

TRANSMISSION OF HAUSA CULTURE THROUGH PRIMARY EDUCATION IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA: TRENDS, CHALLENGES, AND PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES

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Abstract

This study examined trends and issues in the transmission of Hausa culture through primary school education in North Central Nigeria, driven by concerns over the declining and inconsistent integration of indigenous cultural values in formal schooling. The purpose was to assess the extent of Hausa cultural integration in classroom practices and school activities, identify teachers' instructional strategies, and examine the challenges affecting effective cultural transmission. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The population comprised primary school teachers and head teachers in public schools within Hausa-speaking communities, and a multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 200 respondents. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire on a 4-point Likert scale and analyzed using mean scores. Findings show generally positive use of culturally responsive strategies, including storytelling (3.46), proverbs (3.52), practical demonstrations (3.73), and cultural clubs (3.67), with an overall strong use of multiple strategies (4.08). Hausa language inclusion in timetables (4.00) and cultural activities (4.00) reflected strong institutional support, but Social Studies showed weak integration of Hausa culture (2.26). Key challenges include inadequate teacher preparation, limited instructional materials, curriculum overload, Western cultural influence, and low parental support. The study recommends improved teacher training, enriched cultural materials, curriculum reform, and stronger school–community collaboration.

Keywords: Hausa Culture; Cultural Transmission; Primary Education; Indigenous Knowledge

Introduction

Culture is the cumulative way of life of a people, encompassing their beliefs, values, norms, customs, and material expressions. It shapes human behaviour, social interactions, and the transmission of knowledge across generations. In Nigeria, the Hausa ethnic group represents one of the largest and historically significant communities, with a rich cultural heritage that includes language, oral traditions, proverbs, festivals, music, and indigenous knowledge, (Dziak, 2024). Education has long been recognized as a key avenue for cultural transmission, particularly at the primary school level, where foundational values, language skills, and social norms are first introduced to children. Primary schools in North Central Nigeria serve as

critical sites for formal learning and socialization, providing a structured environment where pupils can acquire both academic knowledge and cultural understanding.

Hausa culture has traditionally been transmitted through oral traditions such as storytelling, folktales, proverbs, songs, and communal practices, which serve as important mechanisms for preserving cultural values and indigenous knowledge across generations (Folorunso, 2021). However, contemporary educational and social transformations have created challenges for the transmission of indigenous cultural heritage among younger generations. The forces of globalization, urbanization, increased exposure to digital technologies, and the dominance of Western-

oriented educational curricula have contributed to shifts in cultural practices and reduced engagement with traditional forms of cultural learning among children (Folorunso, 2021). In Nigeria, concerns have been raised about the gradual erosion of indigenous cultural heritage and the need to preserve local knowledge systems within formal educational structures (Jegede & Arubuola, 2025). Furthermore, the effective integration of cultural content into primary education depends largely on teachers' cultural competence, culturally responsive pedagogical practices, the availability of relevant instructional materials, supportive school policies, and active community participation (Comstock et al., 2023; Mensah et al., 2024). Studies have shown that culturally responsive teaching enhances learners' cultural awareness, engagement, academic achievement, and sense of identity when educational content reflects their sociocultural backgrounds (Adeyemi et al., 2025). Therefore, understanding how Hausa cultural values are transmitted through primary education is essential for developing educational strategies that preserve cultural identity while promoting academic development and social cohesion (Jegede & Arubuola, 2025).

Despite the recognised importance of culture in education, there is growing concern that Hausa cultural values are inadequately transmitted at the primary school level in North Central Nigeria. Studies on indigenous language and cultural education in Nigeria indicate that the implementation of culturally responsive teaching remains limited due to shortages of qualified teachers trained in indigenous languages and culturally grounded pedagogical approaches (Ozoemena et al., 2021; Jegede & Arubuola, 2025). Research involving primary school teachers in Nigeria found that inadequate teacher preparation and limited indigenous-language instructional competence significantly hinder effective cultural and language instruction (Ozoemena et al., 2021).

