
**INTEGRATION OF STORY-TELLING TECHNIQUE IN
SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM FOR EFFECTIVE
TEACHING AND LEARNING AMONG PUPILS OF
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN OGUN STATE**

Adebola Y. **ADEBAJO**

*Department of Social Sciences Education,
Kogi State University, Anyimgba, Kogi State*

Abstract

The study examined the integration of story-telling technique in Social Studies Curriculum for effective teaching and learning in Primary Schools in Ogun State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Population comprises of all Primary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select ten (10) primary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State. Fifteen (15) teachers were randomly selected from each of the chosen schools to make a total of one hundred (150) as sample for study. Two (2) research questions were raised and answered in this study. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha and data collected was analyzed using simple percentage, mean and standard deviation statistical tools. The research findings revealed that Social Studies can be effectively taught through story telling which will make the pupils show interest and understand the lessons better. Storytelling, if used effectively, can enhance content and value learning in Social Studies which will make pupils to be responsible citizens in the society. It is therefore recommended that teachers should learn how to develop

different skills of telling story in their Social Studies teachings. Syllabus designers have to allocate time and give more emphasis to the use of storytelling technique in Social Studies teachings.

Keywords: Story-Telling, Curriculum, Technique, Integration, Teaching

Introduction

The primary Social Studies curriculum focuses on the nation's history, geography and economic activities, the lessons learnt from the social issues, the challenges and constraints we face as a small nation without any natural resources except for our people as well as our link with our neighbouring countries in South-east Asia and the rest of the world (Curriculum Planning and Development Division, 2009). As Social Studies integrates History and Geography with some basic Economics and Sociology, the subject can be taught in a variety of ways using dramatic techniques, simulations, art and craft and storytelling (Sim, 2004).

In academic story is associated with the term narrative which means the same thing. Narration is widely used educational teaching strategy in all over the world. In Education narratives are used in two ways; Firstly as an educational strategy and secondly narration as a piece of research. The history of storytelling in the classroom showcased the concerns for story telling in the educational context. Cooper (2007) stated that "coaching for storytellers is at present almost unknown: but it is a very important desideratum for all who are concerned with the training of children. Horne (2006) stated about the undermining the importance of storytelling to all grade learners. The focus shifted to only primary-age students. But recently ideas of storytelling has become alive and again gained it momentum. The story telling institutes are growing at Global levels which are showcasing the importance of stories in improving teaching and learning process at large. Story telling institutes are providing coaching to become story tellers. Story telling is a platform of sharing ideas in the form

of storytelling festival began in 1973 in Jonesborough, Tennessee. Since then plethora of literature on storytelling teaching methods has started evolving. In India, The Indian story telling network was founded in 2011 to be based upon India's myriad splendid ancient Storytelling traditions. The Network is dedicated to developing ways of stories and storytelling as a powerful educational tool and teaching method.

Indeed, storytelling is the world's oldest teaching tool. Since time immemorial, stories are passed down from one generation to another in many cultural settings. Firstly, a story is defined as a narrative account of a real or imagined event(s), it is a structure of narrative with a specific style and a set of characters. Additionally, in this technique 'storytelling' learners may share experience and learn from others' wisdom, beliefs, and values. Besides that, stories build blocks of knowledge and it is the foundation of memory and learning, lastly, stories connect people to the past, present and the future (Barzaq, 2009). Storytelling is a form of communication that predates written human history as a means of teaching lessons and passing history down from one generation to another. Storytelling techniques can humanize learning. They offer students the opportunity to communicate as minded characters. Stories touch students' emotions and make them laugh, cry, fear, and get angry (Rossiter, 2002).

Storytelling is able to survive for so long because it is a powerful medium for transmitting knowledge, culture, traditions, beliefs, morals and values of a community. Stories can make us laugh at ourselves, hold our breath, feel excited and be encouraged aged and uplifted in our spirit when we are down. Through stories, we learn more about ourselves as well as gain insights into humanity and the world we live in. Storytelling and its role(s) in society predates written human history as oral storytelling was the only tool available to people to preserve and share cultural customs, beliefs and heritage. Story proved to be the oldest and the most substantiated means for humans to remember and story information (Abrahamsen, 2008). Thus, storytelling proved to be a highly effective way of coding knowledge in oral cultures because it made them more memorable and easily passed

on to others. In fact, Abrahamsen claims that civilizations survived as a result of storytelling because they ensured the continuity of life experiences to subsequent generations.

According to Andrews and Hull (2009), learning is the most creative when it be in community and social environments that give authentic social basis about how to apply knowledge. In this regard, they demonstrated that stories provide a instrument to provide knowledge in a social way. Other theorists consider storytelling synonymous with and from the perspective of narrative inquiry whether is it written down or provided orally (Denning, 2005).

