

JOURNAL OF TEACHER PERSPECTIVE

JOTEP

VOLUME 9 NO. 1, JULY, 2015

ISSN 2006 - 0173

A Publication of
Association of Nigerian Teachers (ASSONT)



**THE PLACE OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES IN THE TEACHING
AND LEARNING OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

Egbule Philip Onyekachukwu
Department of Social Studies,
College of Education,
Agbor,
Delta State.

Olori Oghogho
Department of Social Studies,
College of Education,
Agbor,
Delta State.

And

Eboh Rhoda Nkemdilim
Department of Social Studies,
College of Education,
Agbor,
Delta State.

Abstract

You may be wondering why so much emphasis is being placed on the use of instructional resources. This paper will help you to find out more about the importance of instructional resources and why teachers should regard them as essential tools for their profession. In addition, this paper will also help to gain a better understanding of what instructional resources are and how social studies students can enjoy their classroom activities through those resources. Learning can be less tedious and more functional, if efforts are made to identify and make extensive use of available instructional resources: materials, human and places. The criteria for selecting instructional materials should include students' characteristics (age, ability, maturity and interest), types of learning activities, accessibility of instructional resources, cultural and gender sensitivity, ease of operation and so on. The wide range of instructional resources include: textbooks, story books, magazines, pictures, maps, models, radio, televisions, computers, internet resources, real object resource centers, and resource persons. There is therefore the need to select and use available instructional resources that will facilitate all round development in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of the students. Finally, pupils should be encouraged to improvise resources – this will help them to be creative and resourceful.

Keywords: instructional resources, social studies education, resource places, resource materials, resource persons, improvisation.

Since social studies focuses on human beings within the environment teachers need to allow learners understand things that exist in their environment, which are usually not abstract in order for them to fully appreciate and understand the realities of their experiences. One of the ways of ensuring effective learning is by making the experience real for learners. Therefore, resources for teaching are always usually very necessary for teaching social studies. Instructional materials in social studies mean anything that can assist the teacher in promoting teaching and learning. When the students are given the chance to learn through more senses than one, they can learn faster and easier and be able to remember the material learnt for a longer time. The teacher should, however, note that the resources used should be able to captivate or arouse the interest of the student. Instructional resources include human, place and material resources. The teacher (human resource) is concerned with the management of instructional materials. Some persons other than the teacher can be invited to contribute their knowledge and experience in the classroom (resource persons). The resource person invited should have a clear idea of what will be expected and the limit of his or her discussion (Adekunle, 1991).

Using various - instructional resources is considered by many as best practice and numerous studies concluded positive results with regard to the use of various instructional resources. Most teachers tend to avoid concepts that require the use of instructional material and places, instead they encourage rote memorization of names, dates, and places. It is imperative to note, however, that instructional resources in themselves are not self-instructing. They are only intended to be used to supplement normal daily teaching activities directed by the teachers. The need for alternative instructional materials to enhance the quality of instruction due to non-availability of first hand (real) teaching materials gives rise to improvisation. It is useful in teaching and learning because no teacher is an island of knowledge.

Clarification of Concepts

The key concepts are clarified below:

The Concept of Social Studies

In general terms, Social Studies could be defined as the study of man in his environment. It teaches ways of life - a means by which people know what they ought to know and do what they ought to do as members of a society. Adaralegbe (1980) defined Social Studies as a study of how man influences and is in turn influenced by his physical, social, political, religious, economic, psychological, cultural scientific and technological

environments. From the above definition, it is imperative to say that there is a reciprocal influence between man and his environment. Osakwe and Itedjere (2005) defined Social Studies as an integrated and interdisciplinary field of study whose ultimate aim is to produce people who are civically competent.

The Concept of Instructional Resources

Instructional resources are modern term used for teaching materials/aids. Instructional resources in social studies mean anything that can assist the teacher in promoting teaching and learning. Schramm (1977) cited in Funsho (2006) sees instructional resources as information-carrying technologies that are used for instructional purposes with the hope of delivering educational information very quickly and widely. Instructional resources are aids teachers use to help students to learn. They help teachers to explain ideas in a concrete way. On the other hand, learners use instructional materials to help themselves to learn. They help learners learn actively, either independently or with others.

The Concept of Improvisation

Simple put, improvisation is the making of substitutes from local materials found at home or school premises when real or original equipment is not available. It offers functional solutions to the problems of dearth of instructional resources

(materials) in our educational system at all levels. According to Mohammed (1997) improvisation is the act of reproducing similar or near similar instructional materials to facilitate teaching and learning outcomes. In other words, improvisation is the provision and use of alternatives in the place of the real or conventional things or materials. Improvisation of some of the teaching aids from local materials will go a long way to promote effective teaching, particularly in social studies.

