



## PERCEIVED EFFECT OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ON THE EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ECONOMICS

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### **Abstract:**

The aim of the research was to find out the perceived effects of instructional materials on the effective teaching and learning of economics in some selected Senior High Schools (SHS) in the Cape Coast Metropolis. In specific terms, the study investigated the types instructional materials used in teaching and learning of Economics. The study also examined the perceived effects of instructional materials on the effective teaching and learning of economics. The study employed descriptive cross-sectional survey design. Respondents of this comprised 21 Senior High School Economics teachers and 123 Senior High School form 2 Economics students drawn from the Cape Coast Metropolis in the Central Region of Ghana. A 21-item questionnaire was used to elicit response from both teachers and students. A reliability index of .801 was obtained. The data were analyzed using frequency and percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings of the study showed that teachers use variety of instructional materials in the teaching of economics. The study also found that majority of the Economics teachers and students agreed that instructional materials are useful in the teaching and learning of Economics.

**Keywords:** economics, effective teaching, instructional materials, learning, perceived effect

### **1. Introduction**

Teaching and learning go together. According to Bosswell (2010), they are the opposite sides of the same coin. Over the years, learning of Economics has not been easy for students due to some abstract topics in it, hence, the influence of instructional materials in promoting students' understanding and academic performance is indisputable. Teaching and learning materials (instructional materials) are any materials that can be used to motivate student learning and enhance understanding. Students learn concepts or skills and can make inquiries in Economics when an opportunity is provided for them

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to obtain information from multiple sources. Instructional materials assist teachers to make their lessons explicit to learners. They are used to transmit information, ideas and notes to learners (Bosswell, 2010). Instructional materials include both visuals and audio-visuals such as pictures, flashcards, posters, charts, tape recorders, radios, videos, television, computers and others. These materials serve as a supplement to the normal processes of instruction.

Learning is a complex process which involves a change in behaviour due to encounter with experiences. Learning can occur as a result of newly acquired skills, knowledge, perception, facts, principles and new information at hand (Bosswell, 2010). Learning can be reinforced with teaching aid of different variety to stimulate, motivate, as well as arrest learner's attention for a while during the instructional process. According to Freedman and Berg (1961), audio – visual aids enable the students to learn and remember a large amount for a longer time than similar students taught without teaching aids.

Economics Education in Ghana started in 1966 and it is believed to provide intellectual training, preparation for citizenship, vocational training for a business career in areas such as actuarial science, banking, accounting, insurance and others. Economics is an imported subject that must be credited by students before gaining admission into a tertiary institution, especially the university, to study relevant courses like Business Administration, Actuarial Science, Economics, and Insurance, etc. The technicality of Economics as subject calls for relevant instructional materials to be used to teach learners. Macaulay (1989) asserts that visual aids make lesson come alive and help students to learn better. Economics is thus a very important subject and so must be taught practically. It should also be socially oriented if the society is to benefit from it. This therefore shows that the use of instructional materials in teaching and learning of economics would facilitate comprehension by students.

Poor academic performance in Economics could be attributed to many factors among which teachers' strategy itself is considered as a key factor. This denotes that the mastery of Economics concepts cannot be fully achieved without the use of instructional materials. Blythe Lord (1991) stressed that, with instructional materials, teachers can deliver their lesson with vigour which implies brevity with exactness, as sophisticated and delicate ideas can be expressed with the faintest shades of meaning revealed through instructional media.

In the light of the above, this research examined how instructional materials affect teaching and learning of Economics in Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. It is, therefore, essential for teachers to acquire the necessary skills in the use of instructional materials. It seems the most successful teachers involve their students in learning through a variety of instructional materials.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Background

Piaget's theory of learning is a comprehensive theory of human intelligence. It refers to the stage theory of cognitive development. His theory dealt with the nature of knowledge itself and how humans gradually come to acquire, construct and use it. It means that learning is a sequential process that learner can gradually acquire, construct and use information to bring about a disposition or change in attitude and behaviour. To Piaget, for children to learn they need to construct reality out of experience and mix their observation with ideas about how the world works. To Piaget, cognitive development is a progressive reorganization of mental processes resulting from biological maturation and environmental experience. If this theory is anything to go by, then children need to interact with real object in order to understand the world around them. This theory lay emphasise on child-centred classroom environment where the teacher actively engages students a particular lesson. The use of teacher needs to present materials to the student in the classroom to help them link reality to abstract economic concept and ideas. In the field of education, two processes namely; assimilation and accommodation were focused.

