
**DISCOVERING INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY AND
STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS SOCIAL STUDIES
TEACHING IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The study examined the discovering instructional strategy and students' attitude towards Social Studies teaching in Ogun State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Population comprises all secondary schools in Ijebu-East Local Government area of Ogun State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select five (5) secondary schools in Ijebu-East Local Government in Ogun State in which thirty (30) students were randomly selected from each of the chosen school to make a total of 150 as sample for the study. Two (2) research questions were raised and answered in this study. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage, mean and standard deviation statistical tools. The study revealed that discovering instructional strategy is one of the teaching strategies that encourage students to play more active role in the learning process through answering of series of questions or problems solving designed to introduce a general concept. It was recommended that Social Studies teachers should do away with the old strategies of teaching and embrace the discovering instructional strategy.

Keywords: Discovering, Attitude, Instructional, Strategy, Social Studies.

Introduction

Social Studies is one of the subjects approved by the Federal Ministry of Education to be taught at all levels of education in Nigeria. The emergence of Social Studies in the Nigerian school curriculum was part of the responses to the problems in the society emanating from neglect of societal culture and values (Meziobi, 2012). The Board of Directors of National Council for the Social Studies – NCSS (2017) defined Social Studies as the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence.

In the same vein, Adaralegbe (2010) viewed Social Studies as the aggregate of experiences a student goes through having been exposed to a course explaining the problems men and women encounter in their environments. The teaching of Social Studies is meant to provide coordinated, systematic study which draws upon such disciplines as anthropology, economics, geography, history, law philosophy, political science religion and sociology, as well as appropriate contents from the humanities, mathematics and natural sciences. The primary purpose of Social Studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the problem as good citizens of a culturally diverse and democratic society in an inter-dependent world.

According to National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (2017), two main characteristics distinguish Social Studies as a field of study; it is designed to promote civic competence and it is integrative as it incorporates many fields of endeavour. Social Studies programmes help students construct a knowledge base and attitude drawn from academic disciplines in specialized ways of viewing reality. From the premises above, the objectives of Social Studies could be seen to be three-fold namely: To help learners acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes and values.

However for Social Studies to achieve its aims there is need for a change in the instructional strategies that have been in used for Social Studies education. This is important because Meziobi (2013)

lamented that poor instructional strategies have been one of the banes of Social Studies education in Nigeria. Most teachers of Social Studies adopt pedagogical skills that do not promote better understanding of the concept. Mbah (2018) equally argued that if teachers must be effective in their teachings and clear students' confusion then there is need for the use of innovative teaching methods that will open student's natural ways of learning. That is why Danjuma in Adediran (2017) averred that some teaching methods are not ideal as they may not produce the desired result.

Experts in teaching and learning have advanced some innovative teaching strategies which could enhance effective learning. These include multi-media, use of internet, problem solving strategies, cooperative groups, discrepant event strategy and the use of collaborative learning (Yusuf, 2014; Haruna, 2018,) Multi-media for example appeal to more than one sense organ at a time and can address a large audience simultaneously (Ema & Ajayi, 2008).

The teacher's role in the class room setting based on this theory is to act as an expert learner (instructor or facilitator) who can guide students into adopting cognitive strategies such as self-testing, articulating understanding, asking probing questions, and reflection. The role of the teacher is also to organize information around big ideas that engage the students' interest, to assist students in developing new insights, and to connect them with their previous learning. The activities are student-centered, and students are encouraged to ask their own questions, carry out their own experiments, make their own analogies, and come to their own conclusions. The implication of Dewey's theory to Social Studies education include that there is need for a paradigm shift of focus from teacher to learners. Also there is need for willing abandonment of familiar perspectives and practices about learning and the adoption of new ones which focus on engaging students actively in any learning situation.

