IJCRT.ORG

ISSN: 2320-2882



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Improving Geometric Concepts Perceived Difficult to First Year Linear Mathematics Students' of Kemissie College of Teachers Education in 2019 G.C.

Lemma Ebissa (M.SC)

KEMISSIE COLLEGE OF TEACHERS EDUCATION

Abstract

There is strong evidence in mathematics education literature that students benefit extensively from Geometry concepts of mathematics in daily life. The benefits include developing an advanced level of mathematical thinking, spatial reasoning and conceptual understanding. The purpose of this study was to investigate students understanding on geometry course and to give effective method of teaching. The sample consisted of 36 students in ML11 section of first year students in KCTE 2019. The sampling technique was used two stages sampling, in the first stage section ML11 selected purposely and the two groups experimental group and control group of the study selected randomly by using Microsoft excel. The collected data were analyzed descriptively and by inferential statistics using software package social science students SPSS (20.1). The reliability of research questionnaire was tested by cronbach's alpha (0.641) which is reliable, and validated by experienced mathematics teachers. This study followed by pre-test and post-test for both experimental and controlled group. Conceptual understanding of the students on topics of geometry was measured through open-ended questions and some findings were obtained. The intervention given was teaching with involving GeoGebra software instruction for experimental group, And teaching geometry without involving GeoGebra software instruction for the controlled group. Statistical analysis is conducted by firstly testing the normality of the data, by using Kolmogorov Smirnov test data were distributed normally. Then the homogeneity was checked and result shows that data are not homogein due to this t-test was executed. Data were analyzed with an independent samples t-test on gain scores for control and experimental groups. In the conceptual understanding test, the gain scores of the experimental group were found to be 0.42 standard deviations higher than that of the control group on the average. Therefore from this result the researcher concluded that teaching with GeoGebra may be an effective tool for teaching Geometry concepts.

Key Words: GeoGebra software, experimental group, controlled group, geometric concepts

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Mathematics is a compulsory subject that cuts across every other field. According to [1] mathematics is the pillar of all knowledge showing its relevance to all disciplines. [11] Described mathematics as a relationship between numbers and other measurable quantities. Mathematics is also the language of science that allows scientists to communicate ideas using universally accepted terminologies. [13] Defined mathematics as the science of structure, order, numbers, space, and quantity. According to [14], mathematics is an indispensable tool in the study of sciences, humanities and technology. As mathematics is wide, it has a different field of study. The broad and familiar field starting from primary school is geometry. Geometry has been taught since primary school. Learning geometry helps students develop their logical reasoning ability [12]). There are many mathematical concepts and procedures which can be explained by geometry representation. Geometry tends to be abstract which is one of many problems making it difficult to understand. However, with the development of ICT, teachers can choose suitable media for teaching geometry in addition to presenting realistic problems. According to [8] since 250 years ago, some aspects of geometry have been developed: (a) interaction with spatial geometry figures. Students learn about length, area, volume and relations among them; (b) spatial geometry figures and its shape transformation;(c) spatial geometry figure is as a basic reflection of visual information through representation, explanation, generalization, and documentation.

The implementation of geometry does not only happen in schools but also in daily activities. It can form students' knowledge about spatial figures and they can apply this knowledge in any fields like design, mechanical engineering, GPS technology, and many others. It also helps them to understand other mathematical concepts such as algebra, linear equations, calculus, arithmetic, etc. However, despite the important roles of geometry knowledge, the fact shows that many students still experience difficulty in understanding its concepts. A study conducted by [24] analyzed students' problems in understanding materials about planes. This study reveals that students have difficulty in the plane visualization especially the shapes, elements, and the nature of planes.

These are also confirmed by the observation results in several junior high schools in Palembang conducted by the writer which shows students understanding in geometry are still unsatisfactory. When the students are combination of three cuboids with the same length and width but different height which resembles stair steps and they are asked about its surface area, most of the students cannot answer it. They even calculate the surface area by separating the cuboids. In geometry the ability which can help students to find the solution of such mathematical problem is spatial reasoning ability.

