
EMERGING TRENDS AND APPROACHES TO SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION IN A CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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Abstract

This study was conducted to find out the approaches used in Social Studies. In this study, Social Studies' approaches, curriculum, and resources are all discussed in detail. A descriptive analysis was adopted for this study. For this study, forty (40) documentary articles on Social Studies approaches and resources were read, and 27 of them were analyzed for the study. This study found that no single technique of learning can be applied to all learning circumstances. Although there isn't one ideal way to teach Social Studies, there are a variety of approaches that can help in achieving our goals as Social Studies teachers in the classroom. The use of a variety of approaches will help in achieving educational goals. As for teaching materials, they include everything that might help a teacher promote meaningful teaching and learning through a variety of means.

Keywords: Social Studies, Approaches, Resources, Curriculum

Introduction

During the past 10 years, the Social Studies curriculum has undergone a radical transformation, both in content and

approach. In Social Studies, the acknowledgment of cultural and ethnic diversity has had a direct impact on the content and methodology. As a discipline, Social Studies is primarily concerned with the nature of man. This means that Social Studies focuses on information, beliefs, and abilities that are important to the human environment. There is a view that the subject should be used as a primary discipline to socialize our young people and as a way of promoting improvements towards the major social goals and objectives that have been recognized, such as emphasizing civic duties or developing citizen participation skills, acquiring desirable attitudes and values, leading a purposeful life, etc. As a result, the scope of Social Studies varies depending on the degree of study (Sivakumar, 2018).

Some teaching techniques are required for the transfer of information and its refinement. The Social Studies teacher must become proficient in his or her methods of teaching the subject. Among these are subject competency, competence in transferring content to the students, competence in the use of a wide range of instructional techniques, and competence in assessing education, among others. There are several ways to enhance meaningful learning through the use of instructional materials in the teaching and learning processes (Ross, 2014). So, this study was conducted to find out the approaches used in Social Studies. In this study, Social Studies' approaches, curriculum, and resources are all discussed in detail as a descriptive analysis was adopted for this study.

Methods of Teaching Social Studies

When one engages with another person to influence their learning, he/she is teaching. Teaching is the interaction between the teacher and the students that creates the learning experience. Teaching as a valuable and practical art requires intuition and improvisation, as well as expressive skills. Many teaching methods and approaches exist for integrated Social Studies. However, no one style of teaching is suitable for all learning scenarios. As a Social Studies teacher, you must stay abreast of new teaching

approaches. The teacher of Social Studies must be a source of knowledge, a facilitator, and an organizer of learning possibilities as well as a person who can excite any learning environment by employing the following instructional styles, among others, that are accessible to Social Studies teachers (Russell III, 2010).

Simulation Method: As observed, it is a simplified version of a real-life issue. When teaching concepts and principles that are difficult to see, such as theoretical notions, simulation is often employed. Such presentations of ideas, concerns, challenges, and realities in past and current civilizations are vivid and energetic. From the Latin word “similis”, meaning “to act like,” similitude is derived. Consequently, this technique results in a situation where actions are portrayed as if they were real. It is important to note that there are three main types of simulation approaches. Historical simulations, simulation games, and simulation activities (Adeyemi & Ajibade, 2011).

Laboratory Method: As a complement to textbook instruction and to improve presentation and understanding, in Social Studies, the laboratory method comprises the use of source materials, ssadditional references, mechanical devices, multimedia aids, and a variety of other life-like activities. No specific location or class hour is required for the laboratory style of teaching, but rather an activity. A conventional classroom, an outdoor area, or a specifically constructed space can be used for the activity. In this technique, students use tangible things, equipment, etc., under the supervision of the teacher, to highlight facts and concepts. Because Social Studies is taught in units in both elementary and secondary schools, the laboratory method allows students to apply their knowledge and abilities practically (Omolaro & Adebukola, 2015).

Inquiry Method: Methods such as the inquiry and discovery approach foster diverse thinking, allow students to gather knowledge on their own, and teach them to think critically. As a

result of this technique, you must identify the problem, analyze the data to come up with viable solutions, and use the solution to generalize. Students may be asked to investigate the causes of fuel shortages in the country, power outages, and shortages of certain commodities, among other things. The inquiry technique's emphasis on higher-level thinking is one of its most attractive features (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017).

Project Method: Depending on the scope of the project, projects can be carried out by a single student or by a group of students who work together to generate something considerably great. The project technique is self-motivated and incorporates specific actions. The instructor must prepare the project carefully, but the goal is to encourage the students to coordinate their information logically. Writing a group tale, creating maps, and creating an album for a special event (such as a wedding or installation ceremony) are just a few examples of Social Studies projects that can be completed (Prtljaga, & Veselinov, 2017).

