

## SCHOOL FACTORS AS CORRELATES OF SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS' CREATIVITY SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN UPPER BASIC SCHOOLS, KWARA STATE

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### **Abstract**

*In contemporary educational discourse, creativity is increasingly recognized as a vital skill for thriving in the twenty-first century-societies are confronting with complex social, economics and technology challenges that require individuals not only to acquire knowledge but also to think critically. Education is a systematic process through which an individual is introduced to crucial tool for intellectual, creativities, technical, moral, and economic development. This study examined School factors as correlates of Social Studies students' creativity skill development in Upper Basic Schools in Kwara State. It explored the level School factors, the level of creativity skill development among Social Studies students. The study adopted a descriptive design of survey with a population of junior secondary school students in Kwara State. A sample of 300 students from public upper basic schools across the three senatorial districts was selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a validated questionnaire titled "School Factors as correlates of Social Studies Students Creativity Skills Development in Upper Basic School in Kwara State." The data were analysed using percentages, mean, standard deviation, weighted mean, and multiple linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that the level of Social Studies teacher factors junior secondary schools of in Kwara State was average (Weighted Mean = 3.25). Similarly, creativity skill development among Upper Basic students in Social Studies was also at an average level (Weighted Mean = 2.85). A significant relationship was found between the school factors and students' creativity skill development ( $F = 9.227$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that school factors play a crucial role in fostering creativity among students. The study concluded that school factors are significant determinants of Social Studies students' creativity skill development in Kwara State. It recommended that school management should make appropriate and adequate investments in the education sector to provide necessary facilities and manpower. This would enhance students' creative potential and improve learning outcomes in Social Studies.*

**Keywords:** Education, Schools Factors, Professional Development, Creativity, Social Studies

### **Introduction**

In contemporary educational discourse, creativity is increasingly recognized as a vital skill for thriving in the twenty-first century. Societies are confronted with complex social, economic, and technological challenges that require individuals not only to acquire knowledge but also to think critically, solve problems innovatively, and adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. Consequently, education systems worldwide are moving away from traditional, rote-based approaches toward pedagogies that emphasize higher-order thinking, collaboration, and creative engagement. In this context, creativity is understood not merely as an individual cognitive ability but as a

socially situated process, shaped through interaction, cultural practices, and institutional support.

Within the Nigerian education system, these global imperatives are reflected in national policy frameworks that prioritize functional, relevant, and learner-centred education. The National Policy on Education and the Basic Education Curriculum advocate teaching approaches that cultivate inquiry, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving (Ogunfowokan et al., 2025). In support of this orientation, Okpara (2024) noted that such policies are designed to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for meaningful societal participation and national development. As such, Social Studies, as a school subject, serves as a strategic vehicle for the realization of these educational policy objectives..

Word Press (2019) categorized education into informal, formal and non-formal forms. Formal education addresses structured schooling in which learners are taught by specialized teachers equipped with relevant academic skills. Students typically progress through pre-basic, basic and upper-basic schooling as part of their foundational educational development. Consequently, the formal school environment is an organized and intentional learning setting governed by subject-specific curricula, syllabi, and a range of principles that both students and teachers are expected to observe.

The focus of this study, with respect to creativity skills development in Social Studies, centre on students' abilities in problem-solving, writing, visual arts, and communication. These skills enable individuals to translate innovative ideas into practical solutions to challenges that may arise in various aspects of life, including the home, family, relationships, education, employment, and career. Problem-solving skills, in particular, are regarded as critical to the productive execution of tasks and the achievement of personal and professional goals. The poor performance of students in Social Studies may therefore be attributed, at least in part, to their limited creativity in problem-solving.

Yusuf and Amzat (2020) stated that a positive school climate characterized by trust, mutual respect, and openness fosters collaboration, dialogue, and learner participation; conditions essential for nurturing creativity. Schools that promote inquiry, curiosity, and inclusivity provide learners with the psychosocial safety to express ideas, challenge assumptions, and engage in reflective thinking. In contrast, highly competitive or hierarchical school cultures, where errors are stigmatized and conformity is rewarded, tend to restrict creative engagement and limit students' ability to explore alternative solutions (Kutsyuruba et al., 2015).