Spatial reasoning ability is an ability involving some one's cognitive processing to present and manipulate spatial figures, relationships, and figure formations(clement and batista,1992). In addition according to national research council(2006), it relates to location and movement from a particular object or person physically or physically or Mentally. Spatial reasoning covers three components namely spatial concept, representation, and reasoning. These components involve relationship spatial structures and possible representation.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Geometry plays a significant role in primary and secondary schools mathematics curricula in Ethiopia and other countries. It provides a rich source of visualization for understanding arithmetical, algebraic, and statistical concepts [3]. Also, [17] expressed that geometry provides a complete appreciation of the world we live in. Also, geometry is used to develop students' spatial awareness, intuition, visualizations and to solve practical problems and so on (Sunsuma, Masocha, and Zezekwa, 2012).

Studies have revealed that difficulty in teaching and learning of mathematics especially geometry. [2] Stated that students generally encountered difficulties in geometry and performed poorly in senior secondary school mathematics lesson. Also, [15] found out that many students fail to grasp key concepts in geometry and leave mathematics classes without learning the basic terminology. Findings have shown that some factors are identified to make the learning of geometry concepts in mathematics difficult which include: teachers' methods of instruction, geometric language, visualizing abilities [12]. Other factors include non-availability and obsolescence of instructional materials, gender differences, poor reasoning skills, inadequate time, inadequate school curriculum and lack of proof by students [10]. All these are believed to have a negative effect on the learning of geometry.

However, despite the important roles of geometry knowledge, the fact shows that many students still experience difficulty in understanding its concepts. A study conducted by [24] analyzed students' problem in understanding materials about planes. This study reveals that students have difficulty in the plane and solid visualization especially the shapes, elements, and the nature of planes.

These are also confirmed by the observation of the researcher that the problem is widely fazing in ML11 section at KCTE 2019. Even when the students are given a plane geometry and solid geometry they fail to differentiate. And they also phase a problem to differentiate and calculate Area and Volume of geometry figures. So this action research is to be conducted to fill this gap of students on geometry course.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this action research study is to investigate the factors that affect students' understanding of geometry concepts and to give possible and attractive strategies to help students understanding in this course in the case of ML11 section at KCTE 2019.

1.4 General Objective of the study

The main objective of this action research is aimed at improving Geometric Concepts Perceived Difficult to First Year Linear Mathematics Students of Kemissie College of Teachers Education in 2019 G.C.

1.4.1 Specific objectives of the study

Specifically, this study is to:

- To identify which concepts of geometry perceived difficult to students.
- To analyze the plausible causes of the perceived difficulty of geometry concepts.
- To address the most appropriate teaching method of geometry.

1.5 Basic question

This study, were providing answers to the following research questions:-

- Which concepts of geometry perceived difficult to learner?
- What are the plausible causes of the perceived difficulty of geometry concepts?
- What are the most effective and appropriate teaching method of geometry concepts?

2 Review of related literature

2.1 Students' misconceptions in geometry

Concept definition is "a form of words used to specify that concept" (Tall and Vinner, 1981, p.152). Formal concept definition generates a personal concept image. Students' prior experiences with the geometrical concept embody the concept image [8]. In some students, this concept image may not develop; in others, it may not, be coherently related to the formal concept definition.

These misconceptions have to be addressed during instruction in order to make the student to contemplate where the conflict between the formal definition and their own concept image occurs.

In the following let's see some common misconceptions. Many students have problems in recognizing different geometrical shapes in non-standard orientation, for example, a square is not a square if its

base is not horizontal (Mayberry, 1983; Clements and Battista, 1992). Many students have difficulties to perceive class inclusions of shapes (Mayberry, 1983; Feza and Webb, 2005), for example, they might think that a square is not rectangle (Marchis, 2008), a square is not rhombus, a rectangle is not parallelogram (Clements and Battista, 1992). Some students can't recognize geometrical solids or/and they can't draw the net of these solids (Pittalis, Mousoulides and Christou, 2010).