Demonstrations: Demonstrations are a sequence of prepared acts that are repeated to explain a specific phenomenon. Students or teachers can employ demonstration techniques that may use pictures as a means of clarifying information and to introduce a specific topic for study at the beginning of a class or as a concluding action during teaching and learning. Demonstrations have numerous advantages, especially when there is a lack of Social Studies material. Showing examples is a good method for teaching cultural patterns, such as how a tribe dresses or composes music and dance (Ciullo, Falcomata, & Vaughn, 2015).

Question and Answer Method: Educators often utilize this teaching approach. The teacher asks a question and identifies the student who responds. The student's remark is then vocally repeated by the teacher. Students can continue to answer the teacher's questions as he or she asks them. Occasionally, another student will be invited to comment on a previous response given. It

is a procedure in which the instructor asks a question, a student answers, the teacher then reacts by asking another question, and so on. It is possible to utilize the question-and-answer approach throughout a class, or only a portion of it. As a result of this approach, the learners' knowledge may be assessed. Throughout the class, the approach keeps both students and teachers constantly engaged (Zevin, 2015).

Field-Trips: As part of a field trip, students observe and examine real-world events. Such trips may be limited to the school hallway, the school building, or the playgrounds of the school. The instructor may be able to locate relevant places for his students within the school itself. Different soils, vegetation, and even a river may be found within walking distance of the school. The teacher may ask local industry or public services to work with him or her to tour its locations. Because field trips are based on real-life circumstances, the students' experiences are vivid, enduring, and frequently more significant (Kenna, & Potter, 2018).

Discussion Method: This technique involves student-to-student discussion, with the teacher stepping in as a necessary guide. Students are divided into small groups with a leader who begins the discussion. Students are more engaged than teachers when this approach is utilized. Some students may try to dominate the debate, but this should be avoided at all costs. Every member of a small group must have the same opportunity or possibility of contributing to a discussion. For example, in Social Studies, the discussion technique may be utilized for topics such as living together, modernization in our national community, challenges of existence, family issues, and environmental issues, among others (Martell, 2017).

Lecture Method: Teachers utilize this approach the most often. There is an expectation that the students will sit quietly and listen attentively to the discussion of the subject matter being discussed. Students are required to take notes, and the teacher may make

notes on the chalkboard in this case as well. Lessons are often concluded with a summary and some recapitulation questions. When a topic is abstract, most teachers employ the lecture approach. This approach can be utilized in situations when there is inadequate staffing and a large classroom audience. Even though it can serve a wider audience, it has the problem of making learning teacher-centered rather than student-centered. When this approach is not combined with other methods and teaching tools, the lesson gets boring (Bass, 2018).

Problem-Solving Method: As a result of this technique, students can think about an issue to try to comprehend it and then evaluate information to discover answers. For the teaching and learning process to be successful, the technique requires the application of a scientific methodology. Learners are engaged in tasks such as arranging, classifying and sorting data to come up with an answer to a given problem. Teachers are sometimes confronted with the challenge of defining the problem that has to be tackled before they can begin. Problem-solving methods must be child-centered, which should be the guiding principle (Güleç, 2020).

Dramatization Method: This is one of the best ways to get pupils interested in what they are learning. It is a way for children to openly communicate their understanding of the world around them in a non-threatening way. Physically, emotionally, and cognitively, the technique encourages pupils to be involved and participate actively in lessons. Dramatization can be used to keep student's attention and interest when a lecture or topic is boring (Celikkaya, 2014). Although this study has attempted to explore a few of the different techniques and methods available for teaching Social Studies, the approaches and methods described are not exhaustive. In addition, no single technique of learning can be applied to all learning circumstances. Although there isn't one ideal way to teach Social Studies, there are a variety of approaches

that can help you achieve your goals in the classroom (Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017).

Resources for Teaching in Social Studies

As a teaching and learning tool, educational materials have gone a long way in the past thirty years in aiding successful lesson delivery. Social Studies teaching materials include everything that might help the instructor promote teaching and learning in the classroom. More than one sense can speed up learning and help pupils retain information for a longer period. According to the teacher, students must be able to be captivated by or interested in what they are learning. There are three types of resources in Social Studies: human, material, and location. (Wynn, Sr. & Okie, 2017).

Textbooks: Traditional teaching methods include the use of textbooks. To the greatest extent, textbooks serve as reference materials for both teachers and students. Pupils are obliged to use dictionaries, textbooks, maps, information almanacs, and other types of reference materials in nearly every subject. Incorporating Social Studies curriculum implementation relies heavily on textbooks since they are one of the most widely available teaching tools in classrooms, especially in poor nations (Ogbaji, 2017).

Pictures and Charts: Students with reading problems or limited vocabulary might benefit from visual presentations. When presenting, pictures assist in bringing the lesson content to life, whereas charts include the actual lesson information. Charts, on the other hand, are useful in presenting things to be taught in their simplest form, while visuals generate attention, make the right impression, and bring lessons to life. The teacher must utilize a range of images to make his lessons clear. A clear and big chart should be displayed in the classroom if it is to be utilized as a tool to highlight key information (Ogbaji, 2017).

