

**EFFECTS OF INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS ON SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS  
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN UPPER BASIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA  
STATE**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study was designed to determine the effects of instructional methods on Social Studies Students academic performance in Upper Basic secondary schools in Delta State. In other to investigate this problem, one research question and one null hypothesis were formulated. The main objective of the study was to find out if there would be positive effects of instructional methods on the academic performance of Social Studies Students at the Upper Basic School in the study area. The study utilized quasi-experimental design. The sampled population consists of 200 students of Upper Basic School Social Studies. The instrument of the study was the Social Studies Students Achievement Test employed to generate data for the study. Generated data were subjected to both the descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found that strategies such as simulation and dramatization are veritable teaching methods that can enhance academic performance. Therefore, the study concludes that there were effects of instructional methods on Upper Basic students' academic performance in Social Studies in Delta State. The study recommends that teachers of Social Studies should utilize innovative instructional methods such as simulation and dramatization to facilitate the teaching and learning of the subject.

**Keywords:** Social Studies, Instructional Method, Simulation, Dramatization, Academic Performance

## **Introduction**

Instructional methods provide a strong context for interface between the teachers and the students; hence, the method adopted to facilitate effective teaching and learning of school subjects including Social Studies is very important. Gill (2016) stated that effective teaching methods engage students in the learning process and help them develop critical thinking skills. This observation from Gill's study, points to a number of facts. For instance, teaching methods have to be effective; engaging and its instructional objectives should meet the area of developing cognitive ability of students. Fundamentally, the supposition drawn from the above concept is that there seems to be a correlation between instructional method and learning achievement. This is because in psychology of learning, efficacy is placed on transfer, storage and retrieval of knowledge. These processes are significant to learning achievement of students.

Students/learners are the target for introducing instructional method in the teaching in a given lesson. The objective of teaching and learning is aimed at changing behaviours. Experts such as Osakwe (2006) described learning as any change in behaviour of a more or less permanent nature resulting from experience or training. Good Friend (2016) makes a connection between learning and the classroom, noted that learning effectiveness is the result of classroom strategies. In his view learning is a step by step process in which an individual experiences permanent, lasting changes in knowledge, behaviours, or ways of processing the world. One of such steps that comes to mind is the introduction of appropriate instructional methods that would encourage the desired change.

Most teachers are familiar and comfortable with the use of conventional method of teaching such as the lecture method. Ajaja (2007) agreed to the fact that the lecture method has been in use for many years as a method of transmitting information. But, he shows that students under this learning condition are passive listeners, and has resulted to many questions on the use

of this method. Hence there is a search for better instructional method that can promote and improve learning achievement.

Appropriate instructional method assumes that it could prompt the cognitive ability of the learners. From a psychological point of view, cognitive focuses on the way people process information. Raindy (2016) stated that cognitive style looks at how individuals process information they receive and how they treat this information in order to lead to responses. Based on this meaning, cognitive psychologists study internal processes that include perception, language attention and thinking. For Osakwe and Itedjere (2005) Social Studies learning involves critical thinking which is an aspect of cognitive ability demonstrated by a child, which guarantees his proficiency, competences and learning outcomes. It is expected that application of instructional methods which is simulation and dramatization can eliminate the problem of academic performance faced by students.

Cognitive style deals with thinking processes of a learner. Often times psychology of learning theories found that there are two categories of learners; they consist of analytical and global learners. It is based on this understanding that it could be assumed that cognitive style is concerned with the different ways in which individual processes and utilizes information. Cools, Amstrong and Verbigghe (2014), stated that “cognitive style or thinking style is a term used in cognitive psychology to describe the way individuals think, perceive and remember information.” They indicated that “cognitive style differs from cognitive ability (or level), the later being measured by aptitude tests or so-called intelligence tests”. The observation from the study above point to the fact that cognitive style deals with aptitude of the individuals towards learning materials which can decide how to group the category of learner he or she belongs weather he or she is an analytical or a global learner.

It appears that academic performance of many learners in Social Studies is affected by aptitude to learning. By implication students' aptitude determines his or her academic performance. Barmola (2013) stated that aptitude measures the intelligence of an individual. According to him aptitude is an important aspect of psychological measurements for individual differences for suitability of any occupation. This is because he found a relationship between aptitude and academic performance since aptitude explains the cognitive style of an individual that is a person's capacity or hypothetical potential for acquisition of certain more or less well defined patterns of behaviour involved in the performance of a task with respect to which the individual has had little or no previous training. Thus, psychologists and educators are interested in simulating learners with the intention of improving their cognitive abilities, cognitive style and academic performance in school subjects. Prompted by this observation, Farooq (2013) stated that simulated teaching can be employed by the teacher to achieve the goal of enhancing learning. According to him, engaging learners in active learning experience has the advantage of promoting cognitive ability and cognitive style of learners.