He stated that assimilation is the integration of external elements into structures of lives or environment or the things we can have through experience. In the classroom setting when external elements are brought into lesson delivery. It helps students to acquire real world experiences. Assimilation helps learners to perceive and adapt to new ideas and principles.

With, accommodation, pre-existing schemas are altered when new information are taken it helps the individual to fit in new information. Piaget holds the opinion that for people to learn they must assimilate and accommodate. Piaget's theory of learning has several implications on the effect of instructional materials employed in teaching economics.

Effective teaching and learning of economics play a critical role in ensuring that the transaction of the Senior High School Economics curriculum is effectively done. According to Okwo and Ike (1995), issues of teacher effectiveness mainly deal with "*how teachers and pupils view and make sense of what happens in the classroom, and how they view each other and learning activities which occur*". The act of teaching is fundamentally concerned with passing ideas, skills and attitude from the teacher to the learner.

Over the years, effective teaching and learning of Economics have been the prime aim of Economics educationists and students. Therefore, various instructional materials have been employed to enhance the teaching and learning of Economics. Teaching and learning of Economics without adequate and relevant instructional materials is more challenging. Okwo and Ike (1995) described instructional media as aids to effective teaching in the classroom which evoke in students the same mental image as in the teacher, thereby making words comprehensible or understandable.

Rote learning and forgetfulness are usually the results of the overuse of words in learning. In social science education, especially in economics, the students should be able to apply real world situation in the lesson or practicalise the lesson so as to enhance understanding. This will go a long way to help the student recall whenever necessary, implying that, the use of instructional materials in lesson delivery improves learning. The problem is, have the various instructional materials used in the teaching of Economics enhanced effective teaching and learning of Economics? In the wake of this, the study sought to examine the perceived effect of instructional materials on the effective teaching and learning of Economics.

### **3. Material and Methods**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The descriptive cross-sectional survey was used for the study. Descriptive survey design seeks to explore and describe events as they are. This provided a better understanding of the research problem. According to Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (1990), descriptive survey design helps to deal essentially with questions concerning what exists with respect to variables or prevailing conditions in a situation.

#### **3.2 Population**

The population of the study comprised Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The target population of the study was Economics teachers and Economics students in Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The schools that were selected for this research includes Adisadel College, St. Augustine College, Mfantsipim School and University Practice Senior High School. The Economics students were all SHS 2 Economics students selected irrespective of their programme of study and gender.

#### **3.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure**

The sample size was made up of 144 respondents. This is made up of 123 economics students and 21 economics teachers. The simple random technique was used to select 123 students for the study and census method was used to involve all economics teachers.

#### **3.4 Research Instrument**

Two sets of questionnaires were used; one set which was responded to by Economics students and the other set by Economics teachers. The four-point Likert scaled questionnaire was used for sections C, D and E had various score values and others for respondents to specify. Statements were scored as Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

#### **3.5 Procedure for Data Collection**

An approval letter from the heads of the selected schools was used as evidence of permission to administer the research instruments in their schools. The questionnaire was

administered to Economics students and teachers of the selected SHS in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The questionnaire was administered by the researchers themselves (a group of four members). The researchers assured the respondents of complete confidentiality, distributed the questionnaire to the respondents, guided them through how to respond to the items and collected them within 10 to 20 minutes.

### 3.6 Data Analysis Procedure

Data collected were coded and refined with the help of SPSS (version 23). Research question one was analysed using frequency and percentages. Also, research question two and three were analysed using means and standard deviations.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Presentation of Results

**Research Question 1:** what instructional materials are available for teaching and learning Economics at the SHS level?

According to Okwo & Ike (1995), instructional materials can be classified into three (3) categories, namely, visual materials, audio materials and multi-sensory materials. The visual materials appeal to the sense of sight and include photographs, real objects and all print materials. Audio materials include radio, television, audiotapes and public address system. Multi-sensory or audio-visual materials combine the senses of hearing and seeing and include television, video, computer and films. Table 1 to 2 present the types of instructional materials based on Okwo & Ike’s categorisation.

Table 1 describes the responses from teachers based on the types of instructional materials used in teaching and learning of economics.

