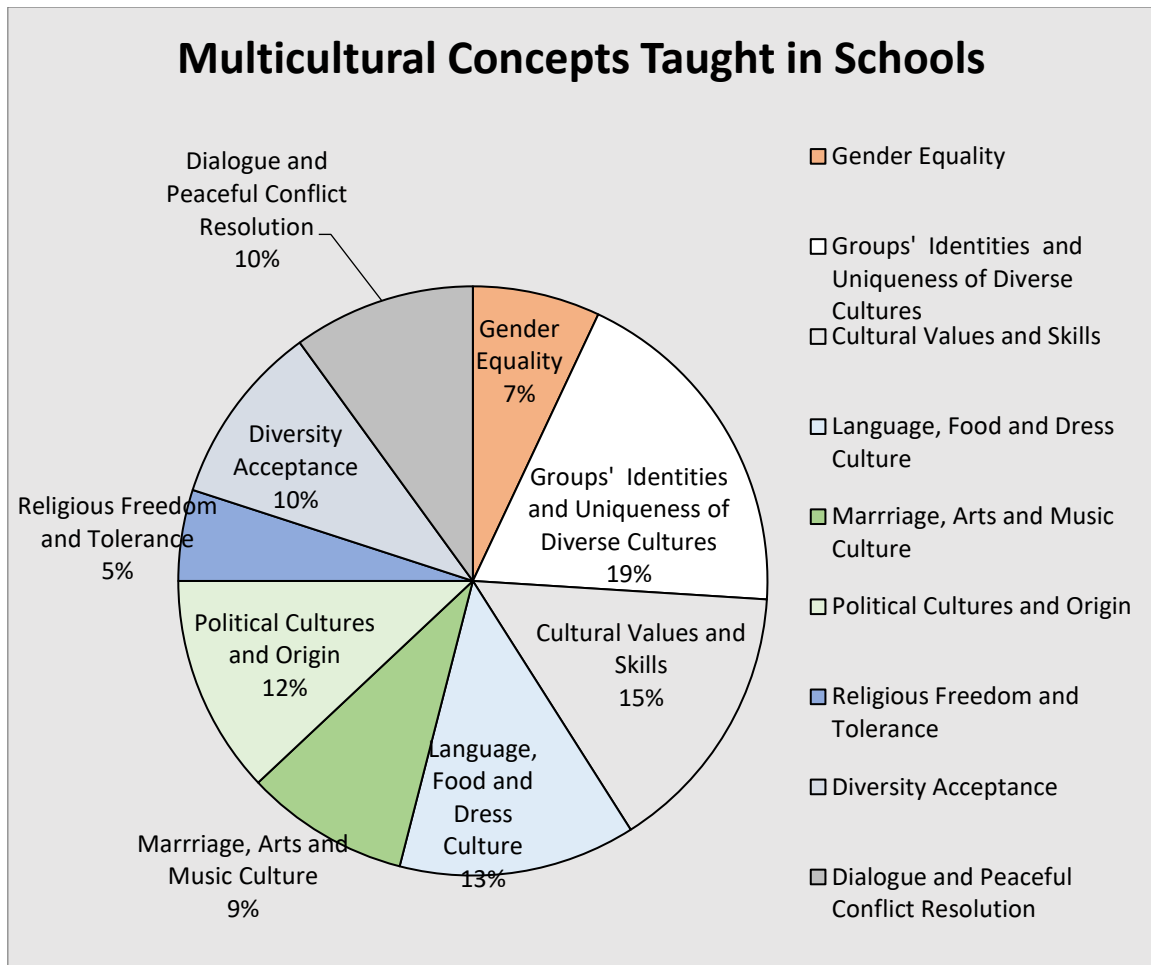


Figure 1: Pie chart percentage distribution of multicultural concepts taught in schools. Source: Authors' fieldwork

From the analysis it was discovered that teachers in junior secondary schools taught most multicultural concepts such as gender equality at 5%, groups' identities and uniqueness of diverse cultures at 19%, language, food and dress culture at 15%, marriage, arts and music culture at 9%, political cultures and origin at 12%, Religious freedom and tolerance at 5%, diversity acceptance at 10%; dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution at 10%.

