

SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHING RESOURCES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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ABSTRACT: *Social Studies teaching resources have improved overtime since its inception in the 1950s to address the social problems in Nigeria. Classroom activities which was formally centered on the use of blackboards and passed-on notebooks, have graduated to the use of computer based systems such as power points and projectors, e-book reader, to online schooling. This paper identified and discussed Social Studies Teaching Resources in the 21st Century. The paper looked briefly at the concept of Social Studies as an integrated field of study which focuses on man in his environments with view to sensitizing man with the symbiotic relationships between him and his environment. Also went further to discuss deeply on multimedia resources in the 21st century classroom known as iTunes-U which is the current developmental resources for educators to share and gain teaching resources on a global scale. To get access to primary resources and find inspiration for enhancing teaching and learning with technology, that can link social studies teachers to the internet, through the iBook store and App store that can enable social studies teachers to gather materials. This write up also looked at the meaning of instructional materials, types of instructional resources that can be used for the effective teaching Social Studies in the 21st Century.*

KEYWORDS: Social Studies, Teaching Resources, 21st Century.

INTRODUCTION

Present day social studies teachers are encouraged and in fact required to use modern teaching aids to teach social studies in order to make classroom more lively, understandable and comprehensively to all learners. Social Studies has been conceptualized and taught in a variety of ways.

When learners are made to see, hear, feel, smell and even taste, there is a higher degree of getting them and appreciate subject matter taught. The more of the senses of the learners the social studies teacher is able to stimulate and bring to bear on issues taught, the greater would be the attainment of stated objectives in the learning domains. Materials and resources can effectively be utilized to accomplish this purpose. Too often social studies lessons have been described as boring, uninteresting and unchallenging. This negative and uninspiring state can be turned around through the identification, collection, preparation and utilization of instructional materials and resources (Olojobu, 2010).

Therefore it is important for modern day Social Studies teachers to teach Social Studies with careful selection and use of instructional materials that can be suitably employed by the teacher at all levels to promote effective teaching and learning. Resources which enhances effective learning should include the resources that are able to make permanent impressions on the minds of the learners.

Concept of social studies

Social studies is an integrated field of study which focuses on man in his environments with a view to sensitizing man with the symbiotic with a view to sensitizing man with the symbiotic

relationships or interactions between him and his environments and equipping him with the intellectual reflective or contemplative skills to identify and conquer his life and environmental problems and make his social living worth the bother. Furthermore, social studies inculcates in its clients societal socially approved and desirable value systems and attitudes Mezieobi, (2013).

Social studies as an integrated discipline brings the social sciences together especially at basic education level. At primary school level social studies lay emphasis on local community and the family, after primary school, the subject integrate social science and humanities in order to enhance knowledge of civic. At tertiary level, social studies borrowed from sociology and political science extensive, but its curriculum is not limited to either sociology or political science as it borrows concepts religion and humanities because social studies draws concept from many other disciplines and synchronize them together, it is considered to be interdisciplinary, (Antigha, 2015).

Social studies instructional materials and resources in critical perception seems to portray those educationally relevant and irrelevant human, non-human materials, places and events and experiences that the learner are exposed to teaching- learning situation and interaction with the larger society. For instance the use of field trips or visitation of historical sites may expose the learner to acquisition of unintended behavior. Also the mixture of complex social attitude and conflicting values in the modern society, calls for teachers use of value clarification in the application of social studies instructional material and resources. The proper use of instructional resources, requires teacher appropriate guide of instruction. Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2013.159). Opined that professionally trained social studies teachers with professionally exposure and orientation in the demands of social studies instructions in the demands of social studies instructional materials usage and development are instructive in the effective implementation of social studies curriculum.

Meaning of Instructional Materials and Resources

The term instructional materials are used in the context to mean all the resources within the reach of the teacher and the learner, which are employed to facilitate teaching and learning. It therefore follows that such resources may be human and non-human provided they facilitate the acquisition and evaluation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, moral and value (Inyang-Abia, 2004).

Instructional materials are indispensable factors in a teaching – learning process. This is because ordinary words or verbalization has been found to be inadequate for effective teaching. Instructional materials serve as channels through which message, information, ideas and knowledge are disseminated. They can therefore be manipulated, seen, hear, felt or talked about. They facilitate activities. They are anything or anybody the learner turns to for help in his learning process (Esu, Erukoha & Umoren; 1998).