Types of Instructional Resources

Instructional resources in the teaching and learning of social studies are divided into three broad types. These include:

1. Material resources
2. Human resources/resource persons
3. Resource places/centres.

Material Resources

Material resources consist of the major tools the teacher employs in transmitting knowledge. They are all the physical resources a teacher uses to help him/her explain or elucidate the topic/content to the learners so that they will be able to comprehend the topic. Ukadike (2013) stated that effective teaching and learning cannot take place without adequate and appropriate material resources. To him, the peculiar nature of social studies makes it possible for great variety of material resources to be employed in its teaching and learning.

Types of Material Resources

According to Funsho (2006) material resources could be classified as follows:

1. Reading materials: such as textbooks, story books, magazines, reference books, newspapers, and so on.
2. Visual aids: Such as wall charts, posters, instruction board marker board (modern term for white, black, or chalk board), graphs, flash cards, maps, pictures, diagrams, and so on.
3. Audio aids: Such as radio, tape recorders, audiotape/CDS, and so on.
4. Audio-visual aids: Such as television, video cassettes, VCDs, DVDs, and so on.
5. Artifacts: Such as models, real objects, mock-ups, and so on.
6. Computer resources: Such as computers, computer games, internet services, and so on.
7. Projected materials: Such as over head projector, multimedia projector, and so on.

The Importance of Material Resources in the Teaching and Learning of Social Studies Education

According to Funsho (2006) and Udadike (2013) the importance of material resources are:

1. Material resources promote teaching. They help teachers to reduce the amount of talking and thus make their teaching more interesting and successful.
2. They help to bridge the communication gap between the teachers and their students. They help the teachers to make their lessons more explicit to the pupils and students.
3. They allow effective use of teaching time. For example, instead of using many words to describe a sound, objects, or function, the teacher can play a recording of the sound, show a picture of the object or present a diagram of the function. As a result, the learners understand faster.
4. The use of learning/teaching aids assists the recall rate of learners, since they would find it easier to retrieve materials that they saw and read rather than those they simply read. It is also helpful if these materials contain operations which would involve the learners' participation.
5. Material resources create high degree of interest which is necessary in stimulating learning. Pupils and students are usually interested in things that they can see, hear, smell, and touch.

Therefore, the attention of the learners could be easily gained through the use of material resources.

6. They also assist teachers to become more efficient in the handling of their subjects and thus, their teaching ability is enhanced.
7. Material resources encourage clear thinking and concentration, for example, pupils like to listen to radio broadcast, television broadcast and watching the cinema with deep attention and concentration.

Criteria for Selecting Material Resources in Social Studies Education

Certain considerations should be made when selecting resources for instructional materials for teaching. Some of these factors are highlighted below:

1. **Learner Characteristics:** Individual differences of learners should be put into consideration. Therefore materials selected should cater for the different learning styles and competence.
2. **Types of Learning Activities:** The tasks and activities for learning would help to determine the type of instructional materials to be selected.

3. **Quality of Production:** Materials to be selected should be of high quality production in terms of clarity of messages, boldness in size of printed letters/numbers/pictures etc.
4. **Medium:** A particular medium must be matched with a type of learning. For instance a learning that requires acquisition of skills will be good for real objects etc.
5. **Relationship of Content to Pupils' Experiences:** Materials should reflect learner's interest, levels of comprehension, age, and maturation level.
6. **Suitability of Vocabulary:** The use of language is important. A material with very complex vocabulary will be of no use to a primary one-school pupil.
7. **Accessibility:** The material should be available, affordable and within the reach of its users.
8. **Durability of Equipment and Materials:** Since materials are supposed to be used from time to time, it is essential that they are durable. For example, a laminated chart will be more appropriate than a paper chart.
9. **Ease of Operation:** In cases where schools can afford equipment such as video, projector, computer, multi-media and so on, preference of

equipment to be selected should be based on its user-friendliness. That is, it should be easy to operate.

10. **Cultural Sensitivity:** The materials should not be culturally offensive. Rather, it should reflect culturally acceptable pictures and illustrations.
11. **Gender Sensitivity:** In line with current trends, materials used should reflect issues that promote respect and dignity of both male and female (Funsho, 2006)

Sources of Material Resources in Social Studies Education

According to Meziobi., Fubara, and Meziobi (2008) there are a wide variety of sources from which a plan-oriented, committed and determined social studies teacher draws the appropriate material resources for his teaching. These are:

1. **Market Sources:** Here commercially produced material resources such as textbooks, hardware and software may be bought from the open markets.
2. **Educational Resource Centres/Places/Libraries:** A number of Educational Resource Centres are available in some tertiary institutions and in most states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Students on educational trips are taken to resource places.

3. **Community/Society:** Material resources are plenty in the communities that house our schools. Social studies teachers who are committed to sensitizing the social studies students to real life in their social world will take the students to the resource places in the community.

4. **School's Social Studies Laboratory:** Relevant material resources that have been acquired from the market or produced (improvised) by skillful social studies teachers or students/pupils are housed in a school's social studies laboratory from where they could be taken and made use of, in the classroom setting, should the need arise.

5. **Improvisation:** In the absence of commercially produced, already made material resources, creative social studies teachers can improvise a good number of material resources, given adequate motivation and congenial school climate.