Why use stories for Social Studies? Stories can be used for Social Studies classes because they can supplement the textbooks and spice up lessons to arouse pupils' curiosity and interest. Stories can enhance pupils' mastery of a topic, its concepts and generalizations. They can help to deepen pupils' knowledge of their own culture, history and heritage, and broaden their awareness and appreciation of other cultures. Stories can also develop pupils' empathy, social and moral values and attitudes, self-confidence and self-esteem. Stories can also bond pupils in a class together when they assist in telling a story and solving the problems of the characters as the plot unfolds. They can take pride in their performance and experience the joy of sharing. Stories can develop pupils' ability to listen, speak, imagine, compose phrases and create stories. Because stories can speak to the heart, pupils can be motivated to be story readers, tellers and creators themselves (MacDonald, 2001).

Stories can either be read or told to the pupils in class. Story reading involves the teacher reading from a storybook to her pupils. She does not have much eye contact with her pupils and she uses her voice and her facial expressions to draw her pupils to the story. In storytelling, the teacher memorizes and internalizes the story and tells the story without referring to the storybook. She has eye contact with her pupils all the time and she uses her voice, her facial expressions, her gestures and her body language or even props to engage her pupils in the story. She can also involve her pupils in the story by getting them to chant, sing along, clap and

dance. Of the two, storytelling is more challenging than story reading as it requires more effort on the part of the teacher to prepare herself before she tells the story. She needs to know the story very well without referring to the storybook at all and she needs to think of ways to involve her listeners. This is especially so if they are young listeners who cannot sit still for long and love to move around or do something together with or for the characters in the story.

Barzaq (2009) assured that storytelling technique is an educational tool because they give moral lessons, positive ideas, styles, good models and entertaining and they depend on humans behaviour and their experience that is considered a vital source of knowledge. Bausch(2004) listed many characteristics for a valuable story as helping the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. A good story can establish the feeling of connecting to religion and for a believer to God. The use of innovative story telling techniques in the classroom can increase enthusiasm and reinforce previously presented didactic information. It is also a positive, interactive alternative method of teaching and information sharing. Stories could have a binding power and enhanced people to understand the all part of a universal, regardless of race or color. Using stories as a teaching technique that might suit students with interpersonal intelligence because they provide an excellent setting for interaction between students. Stories use a special language. Stories use all kinds of language conventions to make the story vivid and memorable. In order for the teacher to invent motivating and fun language learning experiences for students, story technique can be used to link the spare time of the students to learning. By using story telling technique in foreign language learning students can learn grammar, vocabulary and oral skills unconsciously in a supervised situation. Stories improve in the listeners the right-brain imagination. Stories bring about a balance for the listeners to use the right side of the brain. Armstrong (2010) stated that storytelling techniques have been traditional literary which relied on an individual author or storyteller to craft

worlds and characters to inhabit them. The tradition of storytelling was a vital basis for communicating values between people.

Storytelling technique as a teaching and learning activity supports active processing of information in a number of ways. First, according to Rose and Nicholl (2007), the vivid images stimulated by storytelling promote character identification thus engaging the student as an active participant in the learning process. When learners are engaged in this way, storytelling improved understanding and makes the learner to apply and doing what they have learned in the work setting. What's more, storytelling appeals to all learning styles including auditory, visual and kinesthetic and many of the intelligence areas including spatial, linguistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence (Caine et al., 2005). Second, active processing is necessary for long-term information retention.

Again, because storytelling is often an entertaining, visual, experiential, and emotionally evoking activity, students are much more likely to retain the course content taught in story format settings (Denning, 2004; Richter & Koppett, 2000). Moreover, storytelling technique enhances the classroom environment and atmosphere. A good story can relax learners and reduce fears because they are entertaining and at times, humorous. According to Richter and Koppett (2000) a well-told story can bring about a sense of community and belonging in learning communities better than most traditional teaching methods. Storytelling engages students on a level that many teaching methods do not (Rossiter, 2002). Therefore, the study examines the integration of storytelling technique in Social Studies Curriculum for effective teaching and learning in Primary Schools in Ogun State.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of the research is to examine the integration of story-telling technique in Social Studies Curriculum for effective teaching and learning in Primary Schools in Ogun State. The specific objectives are to;

- i. examine the integration of story-telling technique in Social Studies Curriculum for effective teaching and learning in Primary Schools in Ogun State; and
- ii. examine the characteristics for a valuable story for effective teaching and learning Social Studies among pupils of Primary Schools in Ogun State.

Research Questions

- i. What are the reasons for story-telling technique in Social Studies Curriculum for effective teaching and learning in Primary Schools in Ogun State?
- ii. What are the characteristics for a valuable story for effective teaching and learning Social Studies in Primary Schools in Ogun State?

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Population comprises of all Primary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select ten (10) primary schools in Abeokuta South Local Government; Ogun State. Fifteen (15) teachers were randomly selected from each of the chosen school to make a total of one hundred (150) as sample for study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire contained items on the main title of study. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the researchers gave the draft of the questionnaire to the experts to restructure the instrument in line with the research questions. To determine the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted and the scores were tabulated and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula was applied and a correlation coefficient of 0.72 was obtained. On the basis of the corrections done on the questionnaire items, and the test-retest reliability coefficient computed, the instrument was judged adequate, valid and reliable for the purpose of gathering relevant data for the study. Data collected was analyzed using simple percentage, mean and standard deviation statistical tools.

