



# EDUCATION

*A Communication Channel For National Development*

*A Book of Readings in Honour of*  
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## METHODS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHING IN LAGOS STATE

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### Abstract

*The 1985 social studies' National Curriculum Committee has suggested specific methods for teaching social studies themes/topics. This great innovation is aimed at enhancing the teaching and learning of the subject. This study was therefore, concerned with identifying the various teaching methods employed by Social Studies Teachers in Lagos State with a view to determining the level of compliance to the 1985 national curriculum recommended teaching methods and the implication of such choice on students' academic achievement in the subject. A Social Studies Teaching Method Identification Questionnaire (SSTM IQ) and Studies' Achievement Test in Social Studies (SATSS) were the instruments used in the collection of data, while the Student's t-test and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient formula were used in the analysis of data. The study revealed that a significant number of the teachers sampled adhered to the teaching methods recommended by the National Curriculum. It also found that there was a strong positive relationship between students' achievement in the subject and the teaching methods of the teachers. Consequently, it was suggested that Social Studies teachers should be encouraged to adhere to the recommended teaching methods of the National Curriculum.*

### Introduction

Teaching methods had been the focus of professional researches. New methods are being introduced daily while old ones are being modified. This is understandable, bearing in mind the significance of teaching methods in the facilitation and motivation of learning. The study of Akinbode (1993), revealed that there exists a strong positive correlation between teaching methods and students' achievements in any disciplines. Similarly, Onasanya (1990) in his study categorically noted that the quality of instruction is a potential determinant of students' learning outcome in any subject.

Teaching method is a concept used generally to describe the way a teacher organizes and presents content to his learners. It is a sequential presentation of ideas, concepts and process to learners. Gagne (1987) regards it as a recurrent pattern of a teacher behaviour applicable to various subject matters and characteristics of more than one teacher and relevant to learning. Yalokwu (1988) in a similar vein defined teaching method as a set of methods used in teaching and studying a particular subject area. Akinlaye (2003) in his definition of Social Studies method, sees teaching method as "a variety of approaches which a teacher adopts to induce, promote, stimulate, motivate and direct learning." However, for the purpose of this study, teaching method will be seen and perceived as the

strategies and techniques employed by the teacher to stimulate and induce learning in and out of the classroom.

### Classification of Teaching Methods

There exists an array of teaching methods. These range from the Socratic/expository method to the thought provoking inductive/deductive inquiry method. These methods have been classified into two broad categories; namely the teacher-centered and the child-centered methods (Afe 1987). This categorization was found to be in contrast with the classification of Osakwe quoted by Brown (2002). Osakwe classified teaching methods into four namely: Approach, Number, Activity and Place. The Approach classification according to him is the inductive/deductive method of teaching. The Number classification is the individual, class or group based method. The Activity based classification is the teacher-centered or the child-centered method. Finally, the place classification is the classroom or out of class teaching method.

It is important to note that the Afe's classification of "teacher-centered and the child-centered methods" is based on who takes the center stage in terms of the dominant activity in the process of teaching and learning. It is classified teacher-centered when the teacher does most of the activities such as explaining, demonstrating, drawing, telling, listing, identifying, calculating, classifying, and so on. However, it becomes a child-centered method when the learner is engaged in most of the activities that take place in the process of teaching and learning. Thus under the child-centered methods the role of the teacher is drastically reduced to that of facilitator or a guide.

The child-centered method otherwise called child friendly and child involving methods derives its philosophy from the notion that activity is one of the pillars of modern educational practices. These innovating methods include Demonstration, Inquiry, Discussion, Dramatization, Guided discovery, Creative activity, Construction, Simulation, etc. There seems to be a consensus, that the child-centered methods promote and facilitate effective, efficient, critical and reflective thinking that leads to intelligent and rational decision-making skills. In the child-centered method, the learners are seen performing one activity or the other. These activities include: explaining, describing, interpreting, calculating, identifying, listing, dissecting, drawing, dramatizing, etc. The origin of the child-centered methods has been traced to Rousseau and Pestalozzi in the eighteen and early nineteen centuries. However, Froebel was known to have developed the first play-way method of teaching in the school. Today, Montessori is more associated with the play-way method of teaching than any other person due to the fact that she successfully demonstrated the efficacy of the method.

