

SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION
AND
INQUIRY METHOD OF TEACHING

Mary Oyere Aibangbe (Ph.D)

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FORWARD

I am highly delighted to have the unique opportunity to recommend this book “Social Studies Education and the Inquiry Method of Teaching” to all prospective teachers. The book has been written at the most appropriate time by a dynamic lecturer who not only saved his colleagues the trouble of text materials but also provide the student with the most appropriate materials on the subject. The simplicity of expression with words shows the expertise of the writer.

The five chapter’s book is highly a welcome to both NCE and B.ED students in Colleges of Education and Faculties of Education in University.

I am also pleased to see the level of expertise put together with the accumulated wealth of experience acquired over the years being demonstrated in producing what teachers would need to know in areas of social studies education in relation to inquiry method to teaching. This book can be seen as a masterpiece for its contents and practicability in approach. It is really a job well done.

It is my fervent hope that teachers and students shown this book would demonstrate the require zeal and desire in using it to acquire the solid foundation of enquiry knowledge to teaching related contents in social studies education.

It is my pride to see this book as a capacity builder, which I strongly believe will help in no small measure toward acquiring relevant knowledge and skills in social studies education and inquiry method of teaching. Anyway I do not expect less from a well experienced and devoted teacher and curriculum instructor. I look forward to seeing more of this unmatched production.

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PREFACE

What inspired the writing of this book is the need to eradicate the teaching of social studies in abstraction and make the teaching of the subject more practical by involving the students more in the teaching learning process. The inquiry method is less frequently used by social studies education teachers. The predominantly and easily used method is the expository method which is more of the lecture method from primary up to tertiary level of education. This has become a source of concern due to the fact that students need to learn by doing than just learning the subject matter or content of the lesson.

The inquiry method emphasizes student's ability to critically view, question and explore various perspectives and concepts of the real world, sometimes with minimum guidance from the teachers. In inquiry situation, students learn not only concepts and contents but also self-direction, responsibility and social communication. All these are what social studies education stands for and these can only be achieved with more involvement of students and less involvement of teachers. Inquiry method in social studies education is the way students learn when they are left alone.

This book will be of immense benefit to student-teachers, teachers in primary and secondary schools, social studies and civic education students, in-service teachers, school administrators, curriculum planners and policy makers.

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CHATER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A wide variety of methods have been employed over the years in teaching generally and in social studies in particular, but these methods have not improved the performance of students in the secondary schools in Nigeria. Hence, in the words of Edinyang and Ubi (2012), " the performance, achievement and failure of students in social studies, aside other variables, strongly depend on the teacher's teaching methods". Social studies is relatively a new subject compared to other traditional subjects, it is one of the core subjects taught in Nigerian schools. One of the major factors that can influence the effective teaching of this subject is the teaching methods used in the teaching learning process. It has been observed that the didactic or expository method such as the lecture method is seen conveniently to predominate in the teaching of social studies in schools. Social studies with it's rich content is designed to enable students achieve the certain objectives in Nigeria in general and Nigerian schools in particular (NERDC, 2012).

These objectives are geared towards instilling a stronger sense of responsibility in learners as citizens of Nigeria. A cursory look at the objectives of social studies at any level of education reveals that they are reflections of the three learning domains. Social studies is interested in developing in learners, knowledge and

understanding of the environment in which they live (cognitive), the inculcation of positive attitudes, values and action (affective), the acquisition of useful skills for living (psychomotor), for full integration into the society. The teacher as a trained personnel who is at the center of the social studies education process is to act as a guide, model, inspirator, initiator and a facilitator to the learning experiences. He is expected to create opportunities for creativity and self-direction. He is to encourage learners to think rationally and logically and act responsibly. The nature of the social studies classroom should be activities packed, providing practical experiences that enrich learning.