Suggested method for simulating learning is through the methods of simulation and dramatization. The concept of simulation in learning implies role play allocated to students to enhance their cognitive ability. On the other hand, dramatization allows for a great deal of participation by students and enlivens the routine procedures to teaching and learning where students participate physically, emotionally, and mentally. The objectives of these methods is to make learning student centered, it also shapes their aptitude especially critical thinking mechanism of the child is developed.

Students exposed to instructional method of simulation and dramatization are spaced in rural and urban schools. School location is an important index in the teaching and learning of any school subject including Social Studies. In particular reference, the difference between rural

and urban location with its educational implication is that qualified teachers find it difficult to take appointment in the isolated villages due to the fact that there are absence of major social amenities there. Whereas, their counterparts in urban area are comfortable with the appointment to teach there, because of the available infrastructures that encourages learning. It is likely that the subject (Social Studies) will be able to rank among the best leading subjects if taught with the innovative strategies of simulation and dramatization, including a consideration of their cognitive style. It is against this background the study is therefore geared towards investigating the effect of instructional methods on Social Studies students' academic performance at the Upper Basic level in the State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Traditional methods have been used for a long time in the teaching of Social Studies. This is because it appears classroom teachers find ease in the use of these traditional methods such as lecture method, discussion method, demonstration method etc. observation shows that the use of these methods does not prompt students practical learning thereby, student find it difficult to grapples with abstract concept due to the theoretical approach the traditional methods advocate. The implication of the use of instructional methods that does not promote learning is shown in the academic performance of Social Studies Students in the internal and external examinations. The reflection from the results of Basic Schools Certificate Examination over the years when compared with other subjects such as English Language, Mathematics, Agricultural Science and Basic Science shows that Social Studies is experiencing low performance. Whereas, appropriate teaching strategies with innovative measures have not been introduced to teach Social Studies; in spite of the fact that such innovative instructional strategies are capable of promoting and improving academic performance in test score of school subject. Therefore, the

question this study attempts to answer is: What is the effect of instructional methods on students' academic performance in Social Studies?

### **Research Question**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study

1. What is the mean difference between the performance of students taught with dramatization and simulation methods as measured by SSSAT in Upper Basic schools in Delta State?

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

1. There would be no significant difference in the performance of students taught by simulation and dramatization methods as measured by SSSAT.

### **Measures of Instructional Methods**

Teaching and learning is said to be effective to the extent to which teacher is able to promote learning. Facilitating learning requires innovative practice of which instructional methods is an important measure. Smith and Blake (2005) are of the opinion that learning can be facilitated through effective teaching. According to their findings good teaching involves a process of facilitating learning rather than the simple transmission of knowledge. This implies that effective teaching can be promoted when teacher introduces methods of instruction and utilizes appropriate instructional materials. It is against this backdrop that Kelly (2014) suggested a number of methods that can help teachers move away from standard lesson delivery and towards facilitating a true learning experience to include:

- Providing students with choice to built a greater interest in the topic being taught. The choice here refers to instructional methods that should be employed with the aim of

building greater interest for the lesson. The understanding is that instructional method should be used with goal of building the student interest in the topic being taught.

- Making real word connections to make the learning more meaningful. Here, the essence of the use of instructional method is to make learning meaningful. The indication from the above model is that until students' learning is meaningful to them there could be no teaching effectiveness this is because learning that which is meaningless does not promote academic achievement.

Rakum (2014) asserts "that no Social Studies curriculum can be successfully implemented without the appropriate method of teaching. Supporting the above idea, Rakum (2013) explained that method is an important aspect in curriculum implementation. And defined method to mean a general way a teacher organizes his lesson, hence as soon as curriculum content is available for implementation the most important step to be taken by the teacher is the selection of appropriate teaching methods that he will use in the course of his implementation.

Based on this notion, instructional methods are linked with content implementation. It is against this backdrop that Ikwumelu and Oyibe (2014) suggested self directed instructional methods applicable to the teaching of Social Studies as innovated instructional methods that have proved effective for improving students' achievement in Social Studies. It is their opinion that the application of self directed instructional methods in teaching and learning of Social Studies is aimed at actualizing Social Studies instructional objectives in the classroom. Based on this fact, methods which give opportunity to the learner to direct their own learning will make students to go beyond the content of what is being introduced by teachers in the classroom. It is the recognition of this fact that instructional methods such as simulation and dramatization could be considered relevant to the teaching and learning of Social Studies in upper basic education.