Discovering instructional strategy is one of the teaching strategies that encourage students to play more active role in the learning process through answering of series of questions or problems solving designed to introduce a general concept (Udu, 2019). In this teaching approach, the teacher guides the students'

thought process by posing at them a series of questions whose responses would lead the students to the understanding of what is explicitly stated. This teaching strategy is assumed to increase retention of materials because the students acquire the new information and integrates it with already stored information (Oludipe, 2012). Discovering instructional is a method by which inquiry skills, attitude and information processing skills are developed by learners. Learners are totally involved with people, materials, and the environment, but are however using this awareness to generate concepts and facts. Discovering instructional is characterized by convergent thinking. The instructor devises a series of statement or questions that guide the learner step by step into making a series of discoveries that lead to a single predetermined goal. In other words, the instructor initiates a stimulus and the learner reacts by engaging in active inquiry that lead to discovering the appropriate responses (Olokooba, Okunloye & Okunloye, 2019). This method of teaching might improve students' learning outcome, if properly employed for the teaching of concepts.

Students' learning outcome is ability of student to comprehend, understand, assimilate and learn in any area of study embarked upon. Learning outcome is arrived at by their learning ability which is different in term of their intelligence. Alonge and Okunade (2013), defined students' learning outcome as the level of attainment of a person in an examination; that is, how an individual is able to demonstrate his or her ability in examination. This implies that, the students' ability to learn depends on their comprehension of concepts or idea irrespective of gender. Gender is those socially constructed roles, established behaviours, activities and attributes considered appropriate for men and women by a given society. It varies across cultures and over time. Gender is a term used to describe the status of people as men, women, boys and girls including characteristics of masculinity and femininity that are learned or chosen. It is the state of being a male or a female (usually associated with social and cultural differences rather than biological ones). This implied that the ability to comprehend a specific content must not be associated with difference in gender or area of specialization.

Teaching Social Studies present teachers with a unique set of challenges not always found in other disciplines. Students tend to see Social Studies in general, as a subject matter that is least relevant to their current lives and their future needs. Therefore, to build on democratic principles and make Social Studies relevant according to Lazar (2012), Social Studies teachers need to understand that they teach students and not content, if they are to be effective. The use of relevant and appropriate textbooks, visual and audio-visual materials like globes, charts, slides, maps, information communication technology among others, by the teacher are of paramount necessity in the teaching-learning process. Audio-visual materials supplement and consolidate what is used in textbooks and journals. They make the contents of the instructions more practical and less vague (Esu & Inyang-Abia, 2004).

A teachers experience in creating a conducive classroom climate has a major impact on students motivation and attitude towards learning; that is to say for teachers, having being equipped with pedagogical and professional characteristics would not be enough to establish a positively, learnable, and teachable classroom climate. Specifically, the factors that best facilitate student learning are considered to be the ones that are described as being purposeful, task- oriented, relaxed, warm, and supportive and has a sense of order and humor in an integrated sense (Uche and Eukoha, 2012). Radmacher and Martin (2001) submitted the characteristics of teachers as, experiences, professional, pedagogical and personal attributes as factors that will produce better learning atmosphere as well as self-assured students' engagement in the learning process.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the discovering instructional strategy and student's attitude towards Social Studies teaching in Ogun State. Specifically, the objectives are to:

- i. establish students' attitude towards the discovering instructional strategy in the teaching of Social Studies in secondary schools; and

- ii. examine the prospects of discovery instructional strategy for teaching the contemporary Social Studies.

Research Questions

- i. What are the students' attitudes towards the discovering instructional strategy in the teaching of Social Studies in secondary schools?
- ii. What are the prospects of discovery instructional strategy for teaching the contemporary Social Studies in secondary schools?

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Population comprises all secondary schools in Ijebu-East Local Government area of Ogun State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select five (5) secondary schools in Ijebu-East Local Government in Ogun State in which thirty (30) students were randomly selected from each of the chosen school to make a total of 150 as sample for the study. Two (2) research questions were raised and answered in this study. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha. A self-developed questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire contained items on the main title of study. The instrument was given to experts for construct and content validation. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage, mean and standard deviation statistical tools.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the students' attitudes towards the discovering instructional strategy in the teaching of Social Studies in secondary schools?