The learners themselves are to be active rather than passive recipients of information. They are to be involved in the process of active construction of knowledge. They are expected to process an inquiry oriented spirit. It is this sort of learning that social studies believes will prepare learners for the task of nation building as required by the National Policy of Education. Implementing social studies education in the way mentioned above has been a herculean task, thus affecting the performance of students in all ramifications. Hence, according to Ahmed (2013), for decades, severe crises have engulfed the educational industry in Nigeria characterized by acute decline in students' performance, inadequate teacher availability in terms of quality and quantity, poor funding, insufficient textbooks and dilapidated facilities in most schools among host of others, of

which social studies education is not an exception. But most of all, as earlier mentioned by Ahmed and as observed by many researchers, one of the major problems attributed to the poor performance and achievement by students in secondary school social studies is over reliance on conservative methods of teaching, such as the lecture method that does not make students to be active in the teaching learning process. This didactic or expository method is seen conveniently to predominate in the teaching of social studies in schools.

Social studies is a natural development from man's interaction and explanation of the environment in which he lives. It concerns the concrete experience man encounters as he relates to the various aspects of his environment. It is therefore not an abstraction or a collection of theories and principles but rather a practical learning of coping strategies against the backdrop of the problems and challenges man encounters in his relationship with the environment. Through social studies education, one is equipped with useful knowledge, practical skills, positive values and attitudes to be sufficiently informed to tackle societal problems and issues. One of the central goals of social studies education is making the learners aware of and being sensitive to his environment. Social studies also influences positively the learner's social, cultural, economic and political values. The learner can acquire these and more only through effective and efficient teaching method. A teacher is considered effective and

efficient not only through his mastering of the subject matter alone but also through his ability to impart knowledge and skills by use of appropriate teaching methods. Over and above other variables, students' academic performance and achievements in social studies strongly depend on the teachers teaching methods.

An important factor which the search for effective classroom interaction methods for social studies education must take into cognizance of, is the fact that social studies is a skill subject. This means that social studies is a subject that is concerned with equipping the learners with practical know-how such as problem-solving skills, creative skills, analytical or reflective skills etc. Social studies is therefore a subject that involves the active participation of the learners in the teaching learning process rather than one in which the learners become passive or merely perform listening role. Hence, social studies teaching is a complex process of cooperation and interaction between the teacher and the learners. It is a clear means by which students are assisted to acquire new knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, appreciation and understanding (Edinyang, 2010).

Academic performance assessments in social studies in all Nigerian secondary schools are both classroom based and school based for diagnostic, summative and promotion purposes as the case maybe. John and Yakasai (2006), reported that there is sufficient evidence that students performance in secondary schools are lower than what they should be due to combination

of factors that include, the scarcity of trained teachers, lack of resources in schools and poor classroom practicing teachers. National Teacher's Institute (2006), reported that methods like lecture, didactic and note copying used in teaching social studies in secondary schools are quite inappropriate to facilitate the acquisition of their learning experiences in the subject. Also Okobiah (2012), also reported that outcome of several survey studies conducted in different parts of Nigeria from 2000 to 2009 indicating that the poor performance by secondary schools students in internal and external examinations in social studies was mainly due to the traditional teacher centred lecture methods used by teachers in both rural and urban public schools. The recommended methods and strategies in the Nigerian Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum Implementation guidelines such as inquiry, case study, excursion, discovery, simulation, problem-solving, role play, dramatization and use of resource persons in creating learner- centered pedagogical processes are yet to be commonly used in social studies education in Nigerian secondary schools.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

Definition of Social Studies Education

Social studies is relative in nature in terms of definition, this is because it is a new field of study compared to other fields, this is also due to location, time, circumstances and society. Conceptualizing social studies education since its introduction into the Nigerian educational system has been as herculean as defining every other discipline in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities. However, some of the definitions of social studies education as given by different scholars can be highlighted below:

The American National Council for the Social Studies (ANCSS) (1992), defined social studies as the integrated study of social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. According to them, within the school programme, social studies education provides coordinated, systematic study, drawing upon the listed subject areas (social science subjects) as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics and natural sciences. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an independent world.

Meziobi, Fubara and Meziobi (2008), defined social studies as an integrative field of study which probes man's symbiotic relationship with his environment, endows man with the reflective or contemplative capacities, intellectual, affective, social, etc. to enable him understand his world and its problems and to rationally solve or cope with them for effective living in the society.