The availability and quality of school instructional resources further influence the development of creativity in schools. Ibrahim and Sanusi (2019) articulated that access to well-equipped classrooms, libraries, digital technologies, teaching aids, and laboratory materials enables teachers to design diverse learning experiences that stimulate exploration, experimentation, and problem-solving.

Within the school system, the role of teachers is also vital, and teacher-related factors exert substantial influence on learners' development. Weaver (2019) identified teacher factors to include teaching experience, professional development, and educational qualifications. These attributes can shape students' academic attainment in various

ways. The quality of a teacher's experience, for instance, can either enhance or impede learning outcomes. Scholars such as Sawyer (2022) stated that the extent to which teachers support creativity is strongly influenced by their subject knowledge, pedagogical competence, attitudes toward creative learning, feedback mechanism and professional development. Teachers who possess strong content mastery and pedagogical skills are better positioned to design tasks that challenge learners cognitively and socially (Ezike & Olatunbosun, 2023). In addition, teachers' beliefs and attitude about creativity shape their willingness to encourage questioning, tolerate ambiguity, and accept diverse ideas (Kamran & Hashmat, 2023). Mandouit and Hattie (2023) asserted that the use of constructive feedback, open-ended questioning, and reflective assessment practices further supports learners in refining ideas and developing creative confidence. Continuous professional development also plays a vital role in equipping teachers with innovative teaching strategies and contemporary approaches that promote creativity in the classroom (Rugambwa & Mwaikokesya, 2022).

Instructional approaches adopted by teachers significantly determine the level of creative engagement among learners. Learner-centred, inquiry-based, and participatory teaching methods have been shown to promote socially embedded creativity by encouraging dialogue, collaboration, problem-solving, and active knowledge construction (Sakata et al., 2022). Such approaches allow learners to engage meaningfully with content and apply ideas to real-life situations. In contrast, teacher-centred, examination-driven practices that emphasize rote memorization and fixed answers often restrict students' opportunities for creative thinking and exploration.

Teacher qualification is also a significant school factor frequently considered in assessments of school quality. Although Weaver (2019) noted that the concept of a "highly qualified" teacher has become somewhat outdated, the underlying requirements remain relevant. These requirements typically include earning a bachelor's degree, obtaining registration from the Teachers Registration Council, and demonstrating mastery of subject content. While these conditions may appear demanding, they are necessary for the effective implementation of school curricula, particularly in core subjects such as Social Studies. In the United States, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) educational reform emphasised the importance of highly qualified teachers in revitalising education (Robinson, 2011), and similar expectations are reflected in the Universal Basic Education (UBE) mandate for quality teachers in Nigerian basic schools. Despite variations in state-level requirements, the emphasis on teacher competence remains constant.

Professional development program within schools enhance teachers' knowledge, experience and skills, enabling them to support students more effectively and foster creativity. School owners, administrators and Social Studies teachers must therefore prioritise continuous professional learning to strengthen students' creativity skills. As Evans (2011) noted, efforts to promote teacher professionalism inevitably focus on behavioural dimensions of practice, and any changes in professionalism require corresponding professional development. Enhancing teachers' professionalism is thus an essential component of meaningful professional growth.

Olagbaju (2020) also identified teaching experience, subject mastery and questioning

behaviour as indispensable teacher factors within the instructional process. These teacher-related attributes have the potential to positively influence students' creativity skills. Students taught by teachers who possess strong mastery of their subject matter are better positioned to expand their knowledge. Subject mastery refers to the depth of expertise and understanding an individual holds in a given discipline. Omotoyinbo and Olaniyi (2019) maintained that subject mastery and effective communication are distinguishing features of teachers and significant determinants of their success in the classroom.