**Table 1:** Types of Instructional Materials

Resource	Yes Freq (%)	No Freq (%)	Total
Radio	6 (28.6)	15 (71.4)	<b>21</b>
Audio Tapes	5 (23.8)	16 (76.2)	<b>21</b>
Television (Visual)	5 (23.8)	16 (76.2)	<b>21</b>
Public Address System	5 (23.8)	16 (76.2)	<b>21</b>
Pictures (Mostly diagrams and charts)	18 (85.7)	3 (14.3)	<b>21</b>
Photographs	6 (28.6)	15 (71.4)	<b>21</b>
Real Objects	10 (47.6)	11 (52.4)	<b>21</b>
Print Materials	16 (76.2)	5 (23.8)	<b>21</b>
Films	4 (19.0)	17 (81.0)	<b>21</b>
Computer	18 (85.7)	3 (14.3)	<b>21</b>
Video	4 (19.0)	17 (81.0)	<b>21</b>
Television (Audio-Visual)	2 (9.5)	19 (90.5)	<b>21</b>

**Source:** Field data, 2020.

From Table 1, the results show that the majority of the respondents indicated that teachers do not use radio (71.4), audio materials (76.2), television (76.2), photographs (71.4), real objects, films and videos in the delivery of their Economics lessons. They mostly use pictures (mostly diagrams and charts) and print materials, computers in their lesson presentations and sometimes real object.

Table 2 describes the responses from students based on the types of instructional materials used in teaching and learning of economics.

**Table 2: Types of Instructional Materials**

Resource	Yes Freq (%)	No Freq (%)	Total
Radio	4 (3.2)	119 (96.7)	123
Audio Tapes	28 (22.8)	95 (77.2)	123
Television (Visual)	12 (9.8)	111 (90.2)	123
Public Address System	23 (18.7)	100 (81.3)	123
Pictures (Mostly diagrams and charts)	85 (69.1)	38 (30.9)	123
Photographs	11 (8.9)	112 (91.1)	123
Real Objects	14 (11.4)	109 (88.6)	123
Print Materials	59 (48.0)	64 (52.0)	123
Films	5 (4.1)	118 (95.9)	123
Computer	68 (55.3)	55 (44.7)	123
Video	16 (13.0)	107 (87.0)	123
Television (Audio-Visual)	8 (6.5)	115 (93.5)	123

**Source:** Field data, 2020.

From Table 2, students responses indicated that teachers do not use radio, audio materials, television, photographs, real objects, films and videos in the delivery of their Economics lessons. They mostly use pictures (mostly diagrams and charts) and print materials in their lesson presentations and sometimes real object and computers.

**Research Question 2:** What are the perceived effects of instructional materials on the teaching of Economics?

Tables 3 to 4 present the perceived effect of instructional materials on the teaching and learning of Economics. The mean ranges for the responses were given as: Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Agree = 3; Strongly Agree = 4.

Table 3 presented the results from the analysis of data provided by Economics teachers on the perceived effect of instructional materials on the teaching of Economics.

As clearly shown in Table 1, the highest mean value recorded was ( $M = 3.90$ ,  $SD = .30$ , and is in relation to the statement that “instructional materials help to clarify points better to learners”. This implies that a majority of the respondents strongly agreed that instructional materials help to clarify points better to students.

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**Table 3:** Perceived Effect of Instructional Materials on the Teaching of Economics

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Instructional materials help to clarify points better to learners.	3.90	.30
2	Instructional materials help to present real life experience to students	3.62	.49
3	Instructional materials make lesson delivery interesting.	3.81	.40
4	Instructional materials help me to involve learners in lesson presentation.	3.62	.50
5	I feel at ease when using instructional materials in explaining concept to students.	3.57	.51
6	Instructional materials make teaching very effective.	3.52	.51
7	Learners give good responses when instructional materials are used.	3.57	.51
8	Saves time for other matters to be attended to when teaching economics.	3.05	.74
9	Learners perform better in class exercises and exams when instructional materials are used.	3.48	.60
<b>Average Mean/Average Standard deviation</b>		3.57	0.51

Source: Field data, 2020.

On the whole, the Economics teachers acknowledged that instructional materials have a positive effect on teaching. This is revealed in the result of an Average Mean of 3.57. However, an average standard deviation of .51 implies that responses are widely spread from the average mean.

Table 4 presents results on students' response as regards to the perceived effects of instructional materials on the learning of Economics. The Economics students were offered with nine items to rate in terms of the perceived effects of instructional materials on the learning of Economics. The summary of the results is shown in Table 4.