Problems of learning geometry

Adegun, (2013) stated that students generally encountered difficulties in geometry and performed poorly in senior secondary school mathematics lesson. Also,[15] found out that many students fail to grasp key concepts in geometry and leave mathematics classes without learning the basic terminology. Findings have shown that some factors are identified to make the learning of geometry concepts in mathematics difficult which include: teachers' methods of instruction, geometric language, visualizing abilities [12]. Other factors include non-availability and obsolescence of instructional materials, gender differences, poor reasoning skills, inadequate time, inadequate school curriculum and lack of proof by students (Mason, 2002; Uduosoro, 2011 and NERDC, 2012). All these are believed to have a negative effect on the learning of geometry.

2.2 Geometrical shapes and solids

In this section we give the definition of some geometrical shapes which will be included in the research. **A parallelogram** is a simple quadrilateral with two pairs of parallel sides.

A rectangle is a simple quadrilateral with four right angles. We can define a rectangle based on a parallelogram a rectangle is a parallelogram with at least one right angle.

A rhomb is a quadrilateral with four sides of equal length. We can define a rhomb based on a parallelogram: a rhomb is a parallelogram in which at least two consecutive sides are equal in length.

A square is a simple quadrilateral with four equal sides and four equal angles. It can be defined based on parallelogram, rectangle of rhomb. A square is a parallelogram with one right angle and two adjacent equal sides. A square is a rectangle with two adjacent equal sides. A square is a rhombus with all angles equal or a square is a rhombus with at least one right angle.

A pyramid is a polyhedron formed by connecting a polygonal base and a point. If the base is a triangle we got a tetrahedron. If the base is a square we got a square pyramid.

A prism is a polyhedron with a n-sided polygonal base, a translated copy of it to another plane, and other faces joining corresponding sides of the two bases. If the bases are triangles, we speak about triangular prism. If the bases are quadrilaterals, we speak about tetragonal prism. If all the faces of a tetragonal prism are squares, we get a cube. Thus a cube is a particular tetragonal prism.

2.2.1 Traditional Classroom and E-learning

A traditional classroom refer to rooms consist of clean pastel-colored walls and rows of desks and chairs facing a lectern were placed under the microscope.[18] For ages, education has been centered on attending classes day after day, and people found that school facilities could affect learning. In a traditional classroom, education is mainly based on teaching system and often focuses on the material itself rather than the learners and differences between capabilities and learning skills.

[19] At the same time, learners are naturally obliged to harmonize their own techniques and learn ability. Traditional classroom does not stimulate the senses or the mind, and on the contrary inspires rote learning. The term e-learning widely refers to any electronically assisted instruction, and is often associated with instruction offered via computer and the internet. By using various electronic delivery methods, learning can be facilitated in aspect of the transmission of information and interaction. So e-learning has its own special characteristics, including advantages and disadvantages compared with traditional classroom.[20] While with the trend of teaching in university to becoming more learner-centered developing, electronic delivery has been popularized as an alternative or an adjunct to traditional lectures. [21] And the learner-centered instruction means that students will engage more in classroom. So it can be understood that one of the primary aims of higher education in today's information technology enabled classroom, is to make students more active in the learning process.

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Research design

Research Type: The study is a descriptive and a survey type because a questionnaire was used to collect information on the geometry concepts in mathematics perceived difficult to the students. Both qualitative and quantitative research approach was used.

3.2 Population, Sample size and Sampling Techniques

The population for this study was all students in section ML11 at KCTE 2019 G.C. The study employed a purposively and random sampling techniques. The researcher selected ML11 section purposively and administered pre-test to all students. On the second stage, the researcher used random sampling technique using Microsoft excel to form two groups of students.