Effective teaching begins with the teacher's depth of knowledge regarding the subject to be taught. Equally, communication skill constitutes another critical dimension in evaluating teacher quality. Communication is broadly understood as the giving, receiving or exchange of ideas, information, signals or messages through appropriate media, with the aim of persuading, seeking information, providing information or expressing emotion. This definition encompasses body language as well as speaking and writing skills. Listening, therefore, forms an essential aspect of communication. According to Courtright (2011), listening fosters meaningful, engaging and respectful conversations. Deeper levels of communication emerge when attentive listening occurs. Teachers help to develop learners' speaking and listening capacities by modelling positive and effective communication. Improved communication enhances relationships and contributes to the development of self-esteem.

Huang et al. (2020) described creativity as a multidimensional construct comprising cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. Similarly, Sudjarwo et al. (2019) defined creativity as a spontaneous, imaginative and purposeful pattern of thought or ideas that leads to invention and creation. Creativity is an important construct that merits exploration within academic settings, irrespective of the field of study. It is relevant and valuable across all spheres of human endeavour. Creativity involves producing something genuinely new and original, which requires the exercise of creative thinking skills. Although creativity and innovation are sometimes assumed to be natural phenomena, they can in fact be developed or enhanced through training and through the application of appropriate instructional strategies (Rock Content Writer, 2021). Creativity differs from innovation in that creativity focuses on generating ideas, whereas innovation extends this process to implementation and execution (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017).

Furthermore, Robinson and Stubberud (2014) argued that creativity and innovation are essential components of business development. This suggests that creativity is closely linked with human thinking, as the ideas that drive innovation emerge from critical or creative thinking. Creative thinking is the ability and soft skill applied to develop novel solutions to problems. Such ability is crucial for students as they confront increasingly complex socio-economic challenges, particularly in today's competitive era (Arbia et al., 2020; Astuti et al., 2020). In addition, Jooss et al. (2020) emphasised that flexibility, adaptability and authenticity are essential for coping with the demands of living and working in an ever-changing world.

The process of developing creative thinking is associated with the use of lateral thinking, visual reading, out-of-the-box thinking, copywriting, artistic creativity, problem-solving, analytical thinking, divergent thinking, brainstorming, and mind mapping. These techniques are, however, applied subjectively across a range of

creativity skills such as experimentation, considering opposing views, asking questions, communication and organisation (Rock Content Writer, 2021). The Indeed Editorial Team (2021) similarly defined creativity as the ability to think about a task or problem in a new or different way, or to use one's imagination to generate original ideas.

Creativity enables individuals to solve complex problems and to adopt innovative approaches to tasks. For school students, creativity involves the process that leads to insightful solutions and the formulation of new questions that challenge old techniques from fresh perspectives an endeavour requiring imagination and inventiveness. Creativity is nurtured when teachers encourage learners to produce original ideas, and creative education has been shown to stimulate critical thinking (Saracho, 2012).

Social Studies gained prominence in the school curriculum during the 1960s, following its success in addressing socio-political challenges in Britain and the United States. This momentum influenced the introduction of the subject in other African countries, including Nigeria. In Britain, Social Studies education was justified as a means of healing the social wounds of the First and Second World Wars by fostering respect for constituted authority, promoting civic responsibility, encouraging respect for elders, protecting public property, valuing human life and contributing meaningfully to societal development. The national curriculum conference held in 1969 served as the catalyst for incorporating Social Studies into Nigeria's educational curriculum (Edinyang, Mezieobi & Ubi, 2013).

Social Studies is a compulsory subject at the Junior Secondary School (JSS) level in Nigeria (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). As a core subject, it is expected to instil fundamental values essential for national development. For this ideal to be realised, effective instructional program are required to motivate learners. Utulu (2012) defined Social Studies as any course concerned with humans as social beings and with the ways they organise society. This includes the social, cultural, economic, political, historical and geographical dimensions of life, demonstrating that Social Studies provides young learners with a broad understanding of the various disciplines within the social sciences.

