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EFFECT OF ANNOTATED STRATEGY ON THE LEARNING OUTCOMES IN MATHEMATICS

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Abstract

The study was designed to examine the effect of annotated strategy on the learning outcomes in mathematics. As an experimental research study, which employed one shot test pretest and posttest analysis, it contained two research questions and four hypotheses at significant level of .50. Population to the study comprised of all the female students in the senior secondary schools II in Ibadan, Nigeria. In four schools sixty students were chosen by simple random sampling technique of fifth student into the two experimental and two control groups. Each experimental group had fifteen students so that the two experimental groups had total of thirty students. The same applied to the other two control groups. Three instruments were adapted, validated and used for the study, and they were students' questionnaires, achievement test in mathematics [$r=.63$] and annotated strategy package in mathematics [$r=.69$]. The study lasted for one and half months. Data collected were analyzed through percentage, frequency counts, mean and standard deviation, histogram, t-test and one-way ANOVA. Findings showed that topics on statistics and probability had the majority of occurrence as topic difficult to students with 48% of students in this category. The mean and standard deviation stood at 41% and 1.46, respectively, for the students' performance.

There was significant difference in the posttest means scores of control and experimental group with means scores of 43% and 56% respectively, and significant with t-value = -34.4789, degree of freedom = 58 and p-value = -1.080. Secondly, the experimental groups performed better than control groups over times with means scores of 50% and 41% for the experimental and control groups respectively and it was significant at t-value = -23.8700, degree of freedom = 58 and p-value = -1.080.

Study, however, concluded that perennial negative attitude towards mathematics and the perennial failure syndrome in the subject as a result of difficult topics encountered could be minimized completely if the annotated strategy package is employed, with other recommendations thus made in the paper.

Key words : Annotated strategy; learning outcomes; mathematics.

Introduction

Meaningful development of human and natural resources is synonymous to modern development as dictated by level of science and technology, which serve as panacea to the problems of poverty, ignorance and disease. The sustenance of science and technology depends on the understanding of Mathematics which serves as the bedrock of sciences that no one could do away with due to its wide application in all areas of human endeavours. There is no aspect of Mathematics that is deficient except that Mathematics teachers do not know the excellent use of the subject.

In order to realize most nation education philosophy and the relevance of Mathematics in all human endeavours, governments of most countries of the world encourage the teaching and learning of Mathematics. In some countries like Nigeria, Ghana and Gambia just to mention a few, it is compulsory for students to pass, and as a pre-requisite for the admission into higher level of educational advancement. To this end, premium attention is paid to its teaching by government and other stakeholders through the provision of appropriate human and non-human materials relatively to other subjects (NPE, 1998). Apart from that relative frequency of Mathematics in the school timetable positions it is to an exalted place among other school subjects. In contrast, these considerations have not justified the observed learning outcome of students in the subject, as their performance remained dismal as corroborated by Ademolekun (2002) and Olowojaiye (2004), showing the dismal performances of students in the West African Schools Certificate Examination in Mathematics for a decade.

Though dismal performance of students in sciences, Mathematics inclusive, is a global issue according to Obioha (1987) who presented the academic performance of students in science of the Republic of Germany yet the dismal performance is more pronounced in Mathematics than other science subject. And this has greatly affected the studying of science-related course and technology worldwide. Various studies conducted earlier by different scholars on the dismal performance of students in Mathematics and science in general indicate different reasons on the possible cause. These included Mathematics teacher's qualification (Yee, 1990; Gage, 1994; Salami, 2000), effectiveness of teaching by Mathematics teachers (Duyilemi, 1997; Wharton, Pressley and Hampston, 1998), inadequate instructional facilities (Odeyemi, 1995; Akinsola, 1999), perseverance of some topics considered difficult (Oyedeji, 1996), attitude of students towards Mathematics Olowojaiye [2002] and gender (Tijani, 1999; Adesoji, 1999) with considerable solution proffered. Worldwide few females could be observed to have advanced in Mathematics upto the Ph.D. level. According to Olaleye (2004), quoting the first three African American women who received Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Maryland on December 21st, 2000 titled 3 African American women x 3 Ph.D's=one Rare Achievement in Mathematics, dismal performance was more pronounced among females than males. One of the Woman Inniss believed her ambition to pursue Mathematics up to the Ph.D. level was due to her childhood support of her parents and Mathematics teachers, who developed the interest in her. This phenomenon is also noticeable in Nigeria where few females advanced their study up to the Ph.D. level in Mathematics through reputable females