3.3 Research Instrument

The research instrument for this study was a researcher-developed questionnaire entitled: Questionnaire on Geometry Concepts in Mathematics Perceived Difficult to the students which consisted of twenty five (25) concepts in geometry collected from math211 and math212 courses of mathematics curriculum in new modality of Amhara region colleges of teachers Education to identify concepts perceived difficult to the students.

3.3.1 Validity and Reliability of questionnaires

The reliability of research questionnaire was tested by Spss software (20.1) reliability of our data were 0.612 of cronbach's alpha and above 0.6, indicating that the measurement is reliable. And all questionnaires were reviewed and commented by experienced mathematics teachers for validity. Therefore the reliability and validity of the measurement are all logic to test the hypothesis.

3.4 Data analyzing methods

Achievement test scores were analyzed using inferential statistics. Specifically, after normal distribution and homogeneity tested the t-test was executed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 20.0(SPSS 20.0) software. The t-test was used to test for statistical significance difference between the control and experimental groups at the beginning of the study and at the end. This was done primarily by comparing the mean score of the pre-test and post-test scores of both groups. Qualitative descriptive research methods were inducted to explore the sources of geometry concepts perceived difficult to students and the role of teachers in engaging their learners in the process of teaching geometry concepts.

3.5 Data analyzing

In this subsection the researcher tried to analyze, display and interperate some data obtained from Students pre-test score (25 percent).

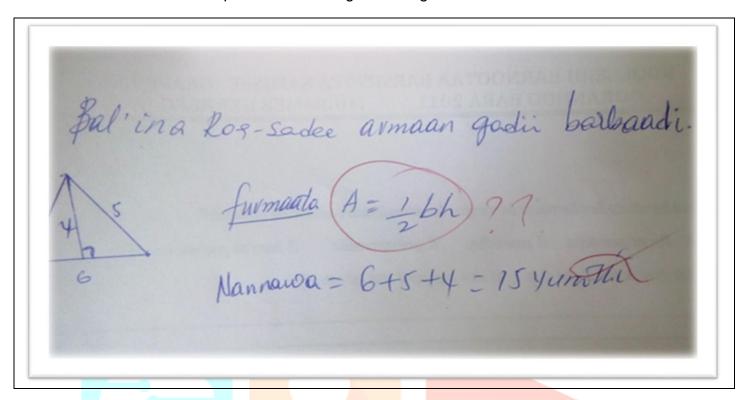
Mark	5-10	11-15	16-20	21-25
No	3	29	4	-
students.				

The mean score of pretest out of 25% mark were 12.61 which are almost having mark of the total. From the above table one can conclude that the student has a problem on some geometric concepts.

1JCR

The problem of some respondents was identified as follows:

Question: find the area and perimeter for the given triangle.

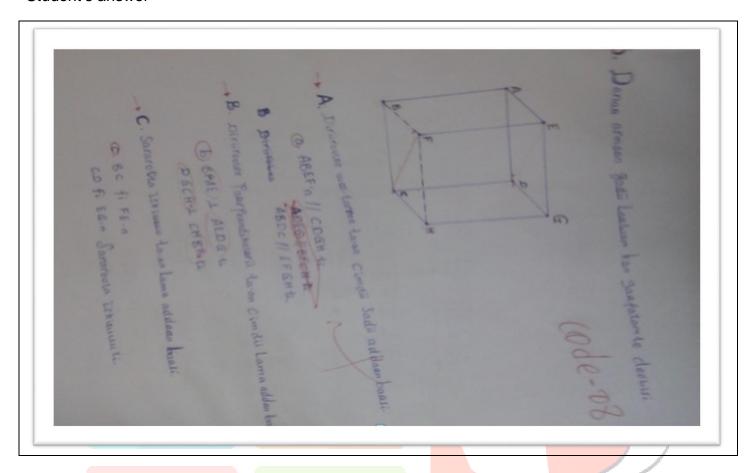


The problem of this respondent was

- He /She know the formula of area and perimeter but fail to compute with it.
- Lack of confidence to manipulate by using these formula.
- He/ She has gap on how to calculate the perimeter.
- He/ She has gap of knowledge on concepts of right angle triangle.