**Research Question 3:** What are the perceived effects of instructional materials on the learning of Economics?

Table 4 presented the results from the analysis of data provided by Economics students on the perceived effect of instructional materials on the learning of Economics.

**Table 4:** Perceived Effect of Instructional Materials on the Learning of Economics

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Instructional materials arouse interest to learn.	3.37	.66
2	Instructional materials provide better understanding of economics concepts	3.44	.64
3	Instructional materials provide practicality to the learning of economics.	3.27	.71
4	Instructional materials promote attention in class and involve students in lessons.	3.26	.78
5	Instructional materials help to easy recall concepts and principles learnt.	3.52	.60
6	I am always motivated whenever the teacher uses materials to teach.	3.30	.78
7	Instructional materials facilitate learning of Economics concepts and principles.	3.34	.69
8	Instructional materials motivate students to learn.	3.16	.77
9	Instructional materials help in easy recall of facts.	3.46	.61
<b>Average Mean/Average Standard deviation</b>		3.35	.69

Source: Field data, 2020.

From Table 4, it can be observed that the highest mean value recorded was on the statement that "instructional materials help to easy recall concepts and principles learnt"

( $M = 3.52$ ,  $SD = .60$ ) while the lowest mean value on the statement that “instructional materials motivate students to learn” ( $M = 3.16$ ,  $SD = .77$ ). Furthermore, an Average Mean of 3.35 was recorded. This implies that most of the respondents agreed that instructional materials have a positive effect on the learning of Economics. An average standard deviation of .69 indicates that the responses are scattered around the mean.

#### **4.2 Discussion of Results**

The first research question of this study was to find out the types of instructional materials used in teaching and learning of Economics at the Senior High School level. The respondents (teachers and students) indicated that they do not use some of the instructional materials since the majority of the responses were “NO” for radio, audio tapes, films, photographs, public address system, real object, videos and films but only use pictures (mostly diagrams and charts), computers and print materials. However, they indicated that computers, real objects and print materials are mostly used. This finding is in harmony with the opinions of Okwo & Ike (1995) who emphasized that instructional materials can be classified into three (3) categories, namely, visual materials, audio materials and multi-sensory materials. The visual materials appeal to the sense of sight and include photographs, real objects and all print materials. Audio materials include radio, television, audiotapes and public address system. Multi-sensory or audio-visual materials combine the senses of hearing and seeing and include television, video, computer and films. From the study, computers, real objects and print materials are the instructional materials often used in the teaching and learning of Economics at the SHS level. Computer falls under multi-sensory or audio -visual instructional materials. Print materials and real objects also fall under visual instructional materials.

Research question two sought to find out the perceived effects of instructional materials on the teaching of Economics at the SHS level. On the whole, the Economics teachers indicated that instructional materials are useful. In addition, the findings suggest that the instructional materials have a positive effect on teaching. This finding is consistent with that of Boswell (2010) which asserted that instructional materials help the teacher to classify, establish, correlate concepts and make learning more concrete and thereby removes the remoteness and abstraction which most of the time renders the subject matter uninteresting and difficult to understand.

Research question three was meant to find out find out the perceived effects of instructional materials on the learning of Economics at the SHS level. Results of this study revealed that instructional materials have a positive effect on the learning of Economics. The finding of this current study is in tandem with that of Okwo and Ike (1995) who stated in his course book for “Economics in the school curriculum” that instructional resources help arouse learners’ interest and ideas they learned, they lend reality to the classroom teaching and link instruction to real life, and they give meaning to learners and enrich learning process.



## 5. Recommendations

It is recommended that schools, Parent-Teacher Associations, Non-Governmental Organizations and Ghana Education Service must help provide instructional materials to facilitate the availability of instructional materials to aid the teaching and learning of Economics, since that will be helpful in enhancing the teaching and learning process.

## 6. Conclusion

The study was designed to ascertain the perceived effect of instructional materials on teaching and learning of Economics. The findings from the study showed that teachers use variety of instructional materials in the teaching of economics. Computers, real objects and print materials were mostly used. Also, instructional materials had a positive effect on teaching and learning of Economics.

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## About the Author(s)

Dominic Winston Kaku and Francis Arthur are both trained Economics Educationists. Currently, they are both Master of Philosophy in Economics Education candidates at the University of Cape Coast in Ghana. They both have special interest in Economics Education research.

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