few females advanced their study up to the Ph.D. level in Mathematics through reputable females Mathematician like Professor Grace Alele – Williams and Dr. Helen Udougou are living witness yet the number is insignificant compare to male counterpart. One wonders what could have been responsible for this perennial syndrome either from mathematics contents or pedagogical practices. Cursory look at the contents of Mathematics reveal that there is no aspect of Mathematics that is not relevant to the need of society e.g. Numbers which is integral part of Mathematics make the use of Global System of Telecommunication (GSM) viable, and ensures Information and Communication Technology (ICT) worldwide. On the other hand pedagogical practices refer to the principle through which learners are taught Mathematics by the teacher in the classroom. Within these two areas abound the problems encountered by students. In education practices many instructional modes abound with each having considerable shortcoming. This is why it is recommended that effective teacher should combine two or more methods of this instructional mode to ensure positive learning outcomes. Hence the need to employ the better strategy to enhance learning of mathematics among the students especially the female that are often affected based on their insignificant number at the advanced level earlier mentioned. Training of a woman is sine qua non to uplifting one family out of the ignorance and underdevelopment due to her close contact with other member of the family. Strategy is not synonymous to method of teaching alone but comprehensive and systematic approach or blue print by which Mathematical knowledge is imparted to students via diverse methods. Two Mathematics teachers in a classroom could adopt different strategies in order to achieve meaningful learning outcome. In another words, strategy is a stepwise discovery of facts about Mathematics problem through the application of fundamental principles towards arriving at solution, which could lead to generalization. To this end, it is imperative to develop annotated discovery approach towards making learning of Mathematics an interesting one because one female trained guaranteed the training of a whole family. Hence, the justification for the study.

Theoretical framework

Learning could be exciting whenever the mode of disseminating knowledge is fascinating and interesting. This could be achieved if the teacher in the course of interaction with the students employs the appropriate strategy. Polya (1957) as quoted by Popoola (2002) was of the opinion that four basic principles had to be observed whenever the teaching of Mathematics was to achieve a desirable end. He emphasized the need for understanding the problem, devising a plan, carrying out such plan and making generalization over such plan to similar topic. This schematic procedure is feasible when there is good interaction between the teacher/text-materials and students. It should be emphasized here that there are different social interactions in the classroom during the teaching of Mathematics but one is not sure if the students recognized these interactions to have contributed to the learning of Mathematics. But strategy employed by the teacher made it clear to the students to imbibe with social issues in the course of teaching which directly enhance learning.

Apart from the above-mentioned strategy, Gagne (1975) postulated programmed learning scheme, which could enhance learning between teacher and students in the classroom. He emphasized teacher as knowledge facilitator to fashion out the appropriate strategy to enrich learning by taking

cognizance of students' level and the available resources.

Arigbagbu (1995) pointed out that the strategy employed by teacher in disseminating knowledge to the students goes along way to facilitate the extent of understanding of the problem on ground. He however submitted six steps towards achieving problem solving skill of a child in Mathematics. It is of interest to document that the extent of interaction of teacher and students especially in Mathematics facilitates the mastery and understanding of problem at hand. Moschkovic (2001) finding revealed that much knowledge is gained by students whenever there is good interaction between them and the teacher. The inability to carry out any step of strategy to solve a problem leads students to a state of frustration, and that is way the extended postulated strategy of Oladunni (1995) and Popoola (2002) by three steps in the present study is imperative so as to see the effect of the annotated strategy on learning outcome in Mathematics among the female students. And at the same time as an extrapolative study of Moschkovic (2001) in the African setup of higher level.