Osakwe (2014), defined social studies as an integrated field of study that attempts to study man in depth within the ramification of his dynamic environments as well as equipping him with positive knowledge, attitudes, values and skills for the purpose of producing competent, humane and effective citizenry who can contribute positively to the society.

Danladi (2015), defined social studies as that parts of the school's general education program concerned with the preparation of the citizens for participation in a democratic society.

It is an integrated field of study that explores man's relationship with his environment and develops in him a high level of intellectual, social skills towards issues that confront man in the environment and enhancing his quality of life (Oganwu, 2018).

National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) (2023), defined social studies as the study of individual communities, systems

and their interactions across time and place that prepares students for local, national and global civic life.

This means the primary purpose of social studies education is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasonable decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally independent world. In other words, in learning social studies there is a clarion call for responsible citizenship. It is not only a study but a way of living by which learners translate acquired information and skills to affect and impact the environment in which they dwell positively in.

Therefore, social studies can be referred to as the integrated study of man physically, socially, economically, religiously, politically and otherwise as functionally well-adjusted citizen in his environment. The essence of studying social studies is to make out of learners, citizens who are responsive, responsible, appreciative and participatory citizens.

Nature of Social Studies Education

The conception of social studies education for any given society must take into account the uniqueness of that society, hence, the concept of social studies varies from one society to another. In Nigeria, it is tied to the changing needs, problems and challenges of our society as they occur over time (Aghulor, 2016). The nature of social studies is the essential features which distinguish

it from other subjects. It is the study of man and the outcome of his interactions with his various environments. This is to say that social studies is different from the older and traditional school subjects like history, economics, religious study, sociology, government etc., because the nature and contents are based on its integrated concepts and methodology. It focuses on man survival problems as he interacts with his environment. According to Ololobou (2010), it is integrated knowledge and information drawn from a wide variety of sources used to study man comprehensively and therefore, portrays the oneness and indivisibility of knowledge and the reality of man's interaction with the environment.

Social studies is a discipline which tries to modify the behavior of learners towards acceptable values and attitude through a process of studying the relationship of people with other people and their environments with the desire to provide solutions to various problems to ensure their survival, having been equipped with the necessary values, attitude, skills and knowledge (Oloya, 2014). It is aimed at imparting knowledge and providing valuable information necessary for life, its basic function is to help learners inculcate desirable social habits, attitudes and values, as well as useful skills, needed for the survival of individuals in the society.

Social studies is a problem-solving area of study. It is a response to the problems of society with a view to seeking rational

solutions to the identified problems. Everyday problems arise in our different societies but with the knowledge of social studies, individuals have the capability to overcome them. It helps to identify societal problems as well as give solutions to the problems. It takes into consideration all conceivable factors and aspects of the problems be these religious, historical, political, geographical, sociological, physiological, scientific and technological. In focusing on problems, it employs the system of analytical approach to identify and study the problems of man in his multifaceted environment. It uses horizontal and spiral approach for the analysis of societal problems from the family to the world.

Social studies is a citizenship education. This according to Olobou (2010), is because it exposes learners to basic tenets of citizenship which emphasize rights and obligations, human dignity and worth, dignity in labour, moral and spiritual principles in interpersonal relations to make them socially responsible citizens.

Social studies is value oriented. It emphasizes all the three domains of learning which are the cognitive, affective and psychomotor but emphasis is more on the affective domain which other traditional subjects do not recognise. This is because social studies is interested in modifying the behaviour of students to get them integrated in their relationship with their fellow human beings, various cultural areas and environments.

Social studies has inquiry method as the core of all the methods it uses. Students are expected to go into the environment to investigate, collect, analyze data to make inferences, theories, generalization and conclusions on social issues, problems and phenomena.

Scope of Social Studies Education

Social studies is a subject that cannot be pinned down to a specific date, time or place rather it changes with these variables, it is however necessary to point out that its main focus helps to understand it's scope. The scope of social studies is generally wide and broad depending on the educational level, be it primary, secondary and tertiary. It covers sociocultural, historical, political, economic, scientific and technological issues.