1JCR

Question: list the faces of the given solid figure and identify parallel faces! Student's answer

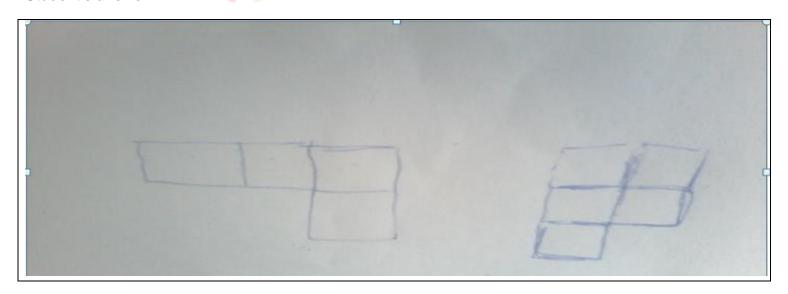


The problem of this respondent was multiple misconceptions of geometries.

- The student doesn't understand the question.
- Has a problem to differentiate faces of solid geometries.
- He/ She has problem to name the faces of prism.
- He/ She did not identify what was given and what was asked.

Question: Draw net of cube figure.

Student's answer



- The respondent has the problem to visualize the figure.
- The respondent has gap to differentiate the faces of solid figures.
- There was a problem how to bloom the faces of cube figure.
- The respondents fail to show even number of cube figure.

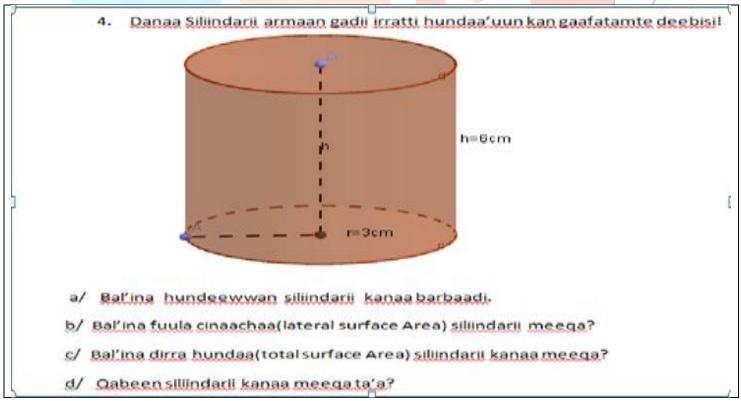
From the whole respondents pretest results the researcher assesses the difficulties of all respondents and generalize it as the findings from pretest.

FINDINGS

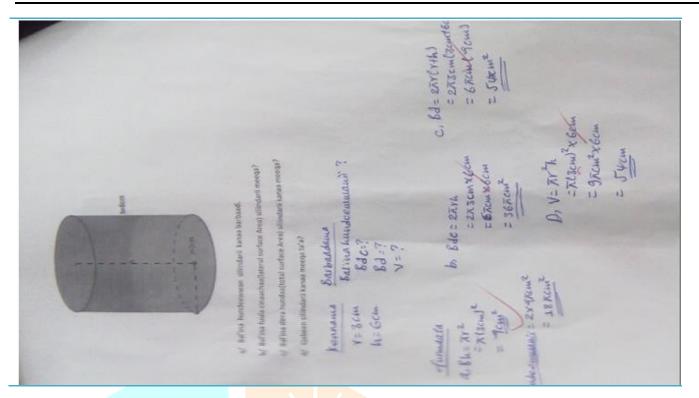
- 1. Many students fail to differentiate solid and plane figures.
- 2. Many students phase the problem to calculate Area and Perimeter.
- 3. There was a gap of knowledge how to identify lateral surfaces of solid figures.
- 4. There was a problem to identify what were given and what were asked.
- 5. Lack of confidence to manipulate calculations.
- 6. Lack of understanding the nature of geometric concepts.
- 7. Many students do not comprehend the geometry questions rather they tend to be confused.
- 8. Some students do not differentiate the relation between two parallel lines and a transversal line.
- 9. Some students phase the problem of calculating angles.