Problem

The study sought for effect of annotated strategy on the learning outcome in Mathematics. It provided answers to the following questions :

1. What are the pretest mean scores of students in the identified difficult Mathematics topics ?
2. What is the posttest mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the identified difficult Mathematics topics ?

As a result, four hypotheses were generated at $\alpha = 0.05$ as:

Ho 1: There is no significant difference in the pretest means score of control and experimental groups in the identified difficult Mathematics topics.

Ho 2: There is no significant difference in the posttest means score of control and experimental groups in the identified difficult Mathematics topics.

Ho 3: There is no significant difference in the pre and posttest means score of students in the identified difficult Mathematics topics.

Ho 4: There is no significant difference within the means score of control and experimental groups in the identified difficult Mathematics topics.

Methodology

Research Design

As a Quasi-experimental research design the study employed one shot test of pre-test and post-test analysis.

Population

All female students of the senior secondary schools II and their Mathematics teachers in Ibadan, Nigeria were involved in the study.

Sample and sampling technique

Four female public secondary school were selected using simple but purposive random sampling techniques in Ibadan, Oyo State of Nigeria. The rationale behind this was due to logistic reason and the intimacy with their mathematics teachers to execute the prescribed package. Two of these schools were experimental groups and the other two were control groups in order to prevent interference among the students if selected within the same area. In both experimental schools a simple random sampling of every fifth student in their register totaled thirty SSII females students were drawn as sample so that in the four schools chosen sixty students were selected.

Instrument

Three instruments were adapted, validated and used for the study. These included students' questionnaires, which classify the mathematics topics at the senior secondary school level into difficult and most difficult topic for students to learn. Students were required to state that of the identified topics were difficult or most difficult to learn. The achievement test consisted of adapted questions on probability and statistics of the West African School Certificate Examination (1982) while the annotated strategy package was an adapted instrument of Oladunni (1995) and Popoola (2002) with modification to make teaching and learning of Mathematics exciting and ensure positive learning outcome.

Validation of instrument

An expert in evaluation assisted in carrying out the content validity of the students' questionnaires and annotated strategy approach while senior colleagues in Mathematics did content validity of the achievement test in Mathematics before administered to some students outside the scope of study.

Reliability of instrument

The test-retest of the achievement test in Mathematics showed KR-value of 0.63 while equivalent form of test was done on annotated strategy approach with two teachers of mathematics scored independently by senior colleague in evaluation for using the instruments. The peer scoring of 0.69 was obtained and this was considered high for the study.

Procedure

Two hundred questionnaires were administered via the student teachers on the teaching practice to female students of five secondary schools (forty in each school) to elicit the topic considered difficult to learn (See Appendix A)

It was discovered that inequality and probability were considered difficult and most difficult to learn

Keys to flow chart of annotated/stepwise discovery approach

1. Previous knowledge and present problem matches for first hand understanding.
=> What is the nature of problem, relationship with previous knowledge via previous problem solved, and find how to arrange involved variable to solve the problem.
2. Proper guidance and Operation for approaching the problems from the teachers :
=> What branches has the problem, which of these is most accurate and simplest, what are the hidden variables to look-for and those ones already identified, otherwise go to step 1.
3. Giving students ample opportunity to translate the problem into explicit of their languages :
=> Learners translate the problem into their language of understanding, separating known facts from unknown and adopt a definite approach to the problem otherwise go to step 2 again.
4. Give room for different approaches to solve the problem :
=> Students may be encouraged to group themselves with each group approaching the problem from different angles, compare which one of the group's approaches get the solution faster. Alternatively, individualistic approach could be employed otherwise go to step 3.
5. Intuitive knowledge from students is welcome :
=> Intuitive knowledge of solution to the problem make possible the use of other alternative approaches in order to confirm the efficacy of the best solution without stress otherwise go to step 4.
6. Use of another approach to the problem :
=> The use of another distinct approach will make the problem's solution become easier to solve ; and it should be in line with the scope of the problem. Relationship of new approach to old one should be compared and the extent of accessible otherwise goes to step 5.
7. Scrutinizing the facts in the problem : All the steps (1-6) and the main problem should be re-examined and scrutinize to ensure that no loophole in the solutions, and different approach solution compared otherwise go to step 6.
8. Studying different approaches :
=> The result of each approach should be injected into the problem to crosscheck the solution in order to identify the most appropriate one.