Several studies have examined the influence of teacher and school-related factors on students' creativity skills. Park, Kim and Jang (2017) investigated the factors influencing the creative personality of elementary school students in Seoul using a path analysis approach. Their study of 208 fifth- and sixth-grade students revealed significant correlations between scientific attitude, attentiveness, and creativity, while gender and age showed no significant effect. Scientific attitude exhibited the strongest direct effect on creativity, with attentiveness playing a supportive role. Similarly, Meintjes and Grosser (2010), in their study of prospective teachers in South Africa, found that creative thinking was shaped by contextual factors such as school type, culture, socio-economic background, and the presence of role models. These studies collectively demonstrate the importance of school environments and teacher-related factors in nurturing creativity.

Further evidence underscores the central role of teachers in fostering creative development. Machali et al. (2021) examined the influence of teacher creativity on

students' ingenuity in Indonesian vocational schools and highlighted the mediating role of entrepreneurial education. Their findings showed that teacher creativity significantly enhanced student creativity, especially when entrepreneurial education was integrated into the curriculum. Perdana et al. (2019) investigated gender differences in creative and critical thinking among chemistry students and found that male students displayed stronger creative-thinking skills, while female students excelled in critical thinking. Tan et al. (2016) explored how classroom context affects creativity in high-ability students, concluding that eliminating high-stakes examinations created more opportunities for creative potential to develop. Collectively, these studies indicate that school structures, teaching strategies, and the learning environment significantly influence students' creativity skills.

Upon the substantial body of research examining creativity and academic outcomes, few studies have specifically explored teacher-related factors influencing creativity skills among upper basic students in Kwara State, particularly in Social Studies. Although researchers such as Hamdallah et al. (2014) and Edeh et al. (2018) investigated creative teaching practices and instructional methods in Nigeria, they did not address how teacher factors shape learners' creativity in Social Studies. This gap highlights the necessity for targeted research on the influence of teacher-related factors on creativity skills among upper basic Social Studies students in Kwara State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Many school administrators and Social Studies teachers place insufficient emphasis on staff professional development, often owing to financial constraints or a limited appreciation of its role in fostering student creativity. This neglect contributes to the continued use of outdated instructional practices that do little to cultivate learners' creative capacities. In contrast, investment in teachers' professional growth strengthens their ability to nurture creativity skills among Social Studies students, ensuring that classroom learning remains dynamic and responsive.

Although creativity is widely acknowledged as a critical twenty-first-century skill, rigid and overly structured teaching environments frequently inhibit students' creative expression. Learners require educators who can stimulate imaginative thinking and encourage experimentation without fear of failure. Yet, despite increasing global recognition of creativity as a core educational priority, research on this topic within the Nigerian context remains limited. Existing studies tend to draw predominantly on foreign experiences, with insufficient attention given to local realities.

Moreover, only a few studies have interrogated teacher-related factors as independent variables influencing students' creativity, particularly within Social Studies education at the upper basic level in Kwara State. Addressing this gap is essential to strengthening the quality and relevance of Social Studies education in Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to examine the school factors as correlates of Social Studies Students Creativity Skills Development in Upper Basic Schools in Kwara state, Nigeria. Specifically, this study examined;

- a. the Level of school factors as correlates of upper basic Social Studies students' creativity skills development in Kwara State.
- b. the level of creativity skill development among upper basic students in Social Studies Kwara state; and

- c. the Level of Social Studies teachers factors (i.e. teachers' professional development, teaching approaches and interdisciplinary) in Kwara state;

### Research Questions

The following research questions was answered in the course of this study

1. What is the level of school factors (i.e.school management supports, time school flexibility and nurturing of the school environment) in Kwara state?
2. What is the level of creativity skill development among upper basic students in Social Studies in Kwara State?

### Research Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between school factors (i.e. school management supports, time school flexibility and nurturing of the school environment) and upper basic Social Studies students' creativity skills development in Kwara State, Nigeria

### Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised all junior secondary school students in Kwara State, while the target sample consisted of 300 Junior Secondary School III students drawn from public upper basic schools. The sample was selected across the three senatorial districts: 10 schools from Kwara Central, 10 from Kwara North and 10 from Kwara South, with 10 students randomly selected from each school.