The scope of social studies is quite wide, vast and extensive. It will remain ever changing given the factors of space, time and human development. It is a subject that focuses on man, examining how he manipulates and is manipulated by the various environments in which he finds himself. Social studies is a combination of selected parts of the social sciences, humanity and arts. It is a subject whose scope is not definite because the society is constantly undergoing series of revolutions or changes.

The traditional sources of knowledge for social studies are the social sciences and humanities disciplines. It neither combines

the different subjects nor tries to replace all or any of them, rather, it selects and incorporate any suitable content materials from the various subjects that fall under the social sciences, sciences, humanities and arts as long as such content materials relate to man and society. Social studies therefore, studies man in depth (Fadeiye, 2005).

Social studies education continue to expand and widens in scope to accommodate contemporary problems and challenges of man in order to provide solutions to them. This means it has been deliberately left open to accommodate ever changing social issues and problems. The essence of this wide focus of human activities is the promotion of good citizenship. Learners get to understand themselves, their families, the school, their community and people around them, their state, nation and the world at large. This shows that the scope is spiral in nature, from concrete to abstract and from simple to complex, from the family to the world.

Reasons for the Introduction of Social Studies in Different Countries

It is important to note that the reasons for the introduction of social studies education differ from nations to nations. The aim of social studies education in Nigeria is different from that of United States of America. Each nation has its reason for the introduction of social studies education since the essence of

introducing social studies education by nations is to solve national problems with their educational system. Hence, the reasons for the introduction of social studies education in different countries is as follows:

1. Nation-Building and Citizenship Education: Ghana, Kenya and India, introduced social studies education in order to create informed, responsible and active citizens which will help to foster national unity and civic responsibility.

2. Colonial Legacy and Post-Colonial Reforms: In most African countries, social studies was introduced to replace colonial education system with curricula relevant to local history, geography and culture. The aim was to focus on African heritage and value.

3. Promoting Social Cohesion and National Identity

Countries like Nigeria and South Africa introduced social studies education to bring together diverse ethnic, religious and cultural groups. In these countries social studies has been used to promote tolerance and reduce tribal, racial or religious tensions.

4. Economic Development and Global Awareness: United States of America and Canada introduced social studies education to prepare students for participation in the economy and a globalized world.

5. Political Education and Democratic Participation

In Eastern Europe or post-apartheid South Africa, social studies was introduced to educate people about democratic values, rights and responsibilities, that is, to promote democratic citizenship.

6. Moral Ethical Development

Countries like Japan and Singapore use social studies to teach moral values such as respect, hard work and integrity and instill ethical behaviour.

7. Response to Social Challenges: In most countries, it was introduced to address issues like corruption, environmental degradation or social inequality.

In whatever country, social studies education was not introduced as a passive academic exercise but as a dynamic tool for societal progress. Also, generally the aims of social studies education irrespective of the nation, are to equip students with the knowledge, skills and values needed to become informed, engaged and responsible citizens in a diverse democratic society and interconnected world. Therefore, the general aims of social studies education are:

- **Foster Critical Thinking and Inquiry Skills:** This is done by development of useful skills and abilities which will enable learners deal with and manage the problems of the

world around them. The students are able to construct reasonable arguments and solutions to complex problems.

- **Develop Civic Competence:** To enable students understand democratic principles, government structures, rights and responsibilities. To prepare students for active, informed participation in civic life such as voting, community service, advocacy, etc.
- **Encourage Cultural Understanding and Global Awareness:** To enable students appreciate diverse cultures, perspectives and identities within societies and globally. To empower students to understand globalization, international relations and global challenges such as climate change, human rights, etc. To enable students develop empathy and respect for differences.
- **Instill Core Democratic Values and Ethical Reasoning:** To promote in students values like justice, equality, freedom, diversity and the common good of the society. To encourage ethical decision-making and responsible actions based on these values. To understand the balance between individual rights and societal responsibilities.
- **Promote Informed Decision-Making:** To empower students to make thoughtful personal, social and civic choices based on evidence and analysis.
- **Foster Social Responsibility and Active Citizenship:** To inspire commitment to community well-being, social

justice and sustainable practices. To motivate students to engage positively in their communities and the wider world.