## **Simulation Method of Teaching**

One of the ways of prompting learning retention is for teachers to devise a means of doing so. Simulated teaching provides such a platform, this is because simulation means role play or rehearsal; which according to Farooq (2013) is a process of teaching which is carried out artificially. This method is considered valuable because it is students centered. From the view of Harvard Business School Publishing (2015) simulations challenge students to analyze available information and make critical decision to solve the identified challenge. Similarly, simulations allow students to experiment with ideas and outcomes and intimately master the application of concepts to real world situations. In addition, the University of South West Australia (2015) described stimulation as a form of experiential learning. It is a strategy that fixed well with the principle of students centered and constructivist learning and teaching and it contained element of again, a role play or an activity that acts as a metaphor. It draws the importance of this instructional method as follows.

This observation points to the fact that conventional teaching methods such as that which is being used by teachers are classroom based which consist of direct instructions conducted by the teachers that have no ability to prompt students learning retention because, they are teachers centered. Hence the approach in the use of instructional methods have recognized a paradigm from teachers centered to learners centered. Thus the instructional method of simulation and dramatization are considered important instructional methods that are aimed at improving learning retention. This fact is sustained in the argument by Ferriman (2013) who observed in the following that “one of the biggest challenges any instructional designer faces when creating training programmes is to maximized the chances that the content is internalized by the learner”. In other words, teachers use of method should lead to helping learners to remember the content



of lesson taught. It is the belief of this researcher that both simulation and dramatization have the advantage of improving learning achievement among students.

### **Dramatization Method of Teaching**

One of the essential methods employed by teachers for facilitating instructions capable of stimulating learning amongst students in Social Studies education is dramatization. Dramatizing a lesson has the objectives of making a lesson practical, concrete, observable experience that can increase students perception about a topic. Despite the usefulness of this teaching method that is learners centered, majority of teachers in Social Studies education appears to neglect its use due to the fact that it involves a project where casting of a piece is showcased within a lesson period. The difficulty is also compounded because most teachers are not prepared to deliver a given lesson using this method, perhaps the shortness of time as spelt out in the school time table also may have increased why teachers happened to abandon the use of this method in teaching.

Conceptually, dramatization implies the act of drama. According to Moore (2004), drama is the act of using imagination to become someone or something other than yourself. In addition, she stated that drama can take one any place to any period of time, that it is only limited by the imagination, the participant fears of risking, or the teacher set limitations. The implication of this definition is that what exists in the imagination of the individual can become real when it is acted by allocating roles to individual to make the imagination come alive. It is against this backdrop, drama is said to be a powerful tool because it enabled learners to balance their thought versus their feelings on the issues being taught. The use of dramatization as a method of teaching as indicated by the study by Moore is that, it makes learning exciting, it brings students or learners to real life concerns and learning becomes enjoyable.

Onny (2016) indicated that drama can be an effective method of teaching Social Studies curriculum. He explained its model to take the form of play, pageantry, tableaux, pantomime and

less formal dramatic activities. The author identified the following reasons for using dramatization method of teaching in Social Studies to include; pupils find the activities enjoyable and fulfilling; there are no right or wrong answer; less emphasis is placed on the skills of reading and writing; learning new ideas can be linked to everyday experiences and the activities offer opportunities to develop social skills

Babo (2018) suggested that dramatization is an effective strategy in the teaching and learning of civic education. He came to this conclusion after conducting a study on the effect of simulation game and dramatization strategies on pupils performance in civic education in primary schools in Yobe State, Nigeria. The study was conducted with six objectives viz: examine the performance of pupils taught civic education using simulation game instructional strategy and those taught using conventional method of teaching in primary schools in Yobe State, determine the performance of pupils taught civic education using dramatization strategy and those taught using conventional method of teaching in primary schools in Yobe State, determine the performance of pupils taught civic education using dramatization strategy and those taught using conventional method of teaching in primary schools in Yobe State among others. This study concludes that dramatization strategy as learners centered have positive effects in teaching civic education. This empirical evidence make it clear that dramatization method is a useful, thoughtful and realistic method of teaching Social Studies particularly at the Upper Basic schools. Many advantages are associated with the teaching of Social Studies when it is approached using dramatization.