Instructional materials are all the objects, things, people and places used to promote the teaching and learning of social studies. The organized combination and utilization of materials, facilities, equipment and people ease the presentation of content for the realization of stated objectives. Jacob (1999) stated that instructional materials are anything and anybody that can be used by the teacher and learners before, during and after the lesson to facilitate the achievement of objectives. In other words, instructional materials are devices that facilitate the transmission, understanding and appreciation of concepts, skills, values and attitudes.

The reason is that, the uses of such materials task the various sense organs of the learners, encouraging their active participation in the instructional process. When learner are opportune to contribute in the instructional process through their various senses, understanding is promoted and the teacher is delivered from making lengthy explanations that further confuse the learners. Also, the more of the senses contributed in a lesson by instructional materials the more reality is stimulated. It is in line with this thought that Ema and Ajayi (2004) stated that instructional materials are all the tools, which can be used by the teacher to provide help and encouragement to learners learning activities. Such materials bring together man and resources in a systematic co-operation to effectively solve educational problems.

Categories of Instructional Materials and Resources

The following categories of instructional material and resources **by Ofoegbu (2009)** are:

1. Resources/Materials, which offer content: for example, charts, graphs, audio-recordings, tools and implements, print materials of all kinds, globes, maps, painting, and resources in the community.
2. Resources/Materials for presenting content such as audio and video recorders, bulletin boards, flannel board, slide projectors, computers, television. Another grouping of instructional materials by Ofoegbu (2009) includes:
 - a. Human resources: which consist of individuals who provide various services in the teaching and learning process. They include: professionals and non-professionals.
 - b. Non-human resources: which include physical facilities and instructional materials, which serve as tools and devices through which stimuli can be passed or obtained.
3. Projected and electronic media sub-divided into software and hardware. This group of materials requires the use of electronic devices.
4. Software materials consist of audiotapes, video tapes, transparencies, slides, filmstrips. Hardware materials are: audio tape recorders, video tape recorders, Slide projector, film projector, overhead projector etc.

Social Studies Teaching Resources in the 21st Century

Some instructional resources are best suitable and effective for school children base on their age and stage developmental. They are often curious and want to use their (primary stage) sense of touch, vision and smell. Thus, materials such as pictures, charts, tools, drawings, maps, physical features, models, posters and so on, will be very appropriate to transmit instruction to them. At the secondary school level, use of printed materials such as newspapers, textbooks, photographs, audio-visual materials, globe, and many others will be appropriate for their age, content for learning and the objectives of teaching the content. Thus, the following are the break-down of instructional materials to be used in teaching of social studies in schools:

Internet

With the recent development of our country and the world at large, the internet is one of the best, fastest and up-to-date source of conveying information be it in a real life picture form or in text (written) form. Social studies teachers can make use of the internet to search for the most recent information from all over the world and even make students search for information

themselves from the internet when available at their schools. This will help enrich the teacher's knowledge as well as the students' knowledge of the most recent changes and activities of not only their environments and country but also the world at large.

- **iTunesU,**

It is the ideal of resources for educators who want to gain insight into curriculum being worldwide, get access to primary resources and find inspiration for enhancing teaching and learning with technology. iTunesU is one of the resources that over 800 universities are having access to iTunesU sites and nearly half of these institutions including Stanford, Yale, MIT, Oxford and UC Berkeley distribute their content publicly on the iTunesU store. In addition, cultural and education institutions, such as the Library of congress public broadcasting organization and state departments of education, it also contribute to this growing education content responding.

- **Audio-visual materials**

Radios, television are very important instructional resources in social studies teaching and learning, because of the impact of value and impression they have on people (Alaezi, 2009).

Textbooks

Textbooks are reading materials that are basic material for the social-studies class. The textbook is in such a way that it organizes the subject matter in a meaningful and logical way. It provides the starting point of learning. It develops the skill of identifying needed information on a variety of issues, persons and processes. It also stimulates thinking and interest of pupils. (Ololobou, 2010).

Graphics or two-dimensional materials:

Charts are used graphically to illustrate various steps in the introduction process. Chart such as flip charts, strip charts, time and sequence charts etc. and graphs such as pictorial graphs, simple bar graphs, maps, atlases, cartoons, comics, posters billboards are all two dimensional materials in which they represent information in order to give out a vivid visual impression of the information been conveyed to the learner and to simplify complex ideas and concepts. (Mezieobi, 2008). These materials are ideal for school students considering their age, development abilities and capabilities.