AFTER INTERVENTION RESPONDENTS RESULT SHOWS PROGRESS

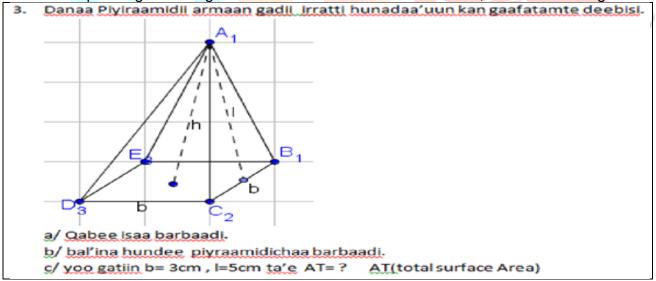
Item 1: If the radius of the right circular cylinder is 3cm and its height is 6cm. Find Area of bases, lateral surface area; total surface Area and its Volume?



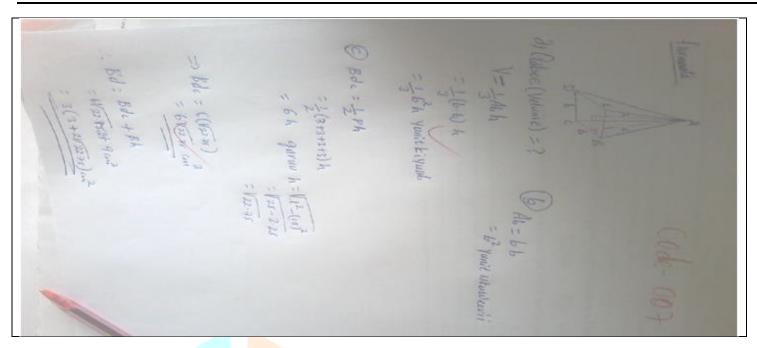
Student's answer



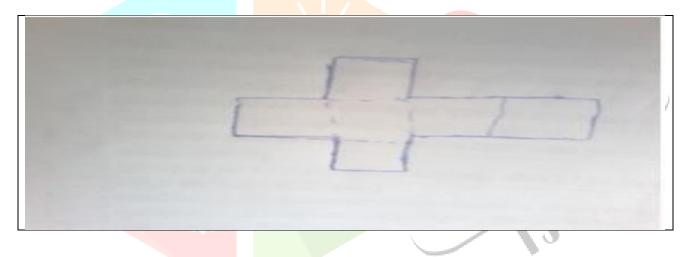
Item 2: Depending on the figure below. Find the total surface Area, volume and height?



Students' Answer



Item 2: Draw the net of cube.



Generally all the respondents showed high progress.

- They were used correct formulas to calculate areas, lateral surface areas, total surface areas and volumes of 3D Solid figures.
- They were visualized 3D figures well.
- They were sort necessary information before manipulation.

4. Result

Statistical analysis is conducted by firstly testing the normality of the data. In order to know whether the obtained data are distributed normally or not. For this purpose, Kolmogorov Smirnov test is used with the following **hypotheses: H0**: The data are distributed normally and **H1**: The data are not distributed normally. The criterion of testing these hypotheses is that if p value > 0.05, H0 is accepted and the other one is rejected and vice versa. The result is displayed in Table 1.

