

Stimulating and sustaining Interest of students in secondary school mathematics for improved achievement through teaching - learning software packages in developing countries

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Stimulating and sustaining interest in the learning of a concept has become a key component of quality achievement in the concept. It is much gain saying that learning is meaningful with interest and the quality of learning is relative to the interest of individual learner. This fact is most evident in the fields of science and technology, especially mathematics where the rigors of learning activities require curiosity and commitment. Hence, very few individuals with fewer girls are seen in the field of substantiates the ugly trend reported in the existing literature that, on the average, in science and technology (worse still, mathematics) for a career. Furthermore, the fact the past ten years, results of secondary school students in mathematics, in both examinations in developing countries such as in the West African sub-region, showed that more than half of the students failed to obtain a credit level pass. This trend has been blamed on poor teaching strategy and lack of suitable teaching-learning materials capable of stimulating and sustaining students' interest in the learning of mathematics. It is therefore needful to introduce into the teaching and learning of mathematics a Mathematics-Interest-Based-Software-Packages (MIBSPs) for improved achievements in mathematics. This study adopts quasi-experimental design of a randomized pretest/posttest control group type consisting of 380 students sampled from six senior secondary schools in Oju local government area of Benue State. Using Circle Geometry Software Package (CiGOSPAC) and Likert scale questionnaire instrument, the study finds that the use of MIBSPs stimulates students' interest in the study of mathematics, which translates to higher achievement in mathematics. The study therefore recommends that different MIBSPs should be designed and employed in the teaching-learning of mathematics as it has ability to stimulate different levels of students' interest in the learning of mathematics.

Keywords: stimulating and sustaining interest; mathematics achievement; MIBSP; CiGOSPAC.