Human Resources/Resource Persons

According to Osakwe and Itedjere (1993) humans form the most valuable resources in the teaching of social studies. They said that "material resources in themselves are not self-instructing but are only intended to be used to supplement normal daily teaching activities directed by the

teachers". They referred to human resources as resource persons that may be utilized in enhancing understanding in certain areas of human endeavours. In her work, Ezekoka (2007) said orally that human resources include all the human beings that function to help in the teaching-learning process. A resource person may be within and outside the school community. Examples of resource persons are subject teachers, lecturers, students, farmers and professionals like medical doctors, nurses, lawyers etc. For example, a lawyer can be invited to teach on "crimes: causes, consequences and prevention".

Importance of Resource Persons in Social Studies Education

According to Ukadike (2013) both teachers and students can derive a lot of advantage from resources persons, of which the following are basic:

1. A resource person helps the pupils or students to have a clear understanding of the topic being discussed.
2. A resource person can help to motivate learners. Students are usually encouraged to have interest in teaching when they have something to motivate them. They can be motivated or aspire to become nurses or doctors after they have listened to them.
3. A resource person helps to train and educate the pupils on ways and

manners of collecting information as regards their educational career.

4. Learning can be more permanent through the resource person.
5. A resource person helps to widen pupils' experience, for example, different topics are treated by various resource persons and these will go a long way to help in widening their experiences.
6. Critical thinking is developed through the resource person. When a resource person gives a lecture, students are able to develop the ability of positive thinking through listening and asking questions.
7. A resource person (usually a professional) gives pupils first hand information on the topic that he or she treats.
8. The resource person helps to break the monotony of the class teacher. The class teacher handles the class always, but by bringing in a resource person, the monotony is broken and this helps the learners a great deal, as variety is the spice of life.

Resource Places/Centres

According to Fadeiye (1998) many places serve as resource centres particularly places of historical significance in our villages, towns and cities. There are places of significance

to social studies—like mineral or mining centres, a market, the Oba or chiefs palace, railway crossing, water fall (like the Erin Ijesha water fall in Osun State), cattle ranch (Obudu cattle ranch in Cross River State), the war museum in Umuahia in Imo State, and so on. All these places are significant to social studies education and excursions could be made to such places. Such visit will enable the pupils and students to see practically what they have been taught.

Conclusion

The importance of instructional resources in the teaching and learning of social studies cannot be over-emphasized. Teachers cannot afford to do without them, for several reasons- it helps learners to enjoy the lesson, it makes them understand and remember what they have learnt, it caters for the needs of individuals who are slow learners. It should be noted that the teacher's choice of resources should be determined by what is available and its relevance to the students' age, ability, maturity and interest. The resources available should be well organized for effective and meaningful teaching and learning. A situation where these materials are not available in the school, the teacher should improvise.

Recommendations

In view of the place of instructional resources in the teaching and learning of social studies education, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Government, public spirited individuals, non governmental organisations and companies should assist the schools through funding, donations and provision of material resources.
2. Since instructional resources facilitate teaching and help to concretize learning outcomes, the government, at all levels, should establish more Educational Resource Centres and Information Communication Technology (ICT) Centres.
3. The ministries of education should organize seminars, workshops and refresher courses for social studies teachers, to improve and update their knowledge in the use of modern material resource like computers, projectors, internet services etc.
4. Pupils and students should be encouraged to improvise locally made material resources – this will help them to be creative and resourceful. This will also make the learners to have first hand knowledge of the topic.
5. Teachers who constantly use improvised materials should be rewarded, encouraged and motivated.

References

- Adaralegbe, A. (1980). *The Nigeria Social Studies Programme: Retrospect and Prospect, NERDC, Social Studies Teaching: Issues and Problems*. Benin- City: Ethiope Publishers.
- Adekunle, M. O. (1991). Methods and resources in teaching social studies. *Ilorin Journal of Education*.
- Ezekoka, O. K. (2007). A survey of learning resources for the teaching of educational technology in Nigeria. *Today's Education*, 10 (3) 65-70.
- Fadeyiye, D. J. (1998). *Notes on Introduction to the Teaching of Social Studies for NCE and Undergraduates*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan Press.
- Funsho, O. (2006). *Primary School Social Studies Curriculum and Methods*. Lagos: National Open University, Lagos State.
- Mezieobi, K. A., Fubara, V.R & Mezieobi, S.A. (2008). *Social Studies in Nigeria: Teaching Methods, Instructional Materials and Resources*. Owerri: Acada Peak.
- Mohammed, D.M. (1997). Improvisation as a veritable tool for achieving integrated science Goal. *Azara Journal of Education*, 1 (1) 53-56.
- Osakwe, E. O & Iedjere, P. O. (2005). *Social Studies for Tertiary Students in Nigeria*. Benin City. Justice Jeco Press Ltd.
- Ukadike, J. O. (2013). *Instructional Materials in Social Studies Education*. Onitsha: Lincel Publishers.