2. What multicultural approaches do teachers perceive as appropriate to reforming socio-cultural challenges in schools?

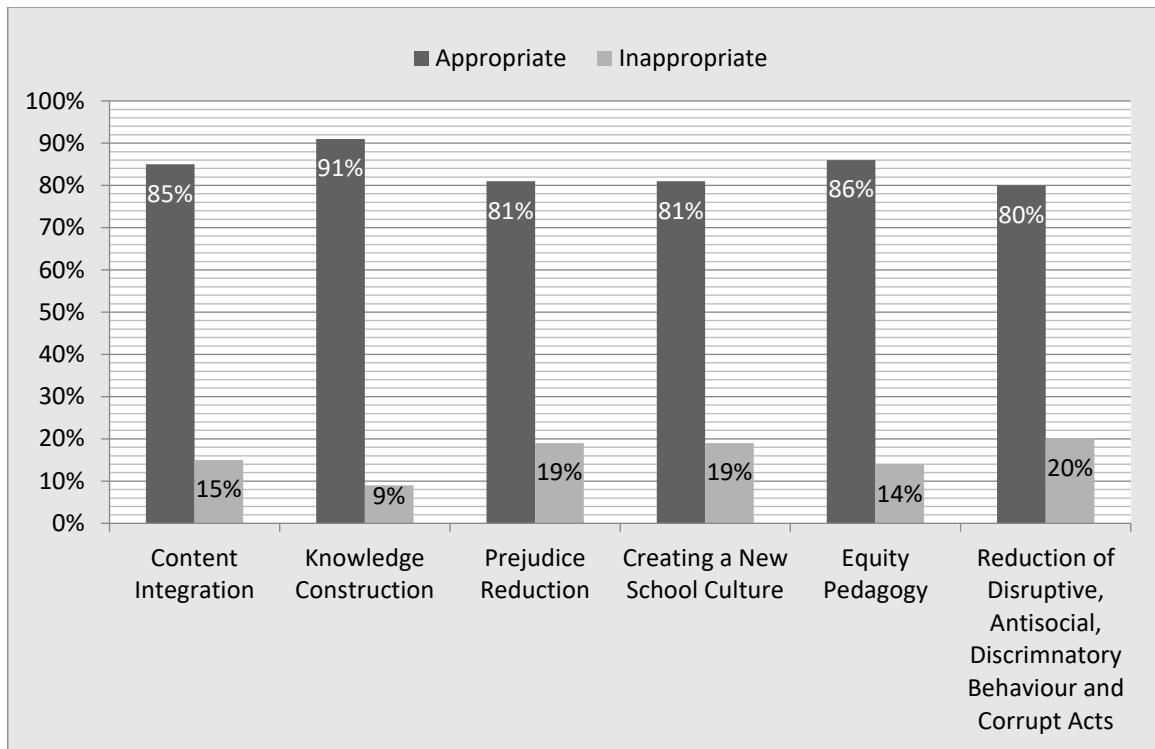


Figure 2: Bar chart percentage distribution of teachers' perception of multicultural approaches addressing socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools. Source: Authors' fieldwork

Figure 2 showed teachers' perception of appropriate multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools to include content integration, knowledge construction, creating new school culture, equity pedagogy, prejudice reduction; and reduction of disruptive, antisocial, discriminatory and corrupt acts.

3. To what extent do teachers perceive multicultural approaches as appropriate in addressing socio-cultural challenges in schools?

Figure 2 showed that teachers' perception of appropriate multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in schools stands at 85% for content integration, 91% for knowledge construction, 81% for prejudice reduction, 81% for creating new school culture, 86% for equity pedagogy; and 80% for reduction of disruptive, antisocial, discriminatory and corrupt acts.

4.1 Hypotheses

H01: Teachers' perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools does not significantly differ between male and female teachers.

Table 1: T-test of gender influence on teachers' perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural changes in Nigeria

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	T-Value
Male	75	75.80	5.681	.656	2.02
Female	75	77.37	3.578	.413	

P < .05; Critical t = 1.96; df = 148

Table 1 shows the t-calculated value of 2.02 to be higher than the t-critical value of 1.96 and so the null hypothesis is rejected as perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges between male and females' teachers is low significantly influenced by gender at $t(148) = 2.02$, $p < .05$, with females' mean perception (77.37) higher than males' mean perception (75.80). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

H02: Teachers' perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools do no significantly differ between public and private secondary school teachers.

Table 2: T-test of influence of school type on teacher perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in schools

School Type	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	T-Value
Public	75	77.65	4.449	.514	3.01
Private	75	75.37	4.829	.558	

P < .05; Critical t = 1.96; df = 148

Table 2 shows the t-calculated value of 3.01 to be higher than the t-critical value of 1.96 and so the null hypothesis is rejected as perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural changes between public and private school teachers is significantly influenced by school type at $t(148) = 3.01$, $p < .05$, with public school teachers' mean perception (77.65) higher than private school teachers' mean perception (75.37).

H03: Teachers' perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools do no significantly differ between national certificate of education and Bachelor of Education degree qualification.

Table 3: T-test of influence of qualification on teacher perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in schools

Teacher Qualification	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	T-Value
NCE Certificate	75	77.03	5.524	.638	1.09
B.SC/ED Degree	75	76.16	4.140	.478	

P < .05; Critical t = 1.96; df = 148

Findings on Table 3 show the t-calculated value of 1.09 to be lower than the t-critical value of 1.96 and so the null hypothesis is accepted as perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in schools was not significantly influenced by qualifications of NCE certificate and B.SC/ED degree at $t(148) = 1.09, p < .05$, with NCE certificate teachers' mean perception (77.03) higher than degree teachers' mean perception (76.16).

