THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOUTHEAST NIGERIAN STUDENTS' INTEREST IN ECONOMICS AND THE METHODS USED BY ECONOMICS TEACHERS TO TEACH IT

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This study evaluated how South East Nigerian students' interest in economics correlated with the teaching methods of economics teachers. Descriptive statistics of the correlational type were used in the research methodology; the sample size for the study was chosen using purposive and proportionate sampling techniques; the mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions; Pearson product-moment correlation and the one-way ANOVA F-test were used to test the hypotheses. The study's conclusions demonstrated a strong correlation between students' academic interest in economics and the methods used by economics teachers to teach the subject. The study made several recommendations. Based on its findings, educational administrators should designate professionally educated economists with a foundation in economic pedagogies to teach economics; delivering teaching effectively will result from this. Teachers of economics should make an effort to motivate students to study and to introduce the subject using any suitable teaching strategies. In addition, educating and retraining economics instructors inefficient teaching methods for the classroom.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Economics is an essential subject in the secondary school curriculum due to its significant role in the growth and development of the country's economy (Hanushek & Wößmann, 2007). Economics, as a secondary school topic, aims to help students understand national economic trends and equip them to positively influence their own country's economy and improve it beyond its current state (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2012; Zulaikha et al., 2021). To pursue specializations in sociology, political science, history and international relations, accounting, marketing, anthropology, and other fields, one must have a solid understanding of economics. Gotip et al. (2020) held a similar perspective, viewing economics as a social science that examines human behavior in an endeavor to effectively and efficiently distribute limited. To maximise

the satisfaction of human desires, it is a subject concerned with the effective use or management of scarce productive resources. It is impossible to overstate the value of economic education for any country. Economics aims to improve the economic situation for the benefit of society as a whole while assisting both teachers and students in understanding fundamental economic concepts, theories, and principles (Ehrenberg et al., 2021). Economics is useful for various professions in addition to being beneficial to learners.

Economics is a social science discipline that elucidates the relationship between societal resources and human behaviour. The researchers defined economics as a discipline that aids an individual or a country in making efficient use of its limited resources in the face of abundant requirements or wants (Daly & Farley, 2011; Tietenberg & Lewis, 2018). Because human wants are insatiable, it helps an individual or nation prioritise its needs and wants based on preference. People typically address the most urgent needs and wants first, leaving the less important ones unfulfilled.

To teach the topic at the senior level, instructors must be suitably qualified and trained. Schools teach economics through the use of professionally qualified individuals who possess knowledge of economic paedagogies, contents, resources, philosophies, and aims (Allais, 2012; Kruger, 2018). This aids in the implementation of economic curricula at the secondary school level (Koehler et al., 2014). The economics teacher should instill in the students the appropriate values, attitudes, abilities, and knowledge.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), teaching techniques, and instructors' actual experience in organising, planning, and delivering lessons in the classroom are all factors in their instructional performance (Rusznyak & Walton, 2011; Berry et al., 2016). To improve students' performance in economics, their interest in the topic should be taken into account independently of the issue of teaching methods. The term 'interest' refers to a sense of concern or curiosity that highlights a particular aspect. Students will pay attention to and enjoy studying economics if they are interested in the subject or develop an interest in it (Brophy, 2008; Roschelle et al., 2011). They will also be more engaged in the teaching and learning process, which will increase their understanding of the subject. Interests are characterised as comparatively steady preferences that are concentrated on things, events, or pursuits. Higher levels of congruence between an individual's interests and surroundings are associated with increased levels of performance, persistence, and enjoyment in activities. A motivating factor that pushes someone towards achieving a goal is interest (Filgona et al., 2020; Al-Said, 2023). The driving force, or stimulus, for success is interest. Therefore, it is important to maintain students' attention to raise their level of academic accomplishment and to teach and improve students' achievement in economics. Based on this premise, the researcher looked at how South East Nigerian teachers' methods of instruction correlated with students' interest in economics.

This study's main goal was to investigate how Southeast Nigerian instructors' methods of instruction connect to their students' interest in and performance in economics. In particular, the study's goals were to ascertain:

1. The relationships between students' interest in economics and teachers' lesson planning, presentation, and pedagogical content knowledge practices are examined.
2. The study examines the relationship between students' interest in economics and teachers' practices.
3. The study examines the relationship between teachers' lesson application practices and students' interest in economics.
4. The predictive relationship between teachers' instructional practices (lesson planning, presentation, pedagogical content knowledge, and application) and students' interest in economics.