=> Select the best approach to solve similar problems to order to **know** its limitation. Where it is limited in scope try another approach until the appropriate **one** is arrived at, otherwise go to step 7.

9. Applying induction approach :

=> Through induction approach arrived step 8 the solution could be **generalized** on similar and related problems in order to arrive at a **generalized statement** which could lead to an acceptable principle of solving such a related problems otherwise go to step 8.

Mathematics teacher's application guide on annotated approach

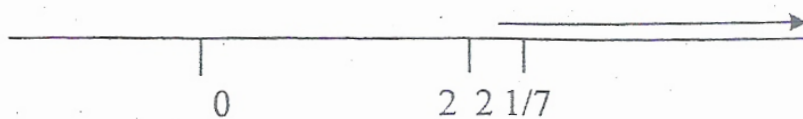
Solve the inequality equation for a if $3(5-4x)+6 \leq 6-5x$ and interpret on number line

1. Problem is presented as above with previous knowledge of '=' equality sign so that ' \leq ' means less than or equal to sign satisfying two conditions. The **only** unknown variable is x. then open the bracket so that inequality becomes $15-12x+6 \leq 6-5x$.
2. Proper guidance and operation from teachers :
Here all the unknown terms are gathered on one side so that **unknown terms 'x'** is gathered on another side : $15+6-12x+12x-6 \leq 6-5x-6+12x$.
=> $21-6 \leq 12x-5x$
From here $15 \leq 7x$
3. Students interpretation into explicit language :
=>students could say digit fifteen is less than or equal to 7 **unknown** value x, and from here the problem that remains is what is the value of x alone.
4. Some students can divided both sides by 7 to get the value of 'x' straight away. Others could do the same to get proper fraction while some get **improper fraction**. In all cases the inequality sign must be obeyed. With problem $15 \leq 7x$, this could be in form $7x \geq 15$ and by carrying-out division $x \geq 15/7$.
5. Intuitively the solution comes out as $x \geq 2 \frac{1}{7}$ which means that **unknown 'x'** is greater than or equal to $2 \frac{1}{7}$. Confirmation of other group approaches is **sought-for** in order to establish the efficacy of the solution of the problem.
6. In case of contradiction another approach may be employed **but** in this case the solution obtained in 5 is acceptable and in line with the rule of inequality.
7. By scrutinize the steps (1-6) and the main problem one can **say** that since $x \geq 2 \frac{1}{7}$, the appropriate number greater than $2 \frac{1}{7}$ is 3, while equal numbers **remain** $2 \frac{1}{7}$.

3. With all the approaches identified one may put 3 into original equation in order to validate the principle of inequality i.e. putting $x=3$ (case one): $3(5-4.3)+6 \leq 6-5.3$ $3(5-12)+6 \leq 6-15$ or $3(-7)+6 \leq -9$.
9. Since one of the conditions or both is desirable and base on number line system ($\neq 15$) is less than (-9) satisfying the equation.

Now the interpretation of solution on number line goes as follows:

$$x \geq 2 \frac{1}{7}$$



Through this approach a similar problem of the form $-3(12+5x) \geq 5+9x$ is posed for the students to solve.

10. With the above stepwise-guided discovery approach coupled with the solution of new problem given to the students to solve the result of new problem could be generalized towards a definite principle of solving a linear inequality of one variable. This process is a linear type and not a branching form, which is outside the scope of the annotated strategy and difficult topic in Mathematics under consideration.

This strategy could be employed to solve different problem in Mathematics as it takes cognizance of the students' interest more important than any other thing. In fact most of the difficult concept in Mathematics could be approached via this strategy in order to reduce Mathsphobia and make the teaching and learning of Mathematics a friendly approach.

The achievement tests in mathematics on the difficult topics were administered to the selected students of four public schools in the beginning and at the end of the study respectively, which lasted for weeks.