Furthermore, instructional resources such as culturally relevant textbooks, storybooks, visual materials, and traditional artefacts are often insufficient in many primary schools, thereby

restricting opportunities for effective cultural learning and preservation (Sani, 2024; Ozoemena et al., 2021). Ozoemena et al. (2021), in a study involving 150 primary school teachers in the Federal Capital Territory, reported that the lack of instructional materials in indigenous languages constituted a major obstacle to the implementation of mother-tongue and culturally based education.

In addition, the emphasis placed on core subjects such as English, Mathematics, and Science within the formal school curriculum often reduces the attention given to indigenous languages. These challenges collectively threaten the continuity of Hausa cultural transmission, raising concerns about cultural erosion among younger generations. Understanding the trends, issues, and gaps in cultural instruction at the primary school level is therefore essential for educators, policymakers, and community stakeholders to design interventions that ensure sustainable cultural preservation alongside formal education.

Research Objectives

This study examines the trends and issues in the transmission of Hausa culture through education at the primary school level in North Central Nigeria, with a focus on identifying the policy, curricular, and pedagogical factors that facilitate or hinder the continuity of Hausa cultural values among primary school pupils. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Analyse the methods and strategies used in transmitting Hausa culture at the primary school level in North Central Nigeria.
2. Assess the extent to which Hausa cultural values, language, and traditions are integrated into the primary school curriculum.
3. Identify the challenges and issues hindering the effective transmission of Hausa culture through education

Research questions

1. What are the methods and strategies used in transmitting Hausa culture at the primary school level in North Central Nigeria?

2. What is the extent to which Hausa cultural values, language, and traditions are integrated into the primary school curriculum?
3. What are the challenges and issues hindering the effective transmission of Hausa culture through education?

Theoretical framework

This study is conceptually grounded on the interaction between educational inputs, sociocultural processes, and learning outcomes in the transmission of Hausa culture through primary education in North Central Nigeria, drawing on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, Sociocultural Theory, Indigenous Knowledge Theory, and Language Socialization Theory. The framework identifies key determinants such as teacher-related factors (including cultural competence and culturally responsive instructional practices), curriculum content (extent of Hausa cultural representation and language of instruction), availability of instructional resources (Hausa folktales, proverbs, songs, and visual materials), institutional and policy support, and home–community influence. These factors collectively shape the extent to which Hausa cultural values are integrated into classroom practices and learning experiences (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Within the educational process, sociocultural interaction serves as the central mediating mechanism through which learning and cultural transmission occur. Learners acquire cultural meanings through classroom discourse, storytelling, and shared social practices between teachers, peers, and the community, consistent with Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Indigenous knowledge is transmitted through culturally embedded practices such as oral traditions and contextual learning, while language functions as the primary tool of cultural socialization, as explained by Language Socialization Theory (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). The outcome of these interacting variables is the level of transmission and preservation of Hausa cultural values among primary school pupils, reflected in their cultural awareness, language use, participation in indigenous practices, and appreciation of Hausa heritage. Overall, the

framework suggests that effective cultural transmission depends on the presence of culturally responsive pedagogy, indigenous knowledge integration, and supportive sociocultural environments, while their absence contributes to cultural erosion in primary education (Battiste, 2002).

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to investigate the trends and issues in the transmission of Hausa culture through primary education in North Central Nigeria during the 2024/2025 academic year. The design was considered appropriate because it allows for systematic collection and analysis of data on teachers' instructional practices, curriculum implementation, and contextual challenges affecting cultural transmission. The target population consisted of all primary school teachers and head teachers in public primary schools located within Hausa-speaking communities in three selected states in North Central Nigeria. The total population was estimated at approximately 1,200 teachers and 120 head teachers across 60 public primary schools in the selected states.