We guided the study with the following research questions:
1. What is the correlation coefficient between students' interest in economics and how teachers prepare their lessons?
2. What is the coefficient of correlation between students' interest in economics and the ways in which teachers communicate their material?
3. What is the coefficient of correlation between students' interest in economics and teachers' pedagogical subject knowledge practices?
4. What is the correlation coefficient between students' interest in economics and the ways in which teachers apply their lessons?
5. How much can teachers' methods of instruction (lesson design, delivery, use of pedagogical content knowledge, and so on) predict students' interest in economics?

We developed and tested the following null hypotheses at the significance level of 0.05.
1. HO1: There is no discernible correlation between students' interest in economics and teachers' methods for lesson planning.
2. HO2: There is no statistically significant correlation between how teachers convey their material and the interest that students have in economics.
3. HO3: There is no significant correlation found between students' interest in economics and teachers' pedagogical topic knowledge practices.
4. HO5: There is no significant correlation between the application of lessons by teachers and the interest of students in economics.
5. HO5: Students' interest in economics is not significantly predicted by the dimensions of teachers' instructional practices (lesson preparation, presentation, pedagogical topic understanding, and application).

2. METHOD

This study used a simple linear approach in conjunction with a correlational survey research methodology. We used procedures for purposeful and proportionate random sampling to sample a total of 399 Senior Secondary School II pupils. We employed the "Economics Teachers' Instructional Practice Rating Scale (ETIPS)" and the "Economics

Students' Interest Scale (ESIS)" as research instruments to collect data. The researchers confirmed the face validity of the rating scales and assessed the internal consistency reliability of the two rating scales (ETIPS and ESIS) using the Cronbach alpha method. or ETIPS and ESIS, the internal consistency coefficient indices were 0.83 and 0.82, respectively.

We used the Personal Direct Administration Technique (PDAT) to collect data for this investigation. We briefed and trained four research assistants on how to administer the instruments, enabling them to assist the respondents directly. When needed, both the assistants and the researcher assisted the respondents in completing the instruments. The one-on-one interaction guaranteed a high subject involvement rate and the best possible instrument return. The replies immediately provided the completed copies of the instruments. We used every recovered copy for the analysis.

The study employed the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to address its guiding research questions. On the other hand, we tested the hypothesis using the one-way ANOVA F-test in conjunction with linear regression. The hypothesis was tested at the significance level of $p^{\wedge}0.05$. The research question's decision rule is as follows: We determined the strength or degree of the link based on whether the coefficient was positive or negative.

0.00 indicated that there was no relationship;

0.01-0.20 indicated a very low relationship;

0.21-0.40 was a low relationship.

0.41-0.60 moderate relationship;

0.61-0.80 high relationship;

0.81-0.99 is exceptionally high;

1.00 was the perfect positive relationship.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

What is the correlation coefficient between students' interest in Economics and how teachers prepare their lessons? Data for answering research question 1 are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Correlation Matrix of Relationship between Teachers' Lesson Planning Practices and students' interest in Economics

		Lesson Planning Practices	Students' interest in Economics
Teachers' Lesson Planning Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.737*
	N	399	399
Students' interest in Economics	Pearson Correlation	.737*	1
	N	399	399

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Data in Table 1 indicate a correlation coefficient (r) of.74, which is positive and within the coefficient limits of ±.61 and.80. This indicates that the coefficient of the relationship between teachers' lesson planning practices and students' interest in economics is high and positively correlated.

Hypothesis 1

There is no discernible correlation between students' interest in economics and teachers' methods for lesson planning. Data for testing hypothesis 1 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Regression Analysis of significant of relationship between teachers' lesson planning practices and students 'interest in Economics

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
	Regression	351.909	1	351.909	152.871	.000
1	Residual	916.076	398	2.302		
	Total	1267.985	399			

df= degree of freedom, F = F-calculated, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Data in Table 2 show a p-value of.000, which is less than the alpha value of.05. This means that teachers' lesson planning practices significantly relate to teachers' students 'interest in economics. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no discernible correlation between students' interest in economics and teachers' methods for lesson planning was rejected.

Research Question 2

What is the coefficient of correlation between students' interest in economics and the ways in which teachers communicate their material?