5 Discussion

Teachers' perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges among secondary school students was highly positive pertinent to the six-constructs developed in the instrument used to measure perception of teachers. Teachers' perceptions were measured on positive behaviour, attitude, competences and various multicultural attributes embedded in the six approaches measured. Multicultural concepts taught in schools were also measured through observation by which the researcher collected data through an observation checklist. The study found that teachers actually taught most multicultural concepts though some concepts were barely taught. When asked in a verbal interaction why teachers taught so little about religious freedom and tolerance a teacher responded they were afraid of being reprimanded as inciting hatred and unity when parents complain to the school authority, so they would rather avoid such topics. Nigeria has experienced a lot of religious crises and intolerance in some regions, especially the Central-North that many people chose to avoid these kinds of multicultural concepts in schools. Teachers' perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools, are highly positive as they found the approaches appropriate to reforming socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools. Positive attitudes were also recorded by Salako and Ojebiyi (2019) in their study which revealed significant effects of practical multicultural approaches on attitude towards multicultural concepts; and significant differences between mean scores of students exposed to treatment as well as on students' multicultural knowledge and attitude towards learning multicultural concepts.

This is corroborated by the findings of Obiagu et al. (2025) who also found positive multicultural teacher attitudes and practices in South-Western Nigerian secondary schools using a self-developed questionnaire instrument and observation list. Findings of this study revealed statistically significant differences between male and female teachers' perceptions, Obiagu et al. (2025) also found significant differences between male and female teachers' attitude towards multicultural practices in Nigerian secondary schools. Contrary to this study however, Mazi (2020) found insignificant difference by gender.

This study also found significant differences between private and public school types teacher perceptions as also discovered by Mazi (2020) in his study. Research therefore supports

multicultural pedagogy which includes native language and traditional education content. It can thus be inferred that Nigeria as a heterogeneous society requires a multicultural approach to education as no one culture want its culture to be dominated by any other culture albeit major culture or not. Teachers all highly acquiesced that the use of multicultural approaches would to reform socio-cultural challenges among secondary school students in Nigerian schools and that multicultural approaches such as content integration, multicultural knowledge construction, culture prejudice reduction, creating acceptable multicultural school environment, equity pedagogy, reduction of disruptive, antisocial, discriminatory and corrupt acts were all appropriate for developing multicultural culture and environment to dispel critical socio-cultural challenges in schools.

This is congruent to Kuppens et al. (2018) study which found teachers to be positively disposed to multicultural education with diversified content but reported lack of equity in cultural pedagogy. Thus, teachers perceived multicultural education approaches as effective means of reducing antisocial behaviours among students. This was also similar to Gibson et al. (2019) study in which they reported significant differences between students' disruptive behaviour and achievement before and after exposure to intervention through social and emotional learning strategies meant to produce positive social behaviour and attitudes. Thus, teachers believe to a large extent that the use of identified multicultural approaches would reform socio-politico-cultural changes in the Nigerian society.

This study also found gender to significantly influence teachers' perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-cultural challenges in schools. Thus, it can be inferred that gender played a significant role influencing teacher perception of approaches reforming the socio-politico-cultural changes devastating Nigeria as female teachers had a higher mean score than male teachers. Thus, women being the home front educators are more versed and knowledgeable in incorporating culture content into classroom discourse.

The results also show significant influence of school type on teachers' perception of multicultural approaches reforming socio-politico-cultural changes devastating the Nigerian society. Thus, teachers' perception differed according to school type with the public schools maintaining a higher mean score than private schools. Mazi (2020) also found significant differences between multicultural perception of preschool and primary school teachers in Hatay, Turkey. Teachers in public schools have always paid more attention to ethics and values as they relate directly with these social issues in schools. However, the study also found no significant influence of teacher qualification and teaching experience on teachers' perception of approaches reforming the socio-cultural challenges devastating the Nigerian society. Both NCE certificate and degree teachers did not significantly differ in their perception, as well years of experience. These did not differ significantly in their perception relating to multicultural approaches reforming the socio-politico-cultural changes in Nigeria. Thus it can be inferred that gender and school type significantly influenced teachers' perceptions of multicultural approaches addressing socio-cultural challenges in secondary schools, while qualification and work experience did not.

6 Conclusion

Multicultural education should be taken seriously in Nigeria, especially by teachers who are the key implementers of curricula in schools. Although content integration is mostly the job of curriculum developers, it is the duty of the teacher to ensure that knowledge construction, culture prejudice reduction, creating a multicultural school culture, equity culture pedagogy, reduction of disruptive, antisocial, discriminatory behaviour and corrupt acts are ensured in the school system or environment. The teacher does not only teach multicultural concepts and values in schools but also portray himself as the role model of what he teaches.

7. Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered based on inference from the study:

1. Multicultural education concepts taught in schools should include concepts that are relevant to developing multicultural values, skills and competences among secondary school students.
2. Multicultural approaches addressing socio-cultural challenges in schools should be considered seriously in Nigerian secondary schools to include content integration knowledge construction, culture prejudice reduction, creating a multicultural school culture, equity pedagogy, reduction of disruptive, antisocial, discriminatory behaviour and corrupt acts among students in order to positively impact the school culture, learner attitudes and the school environment.
3. Teachers should exhibit positive attitudes towards identified multicultural approaches and concepts aimed at addressing socio-cultural challenges among students in secondary schools.

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