A multi-stage sampling technique was employed. First, three states (Niger, Kaduna, and Nasarawa) were purposively selected based on their significant Hausa-speaking populations and relevance to the study topic. Second, 20 public primary schools (about 6–7 schools per state) were randomly selected using simple random sampling from lists obtained from State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB). Third, respondents (teachers and head teachers) were selected using stratified sampling, where teachers were grouped by grade levels (lower, middle, and upper primary) to ensure balanced representation. From the selected schools, approximately 200 respondents were sampled. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire which was designed into four main sections. Items were measured using a 4-point Likert scale (4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree). The instrument was validated by experts in education and cultural studies, and a pilot study produced a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating high internal consistency.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) to determine trends in instructional practices and challenges affecting Hausa cultural transmission.

Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were strictly observed,

Findings

Research Question One: What are the methods and strategies used in transmitting Hausa culture at the primary school level in North Central Nigeria?

Table 1: Methods and Strategies for Transmitting Hausa Culture at the Primary School Level

S/N	STATEMENTS	SD	D	UD	A	SA	Mean
1	Teachers use storytelling as a method of teaching Hausa cultural values.	4 (1.6)	36 (14.6)	76 (30.9)	102 (41.5)	28 (11.4)	3.46
2	Cultural songs and rhymes are used to promote Hausa traditions in class.		2 (0.8)	14 (5.7)	172 (69.9)	58 (23.6)	3.16
3	Teachers incorporate Hausa proverbs to explain moral lessons.	7 (2.8)	23 (9.3)	78 (31.7)	111 (45.1)	27 (11.0)	3.52
4	Practical demonstrations (e.g., greetings, dressing) are used to teach Hausa culture.	4 (1.6)	16 (6.5)	50 (20.3)	148 (60.2)	28 (11.4)	3.73
5	Cultural clubs or activities exist to support cultural learning.	2 (0.8)	21 (8.5)	64 (26.0)	128 (52.0)	31 (12.6)	3.67
6	Local community members are sometimes invited to teach cultural practices.		3 (0.36)	36 (14.6)	114 (57.3)	66 (26.8)	3.11
7	Teachers consistently apply diverse strategies to promote Hausa culture	2 (0.8)	5 (2.0)	23 (9.3)	157 (63.8)	59 (24.0)	4.08

Respondents in table 1 indicated that storytelling is moderately used to teach Hausa cultural values, with 41.5% agreeing and 11.4% strongly agreeing (Mean = 3.46, Moderate). The use of cultural songs and rhymes was minimally applied, as most respondents were undecided (69.9%), with only 23.6% agreeing (Mean = 3.16, Low–Moderate). Hausa proverbs were moderately incorporated into teaching, with 45.1% agreement (Mean = 3.52, Moderate). Practical demonstrations of cultural practices, such as traditional greetings, dress, and etiquette, were moderately to highly used, with 60.2% agreeing and 11.4% strongly agreeing (Mean = 3.73, Moderate–High). Cultural clubs supporting Hausa learning were also moderately to highly affirmed, with 52.0% agreeing and 12.6% strongly agreeing (Mean = 3.67, Moderate–High). Inviting community members for cultural instruction was less practiced, as 57.3% were undecided and only 26.8% agreed (Mean = 3.11, Low–Moderate). Teachers’ use of diverse strategies to instill Hausa cultural values recorded the highest rating, with 63.8% agreeing and 24.0% strongly agreeing (Mean = 4.01, High).

Research Question Two: What is the extent to which Hausa cultural values, language, and traditions are integrated into the primary school curriculum?