The teacher-centered method, according to Farrant (1980) features teachers as a director of both teaching and learning processes. He is the director-general of all activities in the process of teaching and learning in and out of the classroom as well as being the one who actually carries out most of the activities. He assumes the supreme role of "master-know all". An encyclopedia, which is all-knowing. Attention is focused more on the subject matter than the method or the learners. The method emphasizes the completion of the syllabus rather than assisting the students to develop intellect, skills, and positive attitudes. This method has its roots in antiquity dating back to the ancient Greeks and the Roman who perceive education as preparation for adult life. Prominent under the teacher-centered method are the expository, the lecture, the story-telling, and the illustrative talk methods. Understandably, these methods are more popular among teachers in our schools even in this century.

Akinlaye (2003) in a more comprehensive classification identified the methods of teaching Social Studies to include Presentation, Construction, Creative activity, Discussion, Problem-solving, Dramatization, Simulation, Inquiry, and Demonstration. These methods



are in consonance with the 1985 National Social Studies Curriculum (Vol. 5) recommended methods for the teaching of the subject. Furthermore, the Social Studies Curriculum has specific methods tied to the topics/themes.

#### Statement of the Problem

It is no gainsaying that the engineering of the 1985 National Social Studies Curriculum was to guarantee that the right teaching method is used in the teaching of specific topics/themes with a view to enhancing effective learning of the subject. Apparently, the teaching of Social Studies in Nigerian Schools seems to be at variance with the recommended strategies of the National Social Studies Curriculum. Consequently, this study is aimed at identifying the level of adherence of Social Studies Teacher to the recommended teaching methods and the implication of this on students learning outcome in the subject. This is against the background that the most occurring problem in Social Studies teaching is how to get the teachers to make the curriculum more relevant to the lives and experiences of their students. It has been confirmed that the innovation in the curriculum has not been accompanied by a corresponding teachers' pedagogical practices (Akinlaye 2003).

In order to effectively carry out the study the following specific questions were raised:

1. Do Social Studies Teachers in Lagos State adopt the (1995) National Curriculum recommend methods of the subject?
2. Is there any correlation between students' performance in Social Studies and the teaching methods of their teachers?
3. To what extent does students academic achievement correlate with the teaching methods of their teacher in Social Studies?

#### Methodology

The survey design was adopted for the study. In order to elicit information on teachers' methods of teaching Social Studies, and students' achievements in the subject, two questionnaires were used for the study. These questionnaires were the Social Studies Teaching Method Identification Questionnaire (SSTMIQ) and Students' Achievement Test in Social Studies (SATSS). The SSTMIQ was adapted from Jimoh (1999). A Likert-type rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree in the rating of 4, 3, 2, 1 was used in the collection of data. The instrument was made up of twenty topics/themes with their recommended teaching methods attached to them. Teachers were then required to agree or disagree with the statement. The SATSS, on the other hand was a standardized test of the Lagos state examination board. It was a test item based on the Lagos State Junior Secondary School Social Studies syllabus.

#### Population and Sampling Technique

The population from which the sample was procured consisted of the entire social studies teachers and students in Lagos State junior secondary schools. A total of 40 Social Studies teachers and two thousand, two hundred students were sampled for the study in the five educational districts of the state. The respondents were selected using the stratified sampling techniques.

#### Data Analysis and Discussion

The Social Studies Teaching Method Identification Questionnaire (STMIQ) was used to collect data. This instrument was used to find out the various methods social studies teachers usually adopt in the teaching of twenty (20) selected topics/themes. The result is summarized in table 1 below.

**Table 1: Summary of Teachers' Adoption/Utilization of the Recommended Teaching Method.**

S/N	Topic/Themes	Nos. of Teachers who adopt the recommended methods		Nos. of teachers who do not adopt the recommended methods	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1	Social institution	22	55	18	45
2	Physical environment	25	62.5	15	37.5
3	Aspect of culture	30	75	10	25
4	Science & culture	28	70	12	30
5	Origin man	22	55	18	45
6	Social institution	25	62.5	15	37.5
7	National economic life	20	50	20	50
8	Common heritage and national symbols	32	80	8	20
9	Leadership & responsibilities	15	37.5	25	62.5
10	Civic rights & responsibilities	18	45	22	55
11	Social environment & organization	12	30	28	70
12	Nigeria culture, pattern & integration	15	37.5	25	62.5
13	Development & growth	28	70	12	30
14	Nigeria social changes 1914 to date	18	45	22	55
15	National economic life, transport & communication	32	80	8	20
16	The world & its people	30	75	10	25
17	International relation	18	45	22	55
18	Aspect of cooperation	12	30	28	70
19	Religion as agent of association	28	70	12	30
20	Ethnicity, class & stability	30	75	10	25
		460	57.5	340	42.5