Results

Research Question one: What are the reasons for story-telling technique in Social Studies Curriculum for effective teaching and learning in Primary Schools in Ogun State?

Table 1: Reasons for story-telling technique in Social Studies Curriculum for effective teaching and learning in Primary Schools in Ogun State

S/N	Items	Yes		No		Mean (k)	S.D
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %		
1.	Storytelling technique can stimulate students imagination.	108	72	42	28	3.8	.79
2.	It can increase students' efficiency in the using of certain grammar rules in their context.	81	54	69	46	3.5	.77
3.	It can direct students towards different cultural content	77	51.3	73	48.6	3.4	.75
4.	It can develops concentration and attention skills.	90	60	60	40	3.5	.77
Overall Total		Mean (\bar{x}) = 3.57 and STD = 0.79					

Table 1 above shows the reasons for story-telling technique in Social Studies Curriculum for effective teaching and learning in Primary Schools. This findings indicate that storytelling technique can stimulate students imagination (\bar{x} = 3.8, SD = 0.79), it can increase students' efficiency in the using of certain grammar rules in their context(\bar{x} = 3.5, SD = 0.77),it can direct students towards different cultural content(\bar{x} = 3.4, SD = 0.75),and it can develops concentration and attention skills (\bar{x} = 3.5, SD = 0.77)

Research Question Two: What are the characteristics for a valuable story for effective teaching and learning Social Studies in Primary Schools in Ogun State?

Table 2: Characteristics for a valuable story for effective teaching and learning social studies in Primary Schools in Ogun State

S/N	Items	Yes		No		Mean (k)	S.D
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %		
1.	It creates more attractive learning atmosphere.	101	67.3	49	32.7	3.7	.77
2.	Stories help the teacher to create contexts	107	71.3	43	28.7	3.9	.78
3.	It promotes students communicative competence.	98	65.3	52	34.7	3.8	.77
4.	It can promote listening skill	85	56.7	65	43.3	3.5	.76
Overall Total		Mean (\bar{x}) = 3.57 and STD = 0.77					

Table 2 above shows the characteristics for a valuable story for effective teaching and learning Social Studies in Primary Schools in Ogun State. This findings indicate that it creates more attractive learning atmosphere (\bar{x} = 3.7, SD = 0.77), stories help the teacher to create contexts (\bar{x} = 3.9, SD = 0.78), it promotes students communicative competence (\bar{x} = 3.8, SD = 0.77), and it can promote listening skill(\bar{x} = 3.5, SD = 0.76).

Discussions

The study reveals that, the mean and standard deviation of the items listed above is very high (\bar{x} = 3.57, SD = 0.79) showing the reasons for story-telling technique in Social Studies Curriculum for effective teaching and learning in Primary Schools. This result is in line with the MacDonald, (2011) who opined that stories can be used for Social Studies classes because they can supplement the textbooks and spice up lessons to arouse pupils' curiosity and interest. Stories can enhance pupils' mastery of a topic, its concepts and generalization. They can help to deepen pupils' knowledge of their own culture, history and heritage, and broaden their awareness and appreciation of other cultures.

Stories can also develop pupils' empathy, social and moral values. This study reveals that the mean and standard deviation of the items listed above is very high ($\bar{x} = 3.5$, $SD = 0.77$) showing the valuable story for effective teaching and learning Social Studies in Primary Schools in Ogun State. The result of the analysis is also in line with Barzaq (2009) assured that storytelling technique is an educational tools because they are give moral lessons ,positive ideas, styles , good models and entertaining and they depend on humans behaviour and their experience that is considered a vital source of knowledge

Conclusion

Social Studies can be taught in various ways and one of the strategies that is gaining popularity in schools is storytelling. Storytelling, if used effectively, can enhance content and value learning in Social Studies. The key to effective storytelling is practice. The more you tell, the more confidence you will gain and the easier it will become. You do not need to have a special talent for storytelling. Rather, there is a need to tell the story in a way that is natural to you and be comfortable with it. Nobody can tell a story quite like you, not even professional storytellers. Continue to hone your storytelling skills and open yourself up to the story and the audience and tell it from your heart.

Recommendations

Social Studies teachers should use storytelling as an aid in promoting their students' interest Social Studies. Teachers should develop their skills by using story techniques in teaching such as web sites, educational sources, and promote online webinars to share ideas and exchange experience for effective teacher development through collaborating extensively with colleagues. Teachers should listen with sensitivity to students' stories, and design instruction around those stories to allow students' diverse experiences to become meaningful for the students presenting stories as well as for listeners. Teachers should use a range of stories to help meet the linguistic, social, and academic needs of an

increasingly culturally-diverse student population Syllabus designers have to allocate time and give more emphasis to the using storytelling technique when they design any text for Social Studies learning. The Ministry of Education is recommended to train teachers on the different methods of storytelling.

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