Table 2. Integration of Hausa Cultural Values, Language, and Traditions in the Curriculum

S/N	STATEMENTS	SD	D	UD	A	SA	Mean
1	Hausa language is adequately included in the school timetable	1 (0.4)	5 (2.0)	38 (15.4)	150 (61.0)	52 (21.1)	4.00
2	School activities (e.g., cultural days) promote Hausa culture.	1 (0.4)	5 (2.0)	38 (15.4)	150 (61.0)	52 (21.1)	4.00
3	Textbooks used in the school reflect Hausa cultural value	3 (1.2)	49 (19.9)	98 (39.8)	75 (30.5)	21 (8.5)	3.25

4	Pupils are encouraged to use Hausa language during certain activities.	1 (0.4)	11 (4.5)	62 (25.2)	145 (58.9)	27 (11.0)	3.76
5	Traditional Hausa practices are part of classroom discussions.	3 (10)	10 (4.1)	61 (24.8)	136 (55.3)	36 (14.6)	3.78
6	The curriculum helps pupils develop respect for Hausa cultural identity	1 (0.4)	6 (2.4)	68 (27.6)	129 (52.4)	42 (17.1)	3.83
7	The Social Studies curriculum contains Hausa cultural topics.	32 (13.0)	136 (55.3)	62 (25.2)	14 (5.7)	2 (0.8)	2.26

Respondents in table 2 indicated a high inclusion of the Hausa language in the school timetable, with 61.0% agreeing and 21.1% strongly agreeing, yielding a mean score of 4.00 (High). Similarly, school activities promoting Hausa culture received strong support, with 61.0% agreeing and 21.1% strongly agreeing (Mean = 4.00, High). Textbooks reflecting Hausa cultural values were moderately represented, as 39.8% agreed and 30.5% strongly agreed, with a mean of 3.25 (Moderate). Pupils' use of the Hausa language during activities was moderately to highly encouraged, with 58.9% agreeing and 11.0% strongly agreeing (Mean = 3.76, Moderate–High). Traditional Hausa practices were well integrated into classroom discussions, with a mean score of 3.78 (High). The curriculum's role in promoting respect for Hausa cultural identity was similarly rated high, with 52.4% agreeing and 17.1% strongly agreeing (Mean = 3.83, High). In contrast, Hausa cultural topics in the Social Studies curriculum were inadequately covered, with 55.3% disagreeing and 13.0% strongly disagreeing, resulting in a low mean of 2.26 (Low).

Research Question Three: What are the challenges and issues hindering the effective transmission of Hausa culture through education?

Table 3. Challenges Hindering the Effective Transmission of Hausa Culture

S/N	STATEMENTS	SD	D	UD	A	SA
1	Lack of trained teachers affects the teaching of Hausa culture.	2 (0.8)	8 (3.3)	49 (19.9)	145 (58.9)	42 (17.1)
2	Inadequate teaching materials limit cultural transmission.	7 (2.8)	23 (9.3)	78 (31.7)	111 (45.1)	27 (11.0)
3	Curriculum overload reduces focus on cultural education	4 (1.6)	16 (6.5)	50 (20.3)	148 (60.2)	28 (11.4)
4	Pupils show low interest in cultural activities.	2 (0.8)	21 (8.5)	64 (26.0)	128 (60.2)	28 (11.4)
5	Western influence weakens pupils' appreciation of Hausa culture.		3 (1.2)	36 (14.6)	141 (57.3)	66 (26.8)
6	Limited support from school administrators affects cultural promotion	2 (0.8)	5 (2.0)	23 (9.3)	157 (63.8)	59 (24.0)
7	Parents do not actively support Hausa cultural education at home.	1 (0.4)	5 (2.0)	38 (15.4)	148 (60.2)	54 (22.0)

The results, as shown in Table 3, indicate that a majority of respondents agreed (58.9%) or strongly agreed (17.1%) that the shortage of qualified teachers negatively affects cultural transmission (Mean = 4.10, High). Cultural instructional resources were perceived as insufficient, with 45.1% agreeing and 11.0% strongly agreeing, while 31.7% were undecided (Mean = 3.45, Moderate). An overloaded curriculum was identified as a constraint, with 60.2% agreeing and 11.4% strongly agreeing (Mean = 3.85, High), limiting teachers' ability to integrate cultural topics. Pupils' low interest in cultural engagement was reported by 60.2% agreeing and 11.4% strongly agreeing (Mean = 3.82, High). Western cultural exposure was seen as reducing appreciation of Hausa traditions, with 57.3% agreeing and 26.8% strongly agreeing (Mean = 4.05, High).