Instruction				
	WGG	WOGG		
Number of students	16	20		
Kolmogorov Simonov	1.046	1.282		
asym.sig(2-tailed)	0.075	0.224		
H0	accepted	accepted		

As shown in Table 1, p value (Sig.) is more than 0.05. It means H0 is accepted indicating that the data are distributed normally. After the normality test, homogeneity test is conducted. The hypotheses are as follows: H0: **The data are homogen**, **Ha: The data are not homogen**. The criterion of testing these hypotheses is that if p value greater than 0.05, H0 is accepted and the other one is rejected. The result of the homogeneity test can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table:2. The result of the homogeneity test

Instruction					
	WGG	WOGG	F value	Sig.	Ho
Number of students	16	20			
Mean	3.7368	2.0884	2.145	0.00	accepted
std. deviation	0.075	0.224			

As shown in Table 2, p value (Sig.) is lower than 0.05. It means H0 is rejected indicating that the data are not homogen. Due to this result, t-test is used to see the difference of means.

HO: There is no significant difference between the students who are taught geometry with GeoGebra software (experimental group) and those who are taught without involving GeoGebra software (control group).

Ha: There is a significant difference between students who are taught geometry with GeoGebra software (experimental group) and those who are taught without involving GeoGebra software (control group).

If the p value is more than 0.05, H0 is accepted, and if the p value is lower than 0.05, H0 is rejected. The result is displayed in Table 3.

		Ins	Instruction				
	WGG	WOGG	t	df	Sig.	Ha	
			value		// 1		
Number of	16	20					
students							
Mean	3.7368	2.0884	11.03	37	0.00	accepte	
			0			d	
std. deviation	0.075	0.224					

As shown in Table 3, the p value is lower than 0.05 so that H0 is rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the students' who are taught geometry with geogebra software and those who are taught without involving geogebra software

4.1 Reflection

The result of the statistical analysis shows that there is a significant difference on students' between the students' who are taught geometry with geogebra software and those who are taught without involving GeoGebra software. Thus, it can be concluded that teaching with GeoGebra instruction has a positive effect on students' activities and performance during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In other words, GeoGebra instruction is more effective to improve students' geometric skills. The positive result is because teaching With GeoGebra instruction facilitates students to practice and develop their understanding of 3D solid figures caused by the fact that students are involved directly to understand the given concepts with visuals in Geogebra software. It is in line with what **Presmeg's** statement in Encyclopedia of Mathematics Education (Presmeg, 2014) that visualization in Mathematics is not a new thing as Mathematics uses symbols, diagrams, and an abstract notation which need

visualization. Visualization is the ability, process, and product from creation interpretation in mind. Besides, students are given opportunities to discuss with their

Classmates, create plans, and determine appropriate steps to solve mathematical problems. These activities also help students enhance their knowledge and reasoning ability about 3D Solid figures.

The finding of this research is in agreement with a research conducted by [22] revealing that there was a significant difference in students' learning success between students who were taught by using elastic mathematical instruction with Cabri3D and those who were not about spatial geometry figures. Besides, [23] in his research also claimed that in geometry instruction the use of media such as Cabri II Plus can be used as an effort to improve students' ability in forming geometry evidence. Furthermore, [22] in her research also mentions that mathematics teaching with Model Eliciting Activities is necessary to implement in schools which results in broader instruction. She also states that there is a need to develop a variety of instructions by using Model Eliciting Activities. This will improve students' ability to master mathematical concepts.

4.2 Conclusion

From the results of this research, it can be concluded that the students who are taught geometry with geogebra software (WGG) shows better performance than those who are taught without involving geogebra (WOGG). Therefore, it is suggested for mathematics teachers to implement instruction with geogebra teaching mathematics.