Data collection and scoring

The correct answer attracted one mark while wrong answer attracted zero mark. Percentages, frequency-count, histogram, means, standard deviations, t-test and one-way analysis of variance at significant level of 0.05

Finding and Discussion

Table 1: Difficult topics classification by students

Topics	N & N	A.P	M	T	S & P	V & T in a plane	Total
Students	15	30	18	19	96	22	200
Percentage	7.5%	15%	9%	9.5%	48%	11%	100

Treatment	N	Pre-test		Post-test		Differences	
		Mean	Std.D	Mean	Std.D	Mean	Std.D
Control I	15	43%	1.46	43%	1.88	0	0.42
Control II	15	39%	1.49	43%	1.94	4	0.45
Sub-total	30	41%	1.43	43%	1.85	2	0.42
Experiment I	15	52%	1.55	54%	2.03	2	0.48
Experiment II	15	32%	1.35	58%	2.21	26	0.86
Sub-total	30	42%	1.49	56%	2.06	14	0.57
Grand total	60	41%	1.46	50%	2.06	9	0.60

Keys:

N & N – Numbers and Numeration, A.P – Algebraic Processes, M – Mensuration, T – Trigonometry.
 S & P – Statistics and Probability, V & T – Vectors and Transformation.

Histogram

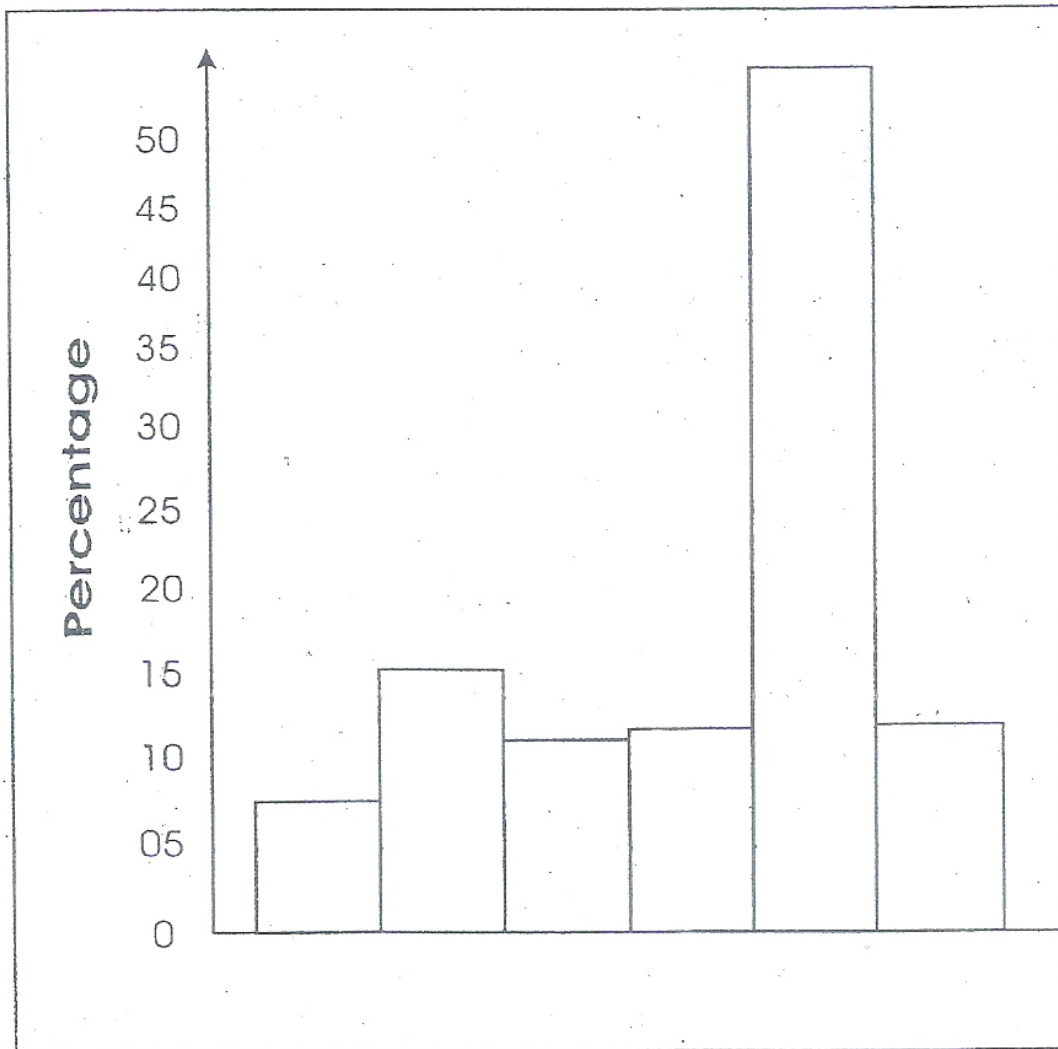


Fig. 1

Table 3: Test of difference between groups in pre test scores

Treatment	Means		t-statistics	Df	P-value
	Control	Experiment			
Scores	41	42	-0.1768	58	-1.0806

Table 4: Test of difference between groups in posttest scores

Treatment	Means		t-statistics	Df	P-value
	Control	Experiment			
Scores	43	56	-34.4789*	58	-1.080

*Significant at $p < .05$

Table 5: Test of difference between groups in posttest scores

Treatment	Means		t-statistics	Df	P-value
	Control	Experiment			
Scores	41	50	-23.8700*	58	-1.080

*Significant at $p < .05$

Table 6: ANNOVA Table

Source	Df	SS	MS	F-Statistics	P-value
Between	3	25.35	8.45	2.07	2.76
Within	56	229.50			
Total	59				

Table 1 showed the different levels of students' difficult topics in mathematics with statistics and probability as the most difficult topic and number and numeration as the least difficult topic in terms of students' response'. These responses were represented by the histogram in fig. 1 with statistics and probability having 48%, and number and numeration having 7.5%. The implication of this is that students tend to run away from mathematics in general due to these topics found to be difficult to learn. Since mathematics cut-across all human endeavours the difficult experienced in the aspect of mathematics might minimize the contribution of students to the nation educational goal as a result of these constraints. Apart from this it has demonstrated that one of the factors to the dismal performance in Mathematics was difficult topics encountered by students without headway.