Data were collected using a questionnaire titled *School Factors as Correlates of Social Studies Students' Creativity Skill Development in Upper Basic Schools, Kwara State*. The instrument comprised three sections: Section A captured demographic information; Section B contained 20 items on school factors; and Section C comprised 10 items measuring students' creative abilities, adapted from Sunday (2000). Sections B and C were rated on a four-point Likert scale, and responses were categorised into low, average and high levels.

Reliability of the instrument was determined using the test-retest procedure, which produced correlation coefficients ranging from  $r = 0.72$  to  $0.85$ , indicating high reliability. Internal consistency was further assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding coefficients of  $0.61$  for school-factor items and  $0.87$  for creativity-scale items. The questionnaire was validated by experts in Social Sciences Education at the University of Ilorin. A pilot study involving 40 junior secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis who possessed similar characteristics to the main study respondents provided additional evidence of reliability.

Trained research assistants assisted with data collection. Permission to administer the questionnaire was obtained from school authorities through an official letter issued by the university. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and weighted mean) to address the research questions, while Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was employed to test the study's null hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise respondents' demographic characteristics, whereas the regression analysis examined the extent to which teacher-related factors predicted students' creativity skills. Clear and concise instructions accompanied the instrument to ensure accurate responses and enhance the validity of the data obtained.

**Data Analysis and Results**

**Demographical Information of the Sampled Junior Secondary School Students**

**Table 1: Distribution of the Sampled Junior Secondary School Students according to Gender**

Gender	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	148	49.3
Female	152	50.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Result in Table 1 showed the distribution of the junior secondary school students that participated in the study according to their gender. It is shown that out of 300 (100.0%) of the student participants, 148(49.3%) were males while 152(50.7%) were females. It is shown in the table that female students constitute the majority of the participants in the study.

**Table 2: Distribution of the Sampled Junior Secondary School Students according to Senatorial District Location of their Schools**

Senatorial District	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Kwara North	100	33.3
Kwara Central	100	33.3
Kwara South	100	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Result in Table 2 showed the distribution of the junior secondary school students that participated in the study according to the senatorial district of their school location. It is shown that equal number and percentage of student participants 100 (33.3%) was selected across the three senatorial districts in the State and this makes a total sample of 300 (100.0%) student participants that were involved in the study.

**Answering of the Research Questions**

*Research Question 1: What is the level of Social Studies teachers' factors (i.e. teachers' professional development, teaching approaches and interdisciplinary) in Kwara State?*

**Table 3: Level of Social Studies Teachers Factor in Kwara State**

Teacher Factors	M	SD	Remarks
Professional Development	3.41	.48	Average
Multiple Approaches and Teaching Strategies	3.31	.46	Average
Collaboration and Partnership for Interdisciplinary	3.04	.81	Average
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.25</b>		Average

Key: 1.00-2.49 = Low, 2.50-3.49 = Average, 3.50-4.00=High

Result in Table 3 showed the profile of Social Studies teachers factors in relation to teachers' professional development, teaching approaches and interdisciplinary, and collaboration and partnership for interdisciplinary in Kwara State. As shown in Table 3, in terms of teacher professional development ( $M = 3.41$ ,  $SD = .48$ ), multiple approaches and teaching strategies ( $M = 3.31$ ,  $SD = .46$ ), and collaboration and partnership for interdisciplinary ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = .81$ ), the profile of the Social Studies

teachers in the Upper Basic schools in Kwara State can be described as average. Also, the overall weighted mean of 3.25 obtained showed an average level. This outcome implies that the engagement level of Social Studies teachers in the Upper Basic schools in Kwara State in relation to their teachers’ professional development, teaching approaches and interdisciplinary can be described as average. In other words, Social Studies teachers in the Upper Basic schools in Kwara State lack adequate opportunity to engage in activities that can develop them, their ways of teaching and working together within the school settings.