References

- [1] J. O. Ayinla(2011). Effects of Teachers instructional strategy pattern on senior school students' Performance in mathematics word problem in Ondo, Nigeria, Unpublished M. Ed. Thesis, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria, 2011.
- [2] Adugum(2013). Geometry in primary school Mathematics, Educat ia 21, vol. 6,131-139
- [3] M. Battista(2014) Geometry results from the third international mathematics and science study. Teaching Children Mathematics, 5(6),1999, 367-373.
- [4] Clement, D. & Batist. M(1992): Handbook of research on mathematics taeching and learning Geometry & spatial Reasoning. New York: macmillan publishing company.
- [5] D. Douglas, Dictionary of mathematics (3rd ed.). (New York, NY: Barron's Educational Series, Inc, 2009).
- [6] Gardner, H. (1993). Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences (2nd ed.). London:
- [7] Maier, P. H. (1996): Spatial geometry and spatial ability How to make solid geometry solid? In: ElmarCohors-Fresenborg, K. Reiss, G. Toener& H.-G. Weigand (Eds.), Selected Papersfrom the Annual Conference of Didactics of Mathematics 1996, Osnabrueck, p. 63–75.
- [8] Hershkowitz,R.(2014). Shapes and space -Geomerty teaching and learning .In S.lerman(Ed), Encyclopedia of mathematics education.
- [9] Marchi, s, I. (2008). Geometry in primary school Mathematics, Educat, ia 21, vol. 6, 131-139
- [10] M. Mason, The van Hiele levels of geometric understanding. Retrieved from http://jwilson.coe.uga.edu/EMAT8990/GEOMETRY, 2002
- [11] S. P. Michael, "Mathematics." Microsoft RStudent Encarta, 2008.
- [12] Nuri'aini,E(2012):Understanding Geometry and disposition :Experiment with elementary studentby using Van Hiele's teaching Approach. Educationist.
- [13] Soyemi, and O. S. Jegede, Student dictionary of mathematics (Revised ed.). (Wiseword Associates Publication, 2000) 11-23
- [14] M. F. Salman(2012) Teachers' identification of the difficult levels of topics in the primary school mathematics curriculum. Journal of Mathematical Association of Nigeria, 30(1), 2005, 20-28.
- [15] A. Telima(2009) Problems of teaching and learning of geometry in secondary schools in River State, Nigeria
- [16] Pittalis, M.; Mousoulides, N. &Christou, C. (2010). Students' 3D Geometry Thinking Profiles, In: Durand-Guerrier, V.; Soury-Lavergne, S. &Arzarello, F. (Eds.), Proceedings of CERME

IJCR

- 6, January 28th-February 1st 2009, Lyon France (pp. 816-825), INRP.
- [17] Volderman, How Maths work. (London: Dorling Kindersley, 1998). G. Sunzuma, M. Masocha, and N. Zezekwa, Secondary school students' attitudes towards their learning of geometry: A survey of Bindura urban secondary schools. Greener Journal of Educational Research, 3(8), 2012. 402- 410.
- [18] PrasannaRamakrisnan, Yuraidzabt Yahya, Mohd Nor Hajar Hasrol, Azlan Abdul Aziz.

 Blended Learning: A Suitable Framework For E-Learning In Higher Education. Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2012, 67, pp.513-526
- [19] ChenKinshuk, W.. Cyber Schooling Framework: Improving Mobility and Situated Learning Proceedings-5th International Conference an advanced Learning technologies. Taiwan. 2005 July 5-8, pp.290-292
- [20] Baeten, Kyndt, Struyven, &Dochy. Using student-centred learning environments to stimulate deep approaches to learning: factors encouraging or discouraging their effectiveness.

 Educational Research Review, 2010, 5 (3), pp.243–260 http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2010.06.001•
- [21] Stephenson, J., Brown, C., & Griffin, D.. Electronic delivery of lectures in the university environment: *An empirical comparison of three delivery styles. Computational and Eduational*, 2008, 50(3), pp. 640!651.
- [22] Chamberlin, S.A, & Moon, S.M (2005). Model Eliciting activities as a tool to develop and identify creatively gifted mathematicians.
- [23] Daher ,&Shamberi ,2013. pre-service teachers modeling processes through engagement with carib plus II .
- [24] pradika,(2012). Geometric understanding and misconceptions among preservice and inservice mathematics teachers. Proceedings of the 10th PME-NA Conference (pp. 290-296). Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University