Table 2 showed the summary scores of pre and post test scores with group I and II of control groups having at means and standard deviation $[x, \sigma]$ of [43%, 1.46] and [39%, 1.49] respectively.

Experimental groups I and II had the means and standard deviation $[x, \sigma]$ of [52%, 1.55] and [32%, 1.35] respectively. Within the groups, group I of control and of experimental group performed better than their groups II counterparts. On the whole the control and experimental groups had the means and standard deviation $[x, \sigma]$ of [41%, 1.43] and [42%, 1.49] respectively. The scores that showed the experimental group performed slightly well than the control group. The implication of these scores showed that students' found the identified topics difficult to learn and this might have been contributory factor to the perennial failure syndrome in mathematics particularly when these topics constituted the questions in examinations.

Furthermore, topics of these nature create fear in the mind of students on the possible ways of succeeding in mathematics not to talk of science related courses that have difficult topics. There was no significant difference within the means scores of all the four groups that comprised two controls and two experimental groups. Table 6 showed one way ANOVA with F -statistics = 2.07, $df=59$ and p -values = 2.76 leading to the acceptance of hypothesis 4. This was feasible as there was variation in the means score of control and experimental groups.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has demonstrated that there was no deficiency in any aspect of mathematics except is that teachers of mathematics have not employed the excellent use of appropriate strategy to consolidate and enrich students learning.

Most of the topics considered difficult to learn in mathematics by students are pedagogically biased. This invariably makes students to do, in most cases, non-science based discipline. The situation which affects the nation manpower needs in science and technology; an index of modern development.

The posttest means and standard deviation $[x, \sigma]$ of control groups I and II were [43%, 1.88] and [43%, 1.94] respectively, while that of experimental groups I and II were [54%, 2.03] and [58%, 2.21] respectively.