**Research Question 3:** *What is the level of creativity skill development among Upper Basic students in Social Studies in Kwara State?*

**Table 4: Level of Creativity Skill Development among Basic Students in Social Studies in Kwara State**

S/N	Creativity Skill Items	M	SD
1	I usually generate more examples myself from the ones given in class by my social studies teachers	2.97	.92
2	I usually generate more exercises from the ones given in class by my Social Studies teachers	2.83	.97
3	I can adjust quickly to new learning situation in Social Studies.	2.72	1.02
4	I do not easily be discouraged when things do not work as planned in Social Studies.	2.77	1.00
5	I like testing different methods in solving a problem in Social Studies.	2.78	.99
6	I do not easily give up when assignment proves difficult in Social Studies.	2.69	1.12
7	I usually have more questions to ask than being permitted in social studies class.	2.77	1.11
8	I can quickly divert my attention from one discussion to another in Social Studies.	2.59	1.05
9	I like trying new methods of doing things in Social Studies.	3.19	.96
10	I can easily adapt a material for other different uses in Social Studies class.	3.35	.91
<b>Weighted Mean</b>		<b>2.85</b>	

Key: 1.00-2.49 = Low Level, 2.50-3.49 = Average Level, 3.50-4.00=High Level

Result in Table 4 showed the level of creativity skill development among the Upper Basic students in Social Studies in Kwara State. Given a weighted mean value of 2.85, this result showed that creativity skill development among the Upper Basic students in Social Studies in Kwara State is at average level. The level of creativity skill development among the Upper Basic students in Social Studies in Kwara State is neither low nor high.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** *There is no significant relationship between school factors and upper basic Social Studies students’ creativity skills development in Kwara State, Nigeria*

**Table 5: Multiple Regression on Relationship between School Factors and Upper Basic Social Studies Students’ Creativity Development in Kwara State.**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Inference
<b>Regression</b>	59.658	3	19.886			
<b>Residual</b>	57.498	296	.194	102.37	.00	S
<b>Total</b>	117.156	299		4	0	

$p < 0.05$

Table 5 shows the results of multiple regression conducted to determine the relationship between school factors and Upper Basic Social Studies students' creativity development in Kwara State. The output reveals that the calculated level of significance 0.00 is lesser than the chosen level of significance 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between school factors and Upper Basic Social Studies students' creativity development in Kwara State ( $F_{(3,296)} = 102.374; p < 0.05$ ). To ascertain the contribution of the inherent three school factor variables together,  $R^2$  was computed and the output is reported in Table 6.

**Table 6: Model Summary of the Independent Variables**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	0.714	0.509	0.504	0.4407	0.509

Table 10 indicates the contribution of the independent variables together. The R-Square reveals 0.509 which implies that the three school factors together contribute 50.9% of the variance observed in the Upper Basic Social Studies students' creativity development. To ascertain the contribution of each of the factors (Flexibility, School management support, and School conduciveness) to the model (Students' creativity development), Beta weight and t-test were therefore computed and outputs are reported in table 7.

**Table 7: Contributions of Each of the Independent Variables (Flexibility, School management support, and School conduciveness) to the Dependent Variable (Students' Creativity Development)**

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.997	.157		6.361	.000
Flexibility	.153	.045	.175	3.413	.001
School Management Support	.089	.050	.092	1.792	.074
School Conduciveness	.457	.027	.703	17.092	.000

Table 7 reveals the Beta weights and the t-values of the independent variables (Flexibility, School management support, and School conduciveness). They show the contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable. An examination of the Beta weights and the t-values in this Table 7 indicates that flexibility, and school conduciveness variables made significant contributions to students' creativity development while school management support variable does not. The flexibility, and school conduciveness variables contributes a respective Beta weight of 0.175 and 0.703 with t-value of 3.413 and 17.092 while school management support variable contributes a Beta weight of 0.092 and t-value of 1.792. This implies that school conduciveness made highest and significant contribution to the model and this is followed by flexibility. The multiple regression equation shows thus:

Regression Equation ( $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3$ )

Substitutes the equation from the table ( $Y = 0.997 + 0.153X_1 + 0.089X_2 + 457X_3$ )

### **Discussion of Findings**

The study revealed that the level of Social Studies teachers' engagement in professional development, the use of varied teaching approaches within the school system and the practice of interdisciplinary collaboration in Upper Basic schools in Kwara State was average. This indicates that the extent to which these school-related factors are being adopted to foster students' creativity development is neither low nor high. It is important to note that teachers cannot offer what they themselves do not possess. Attributes such as continuous professional development, which enables teachers to upgrade and expand their skills and knowledge beyond their initial training; the ability to adopt diverse teaching strategies to accommodate the unique demands of different subject areas; and the capacity to collaborate across disciplines are fundamental to enhancing students' intellectual growth and creativity. Teachers who aim to nurture creativity in their students are expected to demonstrate these attributes to a high degree.