## **Methodology**

The study adopted quasi-experimental design. The population of the study was the entire upper basic secondary schools in Delta State. Data from State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) indicate that there are 435 secondary schools in Delta State, where Delta central

senatorial district with sub total of 175; Delta North senatorial district with sub total of 153 and Delta South senatorial district with sub total of 107 giving grand total of 435. From this population an appropriate sample was drawn for the investigation. This population of school has enrollment figure of students at 200,289. The techniques adopted for sampling of sample in this study was the stratified random sampling techniques which involve the use of tailoring procedure. The stratified random sampling employed for this study produced the sample size of 200 Social Studies students in upper basic school as participants and in order to arrive at the proportionate figure, 45% of the entire population was used to draw the sample size. It is these sample size that was subjected to the treatment, for the period of six weeks. Two separate instruments was utilized for the collection of data for this study; these are the Social Studies Students Achievement Test (SSAT) which is a standardized instrument conducted by the West African school certificate examination council in Delta State and the Social Studies Students Cognitive Style Achievement Test (SSCSAT). This study employed the mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), Standard Deviation (SD) and the ANCOVA in analyzing the research questions and hypotheses.

## Data Presentation

### Research Question One

What is the mean difference between the performance of students taught with dramatization and simulation methods as measured by SSSAT in Upper Basic schools in Delta State?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of students' performance taught by two Methods**

Methods	N	Mean	SD	Mean difference
Dramatization	50	58.66	14.50	3.84
Simulation	50	54.82	14.56	

Table 1 revealed that there was slight difference between the performance of students taught by dramatization and simulation methods respectively measured by SSSAT. The mean difference of 3.84 answers the question that there is difference in performance test scores among students taught with the two methods as measured by SSSAT. This means that both methods are suitable for Social Studies teaching.

### Hypothesis One

There would be no significant difference in the performance of students taught by two methods as measured by SSSAT.

**Table 2: Analysis of Covariance on the performance of students taught by two methods as measured by SSSAT**

#### Test of between – Subject Effects

Source	Type III sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1522.975	2	761.488	3.788	0.026
Intercept	43730.437	1	43730.437	217.511	0.000
Sex	1184.415	1	1184.415	5.891	0.017
Methods	124.215	1	124.215	0.618	0.434
Error	19501.785	97	201.049		
Total	34387.000	100			
Corrected Total	21024.760	99			

R-Squared = 0.072 (Adjusted R-Squared = 0.053)

Table 2 indicated one-way between groups analysis of covariance on the performance of students taught by two methods as measured by SSSAT. Preliminary checks were conducted to ensure that there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, homogeneity of variance, homogeneity of regression slopes and reliable measurement of the covariate. After adjusting for two methods, there was no significant difference in the performance of students –  $F(1,97) = 0.618, P > 0.05$ . That is, the computed F-value = 0.618 and P-value = 0.434. Testing the hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value of 0.434 was greater than the alpha level of 0.05.

Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there was no significant difference in the performance of students taught by the two methods as measured by SSSAT.

The finding was supported in the study by Asabe (2014). He studied the impact of conceptual instructional method on students' academic achievement though in chemistry, using a sample of 100 students randomly drawn from two co-educational secondary schools. The subjects were divided into experimental and control groups. The subjects in the experimental group were exposed to lecture method. Academic achievement of subjects exposed to conceptual instructional method was significantly higher than their counterparts exposed to lecture method of instruction. The implication of the finding to instruction and academic achievement in test scores points to the fact that traditional methods are becoming obsolete for promoting learners performance in Social Studies. Also, the likelihood that simulation and dramatization methods of instruction if understood and applied in teaching and learning of Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State may achieved the same result as shown by the conceptual instructional method on students academic achievement in practical chemistry. Osuafor and Okigbo (2013) found that students taught with different instructional method obtained a higher score in their achievement test above those exposed to conventional method. This finding attempts to agree with previous finding of the study. This is because, finding in literature indicates that there is a paradigm shift on the application of innovative instructional method in the teaching learning process in secondary schools in Nigeria. Thus, teacher at that level are encouraged to adapt to the use of innovative teaching methods such as simulation and dramatization methods of instruction to prompt improved academic achievement among secondary school students.

## **Conclusion**

The study was investigated to establish the relative effects of instructional methods of simulation, dramatization on Upper Basic students' academic performance in Social Studies. It

was studied against the background that appropriate teaching strategies with innovative measures could promote and improve academic performance in test score of school subject; whereas, traditional methods such as discussion and lecture have been used because most classroom teachers find ease in the use of them. Though, observation shows that the use of these methods do not prompt students practical learning since they find it difficult to grasp with the abstract concept due to the theoretical approach the traditional methods advocates. Therefore, the study concludes that in order to promote and improve students' performance in their test score, innovative instructional strategies would be one of the sure ways to teaching Social Studies for effective and efficient learning in the study area.

### **Recommendation**

Arising from the conclusion, the study recommended that, teachers of Social Studies should utilize innovative instructional methods such as simulation and dramatization to facilitate the teaching and learning of the subject. Innovative strategies are found to improve students' cognitive ability and enhance performance in test scores.

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