Improvised Materials

The National Teachers Institute (2006), defined improvisation as the making of substitute from local materials when the real or original equipment is not available. In other words, improvisation is the act of designing and producing instructional materials from locally available resources by the teacher and utilizing such materials to facilitate effective instruction in the classroom. Improvised materials might include motivation models of an airplane, wall clock, or bird using cardboard sheets, sticks, carton etc. Other methods of improvisation could be paper pulp making, clay molding, dry or wet mounting and many others. Improvised teaching materials facilitate teaching and learning activities in social studies class. It helps to

make the lesson real to the students; it creates opportunity for the students to participate in the provision of teaching materials and help develop their skills of creativity and manipulation. (Ololobou, 2010).

Maps and charts

Charts are visual aids that can be seen but not heard. Maps are made to represent and present different data according to the needs of prospective users. There are several types of maps that can be commonly used in schools. They are

World map, which is designed to provide opportunity for a number of students to study geographical locations and data.

Atlas outline maps that a teacher can reproduce by duplicating it or tracing it.

Library

Library is a good source of getting information of every kind. A library is normally a building or a room containing a collection of books and periodicals for use by the public or the members of an institution. (Concise Oxford English Dictionary) A social studies teacher can make the best out of the library by perhaps organizing study trips to the library to mobilize learners to assist in the collection of some materials and participate in making the materials that can be kept at the library for use.

Community resources

Community resources are those persons, places and institutions which desirable enrich social studies teaching and learning, deepen the social studies content and widen the horizon of learners. (Mezieobi, 2008) The community has both human and non-human resources. The human resources are persons with vast knowledge and skills, which can be utilized to enrich the classroom learning experiences. Professionals and non-professionals like Doctors, lawyers, professors, Chiefs or Oba's non-human resources include places such as government agencies, physical features, transportation facilities, and historical sites etc.

Classification of Instructional Materials

* Print materials *Non-Print Materials*Community resources- Textbooks- Teachers guides- Supplementary readers Electrically Operated Non-Electrically Human, Non Human- Magazines - Computer Operated - Professionals- Place of - Newspapers - Slide - Charts - Non-interests- Dictionary - Radio - Models Professionals- Physical- Encyclopedia - Television – Posters features- Poems - Overhead Projector - Graphics- Maps - Films - Games- Short stories - Film projector - Pictures- Pamphlets - Tape recorder - Globe- Bulletin - video tapes – Printings. Film strips - Flannel board- Real Objects (Ololobou, 2010).

Utilization of some common instructional materials

According to Ololobou, (2010) social studies teachers need to exhibit skill and understanding in the use of some instructional materials for maximum results. The practical use of a few would be described below:

Print Materials:-

These are also referred to as reading materials. Individuals go through them to gather information about people, places, processes and events. In the class, they can be used to provoke general class discussions or raise issues for in depth class analysis. The class textbook is a basic material for the social studies class. However, the nature of social studies require broad and current knowledge. Therefore, the teacher need to expose the learners to other print materials such as encyclopedia, new magazines, pamphlets, poems, supplementary readers. In using them, teacher should not turn the class into a reading session even though developing reading skills is important. These materials should be used to:

- i. Provide organized subject matter for learners to study.
- ii. Develop the skill of identifying needed information on a variety of issues person and processes.
- iii. Solve identified group problems to suggest rational solutions.
- iv. Stimulate thinking and interest

Way forward

The following recommendations are very important for all social studies teachers to effectively transmit social studies in the 21st century:

1. The use of most of these resources especially the electrically operated materials requires skills to operate and maintain the equipment. Mass training of social studies teachers in this area will be quite beneficial.
2. There is the need for governments at all levels to set-aside certain percentage of their annual spending on education for the procurement and maintenance of instructional materials.
3. School authorities should encourage social studies teachers with adequate financial and moral support to improvise instructional materials using available local resources.
4. Adequate time should be allocated to social studies teachers to enable them effectively utilize arrays of community resources available to promote effective teaching and learning in the 21st century.

CONCLUSION

Social studies teachers should take into cognizance the modern teaching aids to facilitate learning in order to achieve the goal of 21st century and lessons objectives, the age, maturity, ability of the learners, relevance of the material among other considerations so as not to be carried away by the beauty and physical appearances of the materials.

Also create awareness of current matters of national and international importance. However for these purposes to be achieved the social studies teacher must ensure that the content of such materials is authentic and accurate, suitable to the learners and cultural environment, free from distortions and bias. Furthermore, materials should be checked for good illustrations, clear

prints and durability. More importantly, social studies teachers should combine the use of reading materials with other categories of materials to practically illustrate and demonstrate processes of social studies teaching resources in the 21st century.

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