Efforts to promote creativity development among students must begin with elevating expectations for teachers who guide learners through classroom interactions. This includes sustained engagement in professional development, effective use of multiple pedagogical strategies that promote learner engagement, and participation in interdisciplinary collaboration. The findings of this study align with those of Ajani (2022), who reported that teachers did not regularly attend professional development activities and that the available program did not sufficiently address the changing needs of classroom practice. Similarly, the findings corroborate Samba et al. (2010), who observed that although teachers demonstrated high awareness of innovative teaching strategies, only a few were effectively applied in classroom settings. The development of students' creativity requires teachers to be well prepared, competent and professionally grounded.

The study also revealed that creativity skills development among Upper Basic Social Studies students in Kwara State was at an average level. This suggests that creativity development in these schools is neither weak nor strong. Creativity development should be approached holistically. Although students possess innate creative potential, such potential must be identified and nurtured through structured activities facilitated by teachers. Creativity flourishes when teachers encourage the production of original ideas and when learners are guided to think critically. However, this cannot be fully achieved without the support of school management in providing learning experiences and activities that promote creativity. In other words, both teachers and the wider school environment must be actively involved. This finding contradicts that of Mbanefo (2015), who reported that creative thinking skills were being developed to a high extent among Upper Basic school students, and also contrasts with Saadu (2012), who found that creativity levels among Universal Basic Education students were low.

Furthermore, the study found a significant relationship between teacher-related factors and the creativity development of Upper Basic Social Studies students in Kwara State. This underscores the critical role schools play in shaping students' creative abilities. The finding reinforces the argument that both nature and nurture must interact for meaningful development to occur. While genetic endowment is important, the influence of the environment is equally decisive. Regardless of a learner's innate potential, such potential requires guidance, support and cultivation—

roles largely fulfilled by teachers. The findings are consistent with those of Wua et al. (2013), who asserted that an enhanced social environment is crucial to the development of students' creativity. They also align with Machali et al. (2021), who found that teacher creativity positively influences entrepreneurship education and students' creativity development.

### **Conclusions**

The study concluded that school factors are significant determinants of creativity skills development among Upper Basic Social Studies students in Kwara State, Nigeria. Although the findings showed that Social Studies teachers in these schools engaged only moderately in key teacher-related factors, (namely professional development, varied teaching approaches and interdisciplinary collaboration), the levels of flexibility and school management support were also found to be average. Overall, the conduciveness of the school environment for promoting creativity was rated low. The creativity skills development of Upper Basic Social Studies students in Kwara State was likewise found to be at an average level.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. School management should foster a supportive and collaborative environment. Creativity cannot thrive without teamwork between teachers and school leaders. School leaders should be trained in leadership styles that encourage creativity in both teachers and students.
2. Schools at Upper Basic in Kwara State should mobilized their teachers to receive training suited to their specific needs. Their professional development is essential for student success. Well-trained teachers can provide a higher quality of education and inspire creativity.
3. The government should increase investment in education. This should include providing teaching materials, improving classroom facilities, and supporting teachers. Schools should have well-equipped learning environments, and teachers should receive the motivation needed to perform at their best.
4. Schools in kwara state should make a conscious effort to improve their teachers knowledge and skills to play a vital role in helping students discover and develop their creativity, through organizing workshops and seminars.
5. The government should provide opportunities for teachers to enhance their skills. This will enable them to meet the demands of modern teaching. Teachers must be creative if they wish to develop creativity in their students. Training program should focus on improving teachers' knowledge and teaching methods.

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