The interesting discovery at this level was that groups I and II of control groups maintained the approximated means scores of 43 % though an improvement in the means scores of group II of control group over what it was obtained in the mean score of pretest. In particular within this group they had deficient standard deviation. On the other hand experimental groups I and II had an improved means score compared to what it was obtained in the pretest scores, and more importantly was the group II of the experimental group that improved significantly compared to the means score of the pretest score. The posttest scores of control and experimental groups had the means and standard deviation $[x, \sigma]$ of [43%, 1.94] and [56%, 2.06] respectively. This is an indication of total improvement in the means scores of the experimental groups over what it was obtained in the pretest scores, and at the same time confirmed that experimental group performed better than control groups due to their exposure to the annotated strategy package. On the level of significance of means score of pretest table three showed the pretest means scores of control and experimental

groups as 41% and 42% respectively with t-value = -0.1768, degree of freedom [d f] = 58 probability value [p-value] = -1.080.

This translates to the acceptance of the first hypothesis with conclusion that there was no significant difference in the pretest means scores of the control and experimental groups. The inference is that students found these topics difficult to learn as shown in their responses of questionnaires. At this level there was no difference in their means scores meaning that these topics were actually difficult to pass and if these questions are set in any public examination like W.A.E.C. and others, it is most likely that majority of them would fail mathematics.

Table 4 showed test difference between control and experimental groups in posttest scores with means scores of 43 % and 56 %, respectively, t - value = - 34, 4789, df = 58 and p-value = -1.080 and it was significant at .05. The conclusion is that there was significant difference in the posttest means scores of the control and experimental groups and this lead our earlier hypothesis two rejected. The implication is that experimental groups performed better and significant than the control group after their exposure to the annotated strategy package.

Table 5 showed test differences in treatment changes over time with the means scores at the pretest and posttest stages to be 41% and 50% respectively, and t-value = - 23.8700, df = 58 and p -value = -1.080. This indicated that the hypothesis is hereby rejected. There was significant difference in the pre and post tests means scores of students in the identified difficult topics in mathematics. There is an improvement in the means scores of the experimental groups in the posttest scores due to their exposure to the annotated strategy package. This had reduced difficult processes of understanding such identified topics via pedagogical practice of the teacher for the students. As in line with the study of Moschkovich [2001] at the junior secondary school level the study upheld that meaningful hearing and difficult overcome could be attained whenever there is a meaningful interaction between the teacher and the students, unlike one way flow of information / teaching. Also it is obvious that annotated in the teaching of Mathematics allowed students to have favourable learning outcome in the subject. This confirmed with the studies of Oladunni (1995), Aremu (1998) and Popoola (200) that strategy employed by the teacher encouraged the learning of subject matter of any concept and enhanced mastery learning of the topic under discussion. As a result it is hereby recommended that mass drift of female student into non-scientific field due to Mathematics could be minimized through the application of stepwise discovery guide used in teaching the identified difficult topic in Mathematics as shown in the study.

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Appendix A

List of mathematics topics for the senior secondary schools consider difficult and most difficult topic to learn.

TOPICS	DIFFICULT	MOST DIFFICULT
Number and numeration		
Number Bases		
Fractions, decimals and approximation		
Indices and logarithms		
Sequences		
Sets		
Logical reasoning		
Positive and Negative integers		
Surds		
Ratio, Proportion and rates		
Variation		
Percentages		
Algebraic Processes		
Algebraic Expressions		
Simple operation on Algebraic Expression		

Solution of Linear equation		
Change of subject of formula		
Quadratic equation		
Graphs of linear and Quadratic Equation		
Linear inequalities		
Relations and functions		
Algebraic functions		
Mensuration		
Length and perimeter		
Areas of solid object		
Volume of solid object		
Plane geometry		
Angles at point		
Angles and intercepts on parallel line		
Triangles and other polygons		
Circles		
Constructions		
Loci		
Trigonometry		
Sin, cosine and tangent of angles		
Angles of elevation and dep.		
Bearings		
Statistics and Probability		
Statistics		
Probabilities		
Vectors and Transformation in a plane		
Vectors in a plane		
Transformation in the Cartesian coordinate. Plane		