Table 3. Correlation Matrix of Relationship between Teachers' Presentation practices and students' interest in Economics

		Teachers' Lesson presentation practices	Students' interest in Economics
Teachers' presentation practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.771*
	N	399	399
Students' interest in Economics	Pearson Correlation	.771*	1
	N	399	399

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The data in Table 3 indicate a correlation coefficient (r) of.77, which is positive and within the coefficient limits of ±.61 and.80. This indicates that the coefficient of relationship between teachers' presentation practices and students' interest in economics is positive and highly correlated.

Hypothesis 2

There is no statistically significant correlation between the ways in which teachers convey their material and the interest that students have in economics. Data for testing hypothesis 2 are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression Analysis of significant of relationship between Teachers' presentation practices and students' interest in Economics

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-value
Regression	101.459	1	101.459	28.222	.000
Residual	1430.933	398	3.595		
Total	1441.392	399			

df= degree of freedom, F = F-calculated, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Data in Table 4 show a p-value of.000, which is less than the alpha value of.05. This means that teachers' presentation practices significantly relate to students' interest in economics. Therefore, the hypothesis that the coefficient of relationship between teachers' presentation practices and students 'interest in economics is not significant was rejected.

Research Question 3

What is the coefficient of correlation between students' interest in economics and teachers' pedagogical subject knowledge practices?

Table 5. Correlation Matrix of the Relationship between Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge Practices and Students' Interest in Economics

		Teachers' pedagogical content knowledge	Students' interest in Economics
Teachers' pedagogical content knowledge	Pearson Correlation	1	.804*
	N	399	399
Students' interest in Economics	Pearson Correlation	.804*	1
	N	399	399

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The data in Table 5 indicate a correlation coefficient (r) of.804, which is positive and within the coefficient limits of ±.81 and.99. This indicates that the coefficient of relationship between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and students' interest in economics . is very high and positively correlated.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant correlation found between students' interest in economics and teachers' pedagogical topic knowledge practices.

Table 6. Regression Analysis of Significant of Relationship between Teachers'
pedagogical content knowledge practices and students' interest in Economics

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-value
1	Regression	108.271	1	108.271	29.342	.003
	Residual	1472.363	398	3.699		
	Total	1580.634	399			

df= degree of freedom, F = F-calculated, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Data in Table 46 show a P-value of.003, which is less than the alpha value of.05. This means that the coefficient of relationship between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge practices and students' interest in economics is significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that the coefficient of relationship between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge practices and students' interest in economics is not significant was rejected.

Research Question 4

What is the correlation coefficient between students' interest in economics and the ways in which teachers apply their lessons?

Table 7. Correlation Matrix of the Relationship between Teachers' Lesson Application Practice and Students' Interest in Economics

		Teachers' lesson application Practices	Students' interest in Economics
Teachers' Lesson application practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.67*
	N	399	399
Students' interest in Economics	Pearson Correlation	.67*	1
	N	399	399

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The data in Table 7 indicate a correlation coefficient (r) of.67, which is positive and within the coefficient limit of ±.0.61-0.80. This indicates that the coefficient of relationship between teachers' lesson application and students' interest in economics is positive and highly correlated.

Hypothesis 4

There is no significant correlation between the application of lessons by teachers and the interest of students in economics.

Table 8. Regression Analysis of Significant Relationship between Teachers' lesson application practices and students' interest in Economics

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-value
1	Regression	192.11	1	192.11	53.349	.000

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-value
Residual	1433.061	398	3.601		
Total	1625.171	399			

df= degree of freedom, F = F-calculated, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Data in Table 8 show a P-value of.000, which is less than the alpha value of.05. This means that the coefficient of relationship between teachers' lesson application practices and students' interest in economics is significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between the application of lessons by teachers and the interest of students in economics was rejected.

Research Question 5
How much can teachers' methods of instruction (lesson design, delivery, use of pedagogical content knowledge, and so on) predict students' interest in economics?

Table 9. Multiple correlation coefficient of the extent teachers' instructional practices

N	R	R^2	Remarks
399	**0.751**	0.56(56%)	High Relationship

Sample Size (n), Multiple Correlation Coefficient (R), coefficient of determination (R^2) and Remarks

Table 9, Multiple Correlations The coefficient was computed to describe the extent teachers' instructional practices (lesson planning, presentation, pedagogical content knowledge, and application) predict students' interest in economics. The result shows that the coefficient of 0.75 falls within the coefficient limit of ±.0.61-0.80, indicating a high positive relationship between teachers' instructional practices (lesson planning, presentation, pedagogical content knowledge, and application) and students' interest in economics. The coefficient of determination (R2) of 0.56 indicates that 56% of the variance observed in students' interest in economics was accounted for by teachers' instructional practices.