The table above shows that four hundred and sixty (460) or 57.5% of the teachers adopted the recommended teaching methods. On the other hand, a total of three hundred and forty (340) or 42.5% social studies teacher did not adopt the recommended teaching methods. It was found that an average of 23 or 57.5% of the sampled Social Studies teachers adopted the recommended methods while an average of 17 or 42.5% of the sampled teachers did not adopt the recommended methods. Consequently, it was then concluded that the Lagos



Social Studies teachers adopted the 1995 National Curriculum recommended methods of teaching the subject.

When using the t-test, the methods adopted by the Lagos State Social Studies Teachers were found to be significantly different from those recommended by the national curriculum. The calculated value of 0.244 was less than the table value of 1.69 at 0.05 level of significance. This finding was earlier noted in the study of Ibhafidon (1996).

The students' achievement test was administered on the students in each of the forty schools. Mean scores for each school were computed. The mean scores for the forty (40) schools were correlated with that of their teachers (level of adoption of the recommended teaching method). The result is summarized in table 2 below.

**2: Correlation between teachers' methods and curricular methods**

	X	t-cal	t-value
	23	0.0244	1.697
	17		

Table 2 above shows that there was a significant difference between the teaching methods adopted by Lagos state teachers and the suggested teaching methods of the 1995 National Curriculum.

**3: Relationship between teachers, adopted methods and students' academic achievement in social studies**

Variable	No	Calculated "r"	Table "r"
Teachers' methods	40	0.161288	3.35
Students' achievement	40		

The calculated Pearson product correlation co-efficient was found to be 0.16. It revealed a weak relationship between students achievement in social studies and teachers adoption of recommended methods. In other words, the more of the social studies teachers adopted/recommended methods used by teachers the higher the achievement of students in the subject. Therefore, one can state that the adoption of the national curriculum recommended methods by social studies teachers has a positive impact on students' achievement. The findings of this study was found to be in line with an earlier study of Ibhafidon (1995) on the study of geography methods and students achievement in the Local Government of Lagos State. Furthermore, the finding of this study was also found to be in agreement with the earlier findings of Yalokwu (1988), Awaitefe (1988), and Akinbode (1993) that there was a positive relationship between students achievement and teachers method of teaching.

#### Recommendations and Conclusions

The study was aimed at determining the level of adherence of Social Studies teachers to the recommended/suggested methods of the national curriculum in Lagos state. The result showed that though a significant percentage of the teachers adopted the recommended methods there was a yawning gap between what is and what it should be. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between teachers methods and students achievement in the subject.

Based on the findings of this study, teachers should be encouraged to adopt the methods of the national curriculum recommended teaching methods for the teaching of Social Studies. This recommendation becomes more relevant when one realizes that teachers are free at liberty to adopt any method they considered adequate for the teaching of a particular topic or theme. The method considered good and preferred by one teacher for a

particular topic may not necessarily be considered best by another. Secondly, that teachers often utilized the presentation methods is also a function of their being more competent and familiar with it having been taught with this method too. In view of the above, inspectors of education should coerce teachers to adhere strictly to methods recommended by the National Curriculum; rather they (teachers) should be exposed to the more child-friendly teaching methods by way of in-service training. This is in line with Akinlaye (2003) observation that there is a wide range of considerations that should guide the selection of a teaching method. These he identified as subject matter, objectives, time and place context, number of students in the class, teachers own ability, instructional materials available and the nature of the students taught. This is in consonance with the popular belief amongst educationists that there is no good or bad method rather the most appropriate method of teaching a particular topic.

In line with the findings of this study, additional research should be carried out to determine the effects of resource utilization of instructional resources, teaching methods and class size on students' achievement in Social Studies. Hopefully, the result of this nature will go a long way in refocusing attention on the most important variable in students' achievement.

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