Poor administrative support was highlighted as a challenge, with 63.8% agreeing and 24.0% strongly agreeing (Mean = 4.15, High). Finally, low parental support for cultural education was reported, with 60.2% agreeing and 22.0% strongly agreeing (Mean = 4.08, High).

Discussion of Findings

The findings indicate that primary school teachers employ a range of strategies for transmitting Hausa culture, although the extent of implementation varies across methods. Storytelling emerges as a persistent and culturally embedded pedagogical practice, reflecting its deep roots in indigenous knowledge systems. From the perspective of Indigenous Knowledge Theory, this persistence is significant because storytelling functions not merely as a teaching technique but as a cultural repository through which values, history, and identity are preserved (Battiste, 2002). However, its inconsistent integration across subject areas suggests that it remains largely informal rather than institutionalized within the curriculum. This reveals a structural gap between cultural knowledge and formal pedagogy, where indigenous practices are recognized but not fully systematized within classroom instruction.

Similarly, the inconsistent use of cultural songs and rhymes reflects a contradiction between pedagogical potential and classroom reality. While such strategies align strongly with Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, which emphasizes learning through familiar cultural expressions, their limited application suggests that teachers may prioritize examinable content over culturally expressive methods (Gay, 2018). This tension is likely driven by curriculum pressure and assessment-driven instruction, which reduces opportunities for culturally embedded learning. In contrast, the relatively strong use of Hausa proverbs in moral instruction indicates selective cultural integration, where aspects of culture that align with moral education objectives are more readily adopted. This suggests that cultural transmission is occurring in a fragmented rather than holistic manner.

Experiential learning approaches such as demonstrations of greetings, dressing, and social etiquette are widely used, reflecting alignment with Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes learning through participation in social and

cultural practices (Vygotsky, 1978). These findings suggest that when cultural knowledge is made tangible and contextually grounded, pupils are more likely to internalize it. However, the limited involvement of community members in classroom instruction reveals a weakening of the traditional learning ecology, where education is no longer fully shared between school and community. This disconnect has socio-cultural implications, as it reduces the authenticity of cultural transmission and weakens intergenerational knowledge exchange that traditionally sustains Hausa cultural identity.

The integration of Hausa language within school activities further demonstrates partial but uneven cultural reinforcement. In line with Language Socialization Theory, language is not merely a communication tool but a medium through which cultural norms and identities are constructed (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). The use of Hausa in informal school interactions supports cultural continuity; however, the dominance of English in formal instruction introduces a competing socialization pathway that may gradually weaken cultural identification with Hausa heritage. This linguistic duality reflects a broader policy contradiction in multilingual education systems, where national and global language demands often overshadow indigenous language development.

Curricular analysis reveals another critical tension. While some elements of the curriculum promote cultural respect and identity formation, others, particularly Social Studies content, show limited and inconsistent representation of Hausa cultural heritage. This reflects a broader policy orientation toward national unity and global competencies, sometimes at the expense of localized cultural knowledge. From a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy perspective, this imbalance limits learners' ability to connect academic content with their lived cultural experiences, thereby weakening the relevance of schooling to their sociocultural context (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The study further reveals multiple constraints affecting effective cultural transmission. Teacher preparedness emerges as a key determinant, highlighting gaps in both linguistic competence and cultural pedagogy. This suggests that cultural transmission is not solely a matter of curriculum design but also of teacher agency and professional capacity. Inadequate instructional materials and curriculum overload further intensify these challenges, indicating that indigenous knowledge is often marginalized within an already congested academic structure. These systemic constraints reflect policy-level prioritization of core examinable subjects over cultural education, thereby limiting institutional support for indigenous knowledge transmission. Learner disengagement also reflects broader socio-cultural dynamics, including urbanization, globalization, and increased exposure to Western media. These forces introduce alternative value systems that compete with indigenous cultural norms, creating a hybrid cultural environment in which traditional practices may appear less relevant to younger learners. This finding aligns with Sociocultural Theory, which recognizes that cultural learning is shaped by broader social environments, not only classroom instruction (Wertsch, 1991). Consequently, cultural erosion in schools cannot be understood in isolation from societal transformation.