Maps: Students in Social Studies classes need to learn to analyze and draw maps. Mapping reveals information on economic and

physical characteristics, geographic locations, political borders, and cultural limits, as well as occupational zones, among other things. Consequently, the instructor should introduce pupils to maps so that they can correctly read maps used in Social Studies (Haas, 2017).

Audio-Visual Devices: There is a variety of audiovisual equipment and content available today. They may be used in a variety of ways, from an instructor using small cameras to display close-ups in his classroom to an aerial studio broadcasting to many states. There are a variety of ways to educate with a self-contained classroom television system, videotape recorder, camera, filmstrips, and radio available. Role-playing exercises in class might benefit from the use of videotape. The use of tape recording is beneficial for dealing with difficulties such as those that arise in mixed ability groupings of students. Researchers believe it is a strong tool that may improve the quality of learning, enrich curricula and provide educational advantages to millions of students who might otherwise miss out on chances (Ho & Intai, 2017).

Focus of Social Studies Curriculum

Due to contemporary challenges, there is an increased emphasis on the following subjects/topics in the Social Studies curriculum nowadays;

History: In recent years, every major curriculum report has recommended a greater focus on the study of history. Many believe that history is the only discipline that connects the past with the present in Social Studies. Humanities like art, music, and philosophy may be taught through historical study according to them. Rather than concentrating solely on political, military, and diplomatic events, social history focuses on how ordinary people grew up, worked, and developed throughout the period. All of these areas of human existence should be covered in the study of any historical era, whether it is philosophy, religion, music, and art, or amusement and sports. Last but not least, there is a strong

focus on comprehending historical events rather than simply memorization. These broad concepts and ideas have persisted throughout history, and they are being taught to today's children as well. Effect and cause are taught as well as truth and opinion (Marcus, Metzger, Paxton, & Stoddard, 2018).

Geography: History and geography have become the foundations of Social Studies education. They have agreed on the 5 themes of geography that serve as a framework for geographic thinking and demonstrate the link between human history and the universe as well as between place and time. These are some of the themes. (1) creating a sense of place (2) developing location skills and understanding the significance of location; (3) studying human-environment interaction over time; (4) reasons for and significance of human migration; and (5) understanding global regions and the impact of global interaction and culture. Geographical knowledge has evolved from basic memorization of capitals and national resources to "human geography" (Brophy, Alleman, & Halvorsen, 2016).

Ethics and Values: There used to be chapters in many primary and secondary Social Studies textbooks that stressed virtues such as punctuality and honesty. Students were encouraged to explore their views, but no attempt was made to steer them toward a preset set of ideals. The role of a person in society and the duties and actions that contribute to a just and fair nation are now being addressed in Social Studies curricula. Respect for the rights of the minority, fair play, tolerance of different ideas, and a willingness to actively engage in a democratic country are some of the traits that are sometimes called "civic virtue" (Zevin, 2015).

Conclusion

It is believed that it is ideal to examine assessment as an integrated part of the curriculum rather than as an "add-on" or "afterthought" because of the increased emphasis on Social Studies for the early grades, driven by national and state standards. According to our

recent classroom observations, evaluation may be a natural and continuing part of the curricular process, even in the early grades, and it can set the tone for Social Studies to be appreciated by students. Many teaching approaches and materials are accessible to Social Studies instructors. The following are a few of the most popular. In addition to the textbook instructions, these techniques include historical simulations, games and simulation activities, laboratory methods including the use of source materials, extra references, audio-visual aids, mechanical devices, and other lifelike activities. Other types of inquiry approaches include projects, demonstrations, question-and-answer sessions, field trips, lectures, and problem-solving approaches. Noting that no one technique of teaching Social Studies can effectively cover all learning contexts, using a variety of approaches will help in achieving our educational goals. As for teaching materials, they include everything that might help a teacher to promote meaningful teaching and learning through a variety of means. Human, location, and material resources are all included in Social Studies instructional resources. Managing instructional materials is a teacher's (human resources) primary priority.

For classroom instruction, the locations include a variety of sites of interest. factories, museums, geographical characteristics and locations, historical structures, etc., are all examples of places of interest. Material resources are the primary tools for learning and teaching. Textbooks and semi-text (charts, maps, and images) are examples of printed materials. In addition to models, non-text materials include actual real-life objects, video and audio aids, as well as video and audio assistance. Note that the teacher's material selection should be dictated by what is available. The teacher's choice of materials should be based on what is accessible and what is appropriate to the kids' age, aptitude, and interests. The accessible materials should be well-organized for effective and meaningful learning to take place in the Social Studies classroom.

Suggestions

This study suggests that teachers should use appropriate approaches for teaching Social Studies. The government should provide resources that will enhance the teaching and learning of Social Studies in a digital generation. The curriculum should be reviewed and modified to meet the needs of every student. Teachers should be retrained in continuous assessment for effective measurement of students.

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