

Instructional Materials Utilization for Effective Teaching and Learning of Social Studies Education

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Abstract

The physical mental and psychological differences among learners call for the use of appropriate instructional materials by the teachers to enable him achieve effective communication. This paper discusses the concept of institutional materials as a means of making teaching and learning of social studies effective. This paper also discusses types of instructional materials, their utilization and limitation

Keywords: Materials, Instructional Materials, Utilization, Effective teaching

Introduction

The elevation of human condition is the primary concern of education. Through education people are able to develop and be better able to survive in their society. The society cannot progress as expected without expected educational programme that are planned to provide the necessary skills, cognitive, affective and psycho-motor.

The development of any country is based on a sound practical skill acquisition instead of only theoretical knowledge. There are different areas of study through which these desirable skills and knowledge could be imparted on the students.

The place of instructional materials to be effective teaching and learning of Social Studies cannot be over-emphasized. This is because Social Studies is not only diverse in nature. It is one of the most important subjects in our school system in Nigeria especially at the elementary level. It attempts an integrative and interdisciplinary approach to the study of Man. As a field of study, Social Studies provides knowledge, skills and attitude that will enable people to understand their physical and human environment in order to act or behave as responsible citizens. It involves, persons, persons with group, group with groups. It is a study of man's relation to his physical environment. Its effects upon him and his efforts to modify the influences. In view of this background Studies draws its content materials from the Social Science subjects like Sociology, Political Science, History, Economics, Psychology, Anthropology, and other related disciplines such as Art, Religion, Music, Philosophy, Science and Technology. Each of the parent disciplines become a tool on the mastery of Social Studies concepts and in the understanding and application of its methods (Adaralegbe, 1920).

It is therefore the objective of this paper to discuss instructional materials utilization, their types and reliance to the teaching of Social Studies. The paper also discusses the limitation of instructional materials, improvisation and recommendations.

Concept of Instructional Materials

Instructional materials are a means of making teaching and learning process easy, more meaningful, and understandable. Adekeye (1982) defines teaching aids as the materials or objects which help the teachers in make lessons explicit to learners. He goes further to say that it makes teaching effective and lively while pupils understand fully too. In his own view, Obemeata (1985) conceptualizes teaching aids as anything which promotes the effectiveness of instruction. They are things which make teaching concrete and real.

Instructional materials can be defined as all the resources which may be used by the teacher or the learner in isolation or in combination formally, or informally to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, skills and morals.

Olaleye (1992) defines teaching aids as facilitators of learning, Obanya (1985) describes them as tools for teaching and learning while Obed (1979) calls it environmental factors or apparatus.

Oluwafoise (1990) emphasized that teaching aids (instructional materials) refer to anything used by the teacher to help promote teaching and learning activities. He identified teaching aids, audio-visual aids -blackboards, maps, globes, charts, diagrams, films, television, tape recorders, drawings cartoon, museum, pictures as common instructional material in Social Studies.

Types of Instructional Materials

There are a variety of instructional materials classified in different ways. In Social Studies, Aina (1982) classified them as;

1. - Reading materials
2. - Audio-visual materials
3. - Community resources

Obemeata, Ogugua, Agu, Olasebikan (1985), Adekeye (1982), give the following as lists of teaching aids that can be used in the Social Studies class. These are; pictures, chalkboard, maps, globes, charts, Diagrams. Graphs, Films, Television, the Tape Recorder, Drawings. Cartoons and Cinemas, others include: the Mass Media, Newspapers and Magazine.

For the purpose of this paper, instructional materials are grouped into non-projected materials, projected materials, audio-materials and audio-visuals. Non-projected materials include textbook, chalkboard, bulletin boards, flannel boards, objects, specimens, models, pictures, photographs, charts and, graphs, maps, posters and manuals demonstration , excursion, peoples, places and events. Projected materials include slide projectors, opaque projects, overhead projectors, film strip projector. Audio materials include tape recorder, radio sets, telephone, telex, handset etc. The audio-visuals include television, sound motion pictures, and sound film strips.

Relevance of Instructional Materials to Social Studies

The need for instructional materials in education dates back to ancient times. Since early times, man has made use of instructional materials to give expression to his feelings or demonstration skills involved in some work Mathematicians or Philosophers traced out diagrams in dust to Illustrate the development of ideas; cave dweller used pictures to give expressions to their feelings and children accompany fathers to the farm and watch him demonstrate skills involved in tillage or weeding These led the innovations being made and used today in the teaching-learning process, Mkpa (1989) recommended the use of real objects in life situation for instruction. This implies the use of real objects or representation that will be meaningful to learner.