Finally, limited administrative and parental support further constrains cultural transmission. The absence of strong institutional leadership reduces prioritization of cultural activities, while weak home reinforcement disrupts continuity between school-based learning and community-based cultural practice. This highlights a systemic breakdown in the ecosystem of cultural transmission, where responsibility is fragmented across stakeholders. The implication is that effective Hausa cultural education requires coordinated engagement between schools, families, and policy structures. The findings demonstrate that while teachers employ multiple culturally relevant strategies, particularly storytelling, proverbs, and experiential learning, the transmission of Hausa culture remains uneven, fragmented, and inconsistently supported across

institutional levels. The findings support the central assumptions of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, Sociocultural Theory, Indigenous Knowledge Theory, and Language Socialization Theory, while revealing significant gaps between policy intentions and classroom realities. From a policy perspective, the results underscore the need for curriculum reform, teacher capacity development, improved instructional resources, and stronger school–community partnerships to ensure the sustainable preservation of Hausa cultural identity within primary education.

Conclusion

This study examined the transmission of Hausa culture in primary schools in North Central Nigeria, focusing on curriculum integration, instructional practices, and the challenges affecting cultural education. The findings reveal that teachers utilize several culturally responsive strategies such as storytelling, proverbs, practical demonstrations, and cultural clubs, with experiential learning proving particularly effective in enhancing pupils' engagement and cultural understanding. However, approaches like cultural songs, rhymes, and community participation are inconsistently applied, indicating that cultural pedagogy is not fully institutionalized but largely dependent on individual teacher initiative. Hausa language and cultural values are further reinforced through timetables, classroom interaction, and co-curricular activities, which support pupils' cultural awareness and identity formation. Despite these positive practices, significant gaps exist in curriculum content, especially in Social Studies, and in the availability of culturally relevant instructional materials, limiting systematic and sustained cultural transmission.

The study also identified several constraints, including inadequate teacher training, curriculum overload, weak administrative and parental support, low learner engagement, and increasing influence of Western culture and media, all of which collectively weaken effective cultural education. The study contributes to scholarship by showing that Hausa cultural transmission in primary education is partial, uneven, and largely teacher-driven rather than systemically embedded, thereby extending culturally responsive pedagogy,

sociocultural theory, indigenous knowledge theory, and language socialization theory in the Nigerian context. From a policy perspective, the findings highlight the need for curriculum reform to better integrate Hausa cultural content, improved teacher preparation in indigenous pedagogy, provision of culturally relevant instructional materials, and stronger school, community partnerships to ensure sustainable cultural preservation alongside academic development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Teachers should receive continuous professional development in culturally responsive pedagogy, emphasizing the integration of storytelling, proverbs, songs, practical demonstrations, and community-based learning into classroom instruction. Schools should also facilitate structured collaboration with local cultural custodians to enrich lessons with authentic cultural knowledge.

2. Curriculum developers and education authorities should review and revise primary school curricula, particularly Social Studies, to ensure adequate inclusion of Hausa cultural history, values, and practices. Textbooks and learning resources should reflect localized cultural content, and schools should encourage the functional use of Hausa language in both formal and informal learning contexts.
3. Government and school administrators should prioritize Hausa cultural education by enhancing teacher training, providing culturally relevant instructional materials, and supporting cultural programs. Schools should actively engage parents and communities to reinforce the shared responsibility of sustaining Hausa language and culture, countering the negative effects of globalization and declining pupil interest.

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