Table 1: Students' attitudes towards the discovering instructional strategy in the teaching of Social Studies in secondary schools

S/N	Items	Yes		No		Mean (x)	S.D
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %		
1.	I enjoy working with others inside the classroom using computer (studying together, working on a problem, preparing for a test, performing a task).	108	72	42	28	3.8	.79
2.	My score has been greater as a result of team effort.	81	54	69	46	3.5	.77
3.	Working with others, I feel much comfortable (less stressful) than if I was to perform similar tasks alone.	77	51.3	73	48.6	3.4	.75
Overall Total		Mean (x) = 3.57 and STD = 0.79					

Table 1 shows the students' attitudes towards the discovering instructional strategy in the teaching of Social Studies in secondary schools. This findings indicate that they enjoy working with others inside the classroom using computer (studying together, working on a problem, preparing for a test, performing a task) ($\alpha = 3.8$, $SD = 0.79$), they score has been greater as a result of team effort ($\alpha = 3.5$, $SD = 0.77$), and working with others, they feel much comfortable (less stressful) than if they was to perform similar tasks

alone ($\alpha = 3.4$, $SD = 0.75$). This reveals that the mean and standard deviation of the items listed above is very high ($\alpha = 3.57$, $SD = 0.79$).

Research Question 2: What are the prospects of discovery instructional strategy for teaching the contemporary Social Studies in secondary schools?

Table 2: Prospects of discovery instructional strategy for teaching the contemporary Social Studies in secondary schools

S/N	Items	Yes		No		Mean (x)	S.D
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %		
1.	Learners will be actively involved in the lesson.	101	67.3	49	32.7	3.7	.77
2.	Stress and boredom will be reduced.	107	71.3	43	28.7	3.9	.78
3.	A lot of concepts will be covered in good time.	98	65.3	52	34.7	3.8	.77
Overall Total		Mean (x) = 3.57 and STD = 0.77					

Table 2 shows the prospects of discovery instructional strategy for teaching the contemporary Social Studies in secondary schools? This finding indicates that learners will be actively involved in the lesson. ($\alpha = 3.7$, $SD = 0.77$), stress and boredom will be reduced ($\alpha = 3.9$, $SD = 0.78$) and a lot of concepts will be covered in good time ($\alpha = 3.8$, $SD = 0.77$).

Discussions

Result shows that students' attitudes towards the discovering instructional strategy in the teaching of Social Studies in secondary schools enable students enjoy working together in the classroom

using computer to solve problem and performing tasks. The result is in line with the submission of Danjuma in Adediran (2017) who noted that, multimedia learning helps to reduce verbalism on the part of the teacher as well open learners' natural gateways to learning.

The findings equally shows that prospects of discovery instructional strategy for teaching the contemporary Social Studies in secondary schools is a rewarding strategy that can help students assimilate and understand the content of the lesson very well. The finding is in support of Ema and Ajayi (2008) who advocated that teachers should use teaching strategies that will appeal to more than one sense of organ at a time for meaningful learning to take place.

Conclusion

Discovering instructional strategy is one of the teaching strategies that encourage students to play more active role in the learning process through answering of series of questions or problems solving designed to introduce a general concept. Students' learning outcome is ability of student to comprehend, understand, assimilate and learn in any area of study embarked upon. Learning outcome is arrived at by their learning ability which is different in term of their intelligence. This teaching approach, the teacher guides the students' thought process by posing at them a series of questions whose responses would lead the students to the understanding of what is explicitly stated. Learners are totally involved with people, materials, and the environment, but are however using this awareness to generate concepts and facts. This study thus concluded that the instructor initiates a stimulus and the learner reacts by engaging in active inquiry that lead to discovering the appropriate responses. Therefore the method of teaching might improve students' learning outcome, if properly employed for the teaching of concepts.

Recommendations

From the foregoing discussion, it was recommended that Social Studies teachers should do away with the old strategies of lecture,

inquiry and others in their teaching of Social Studies and embrace the discovering instructional strategies. Social Studies curriculum designers should design or proffer means of ameliorating some ills associated with some of the identified teaching methods for better results. Teachers of Social Studies should embrace the discovering instructional strategies and methods of teaching, Social Studies for better results. Social Studies curriculum experts should design training packages for the discovering instructional strategies and method to enable teachers gets acquainted with them for better results. Government should provide schools with the multi-media and ICT tools to enable Social Studies teachers adopt them in their teaching of contemporary Social Studies.

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