Teachers are required to employ instructional materials in their teaching in order to make sure that learning it more permanent in the minds of the learners. It is necessary that teachers especially Social Studies teachers use instructional materials so that students can have the opportunity of seeing, hearing, touching and tasting and manipulating specific items to contribute to effective learning. Instructional materials enhance teaching and learning activities and consequently the attachment of the lesson objectives.

The unique place of instructional materials as Integral component of the curriculum and instruction has traditionally been grossly misunderstood and correspondingly neglected by teachers of school subjects. Instructional material are useful at different levels of educational development be it primary, post primary, or tertiary institutions. They promote the spirit of inquiry observation and help students to develop good human values, skills, attitudes and appreciation.

The Role of Instructional Materials in Social Studies Education

Instructional materials are the aspect of the general facilities which is very vital in teaching and learning Social Studies. Teachers of Social Studies have the responsibility of sensitizing and stimulating learning process through the effective use of instructional materials. They support activities that have been planned to help learners achieve educational objectives.

Instructional materials stimulate learning. Their proper use promote more meaningful communication and so enhances teaching and learning. Effective use of materials in teaching of Social Studies will encourage interest in learning because students' motivation, individualized instruction and instant learning can be assured.

The use of instructional materials supply the experience which is not easily obtained in the classroom and contribute to the efficiency, depth and variety of learning Aina (1982).

Instructional materials motivate to investigate a problem hereby increasing voluntary acquisition. According to Nwandu (1994) the use of Instructional materials provide teachers and learners with the opportunity of developing the ability to imagine to improvise and to relate things observed to reality. It elicits group Interaction. As the teachers and learners work together, use instructional materials, questions are asked, comments and suggestions are made, solutions to given problems are proffered, plans and instruments are devised while some needed items may be

improvised. These activities result in healthy group interaction as well as in the growth and development of knowledge, skill and positive attitude in the learners,

Instructional materials ensure better retention and transfer of knowledge. They provide direct experience with reality as well as encourage active participation and skill acquisition, especially where students are allowed to manipulate the materials and equipment

Limitation of Instructional Materials Development

In realization of the vital role of the teachers in the production of instructional materials, the National policy on Education (FRN,1998) slated that teachers will be required to participate more in the production and assessment of educational materials and teaching aids and the valuation of technical innovations and new techniques. These responsibilities make teachers producers and consumers of instructional materials.

In a study carried out by Aina (1982), it was revealed that teachers encounter a lot of difficulties in developing instructional materials. The few ones available are inadequate. To worsen the situation, lack of fund is another inhibiting factor.

The economic situation in the country today calls for caution in the spending of scarce foreign currencies. As a result of the economic problem now facing the country, it may be difficult to purchase electronic resource materials such as opaque projector, films and slides. In situations where these gadgets are available, many of our teachers are not trained to operate them. The lack of experienced educational technologists may hinder the use of electronic devices.

Improvisation of Instructional Material*

Improvisation can be defined as teachers effort to supplement, substitute, and device means materials and equipment for teaching and for pupils learning (Ango 1990). Improvisation can be explained as composing or to make the best use of materials at hand. Bamgboye (1991) defined improvisation as doing something quickly in time of need or using whatever happens to be available in our locally for the purpose of teaching and learning.

Common types of instructional materials that can be improvised included

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| - Map and charts | - The teachers should use local available markets like cardboard and markers, maps and charts. |
| - Bulleting boards | - Improvised through construction e.g by using blanket with framed edges on a wall. |
| - Chalkboard | - Use ceiling or particle boards which are cheaper |
| - Models | - Side of wall, available open space. |
| - Globe | - Clay molds, Styrofoam shapes |
| | - Round calabash, pawpaw, football or volleyball |
| - Gadgets | - Jagged (home-made crude low cost teaching materials). |
| - Reading Materials | - The teachers can contribute in his or her knowledge in writing text-books or various interesting topics or theme |
| | - Learners can be asked to purchase copies if the school cannot afford them. |
| | - They can be borrowed from parents libraries or Ministry of Education Research Centre |
| - Almanacs calenders | - Students and the teachers can bring them from home. |
| | - Parents can also assist |

Sources: Ademola O. (2004).

Recommendations

Teachers skills should be enhanced by incorporating a course on improvisation into teachers training programmes for the benefit of the pre-service teachers. Students tend to do better when they master the subject properly through active involvement in improvisation of these resources. Teacher should as well be trained in the use of instructional materials. Since the study of the social norms and values of the local community and of the country as whole through Civics and Social Studies (FRN 1998), there is the need for the federal and state governments in Nigeria to start making adequate arrangement for the provision of instructional materials for Social Studies education. Government can establish instructional material resource center in each Local Government Area where schools could rent the materials they want.

Collaboration with in introductory technology teachers will help to sharpen teachers manipulated skills and dexterity in the handling of tools required in improvisation.

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