Hypothesis 5
Students' interest in economics is not significantly predicted by the dimensions of teachers' instructional practices (lesson preparation, presentation, pedagogical topic understanding, and application).

Table 10. One-way ANOVA F-test for the coefficient of relationship among the dimensions of teachers' instructional practices

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F_{cal}	P-value	Decision
Regression	199.509	4	49.877			
Residual	1451.047	398	3.646	**13.679**	**.001**	**Reject Ho₅**
Total	7644.561	399				

F-test of Significance of Multiple Linear Correlation/Regression among the variable

The data in Table 10 show a one-way ANOVA F-test of significance of a multiple linear correlation statistic computed to display the dimension of teachers' instructional practices (lesson planning, presentation, pedagogical content knowledge, and application) that significantly predict students' interest in economics. Based on the data in the table, given the calculated F-ratio value of 13.679, a p-value of.001 is less than.05 level of significance. Hence, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis, thus concluding that students' interest in economics was significantly predicted by the dimensions of teachers' instructional practices (lesson preparation, presentation, pedagogical topic understanding, and application).

3.2 Discussion

According to the data, there was a strong and positive correlation between students' interest in economics and teachers' methods for lesson planning. In a similar vein, the matching hypothesis showed a substantial relationship between students' interest in economics and teachers' lesson-planning strategies (John, 2006; Manzi & Moreeng, 2023). This result was consistent with that of Mussel (2022); Amorim Neto et al. (2022), who discovered that curiosity and academic success had a reciprocal relationship because they both supported one another. This suggests that learners' curiosity can act as a factor in stimulating their attention and improving their memory.

According to the study, there is a good and strong correlation between students' interest in economics and teachers' presentation techniques. The corresponding hypothesis also showed a substantial relationship between students' interest in economics and teachers' presentation techniques. This result is consistent with that of Wyk (2011); Ayeni & Afolabi (2012), who claimed that there is a highly substantial correlation between students' academic interest in economics and teachers' performance in presentation techniques.

The corresponding hypothesis suggested that there is a significant correlation between the interest of students in economics and the pedagogical content knowledge practices of teachers. However, the results also showed that there is a very high and positive correlation between the two variables. The results are consistent with Falk's (2012) findings, which demonstrated that teachers' pedagogical content knowledge aids in simplifying, blending, and ensuring that the material being learned suits students' cognitive capacities and piques their interest.

The study's results confirmed the positive and strong correlation between teachers' application of lessons and students' interest in economics, while the corresponding hypothesis found a significant correlation between teachers' pedagogical lesson application practices and students' interest in economics. Prince & Felder (2006); McWhirter & Shealy (2020) discovered, among other things, that we should use learning cycle-based instructional strategies, project-based learning approaches, and case-based approaches to teach students how to be work-independent and pique their interest as they engage in meaningful participation.

According to the study, students' interest in economics and teachers' instructional practices—which include class design, presentation, pedagogical material knowledge, and application—is highly positively and significantly correlated. The results were consistent with the claims made by Slavin (2011); Becker & Jacobsen (2020) that teachers' instructional practices help students master the material they are studying, help teachers choose a variety of teaching strategies, and inspire students to perform better.

4. CONCLUSION

The study's conclusions showed that there is a strong positive correlation between economics teachers' instructional strategies and their students' interest in the subject. As a result, educational administrators ought to designate economics instructors with formal training and a foundation in economics pedagogy. Delivering teaching effectively will result from this. Teachers of economics should make an effort to motivate students to study and to introduce the subject using any suitable teaching strategies. When teaching a lesson in economics, teachers should take into account the various learning styles of their students in order to pique their interest and help them perform well in the subject.

In order to provide efficient classroom instruction and stay up-to-date with the latest innovations in education, educational administrators should routinely review the lesson plans created by economics instructors. Teachers of economics should try to incorporate contemporary social themes into their lessons. That is to say, giving the abstract nature of the subject some real-world application will pique students' interest and inevitably lead to high achievement. We should hold seminars, workshops, and other capacity-building programmes to support the development of economics teachers' professional competencies in the delivery of instruction.

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