Global Aims of Social Studies Education

The aims of social studies education the world over can be summarized according to Ndampon (2006) as:

1. The inculcation of values, attitudes and appreciations in the learners.
2. The development of skills like group, social, intellectual and manipulative.
3. The acquisition of knowledge and understanding.
4. The development of concepts and generalization peculiar to social studies as a discipline.

In essence, social studies education aims to create citizens who are informed, thoughtful, ethical, engaged and adaptable.

Aim of Social Studies Education in Nigeria

The primary aims of social studies in Nigeria according to Aina et al (1982) include:

- To develop an understanding of the immediate environment.

- To develop certain skills which enable the youths to deal with and manage the forces of the world they live in.
- To inculcate in the youths the desire for harmonious living through an understanding of the social and cultural diversities in the society.

From the above therefore, the aims of social studies in Nigeria are intended to solve specific national problems which include the promotion in the youths the spirit of patriotism and equipping them with the necessary skills needed for their survival.

Objectives of Social Studies in Nigeria

According to Aghulor (2016), the National Conference of 1969 listed the objectives of social studies in Nigeria to include:

- To create in the learner awareness and understanding of our evolving social and physical environment as a whole in its national, man-made cultural and spiritual resources together with the rational use and conservation of the resources for national development.
- To develop a capacity to learn and acquire certain basic skills including not only those of listening, speaking, reading, writing and calculation, but also those skills of the hand and head together with those of observation, analysis and interference which are essential to the forming of sound social, economic and political

judgments. This implies that social studies is not only to enable learners acquire knowledge of intellectual nature but to equip them with more skills, competencies and know-how essential for the critical and constructive analysis of socio-economic and political issues to enable them make rational decisions. Social studies create the enabling socio-political and economic awareness that equip the individual to cope with such issues in the society and participate actively and meaningfully.

- To ensure the acquisition of relevant knowledge and information, this is essentially a prerequisite to personal development as well as to positive personal contribution to the betterment of mankind. The gain is the tools for solving problems which they encounter in their interaction with environments. Exposure to social studies equips individual to utilize his or her reasoning and imagination critically and constructively in identifying and solving personal and community related problems. It enable learners contribute meaningfully to national development because they understand and appreciate the working of the systems in the society.
- To develop a systematic appreciation of diversity and dependence of all members of the local community and the wider national and international community. The teaching of social studies ensures that learners understand the similarities and differences between one ethnic group

and another and appreciate the essence of unity in diversity. Social studies deals with important problem of ethnic tolerance, national unity and development of international understanding and cooperation. Also, social studies help learners appreciate the interdependence between people, countries and nations.

- To develop in student's positive attitude of togetherness, comradeship and cooperation towards a healthy nation, the inculcation of appropriate values of honesty, integrity, hardworking, fairness and justice as one contributes to the development of the nation. Social studies seems to provide students with skills and behaviour patterns needed for articulate citizenship, for effective participation in political democracy, for political literacy and social responsibility.
- To create awareness that discipline is essential for an orderly society. Social studies aims at training people with good qualities of mind and also encourage such virtues as honesty, obedience, hard work, orderliness, among others which are fundamental for an orderly society.
- To develop the ability to think reflectively and come to independent conclusions. Social studies adopt the inquiry method which involves identification of a problem, collection of data on the problem, analysis of data arriving at solution from the analysis and making generalization.

- To demonstrate flexibility and a willingness to accept necessary changes within a system for the good of all. Man's social, economic and cultural environments are ever changing. As he lives in such changing environments, he needs to adapt continually to the changing environments. Social studies promotes man's ability to adapt and function positively to changes in society.

Objectives of Social Studies in Primary School

As outline by DuBey and Barth (1980), the objectives of social studies in primary school are as follows:

1. To develop children's self-confidence and initiative.
2. To develop children's imagination and resourcefulness
3. To develop children's desire for knowledge and continual learning.
4. To develop children's appreciation of the dignity of man and of liberty.
5. To develop children's sense of compassion for the less fortunate ones.
6. To develop children's sense of respect for and tolerance of the opinion of others even in disagreement.

7. To develop children's willingness to accept necessary changes within a system of law and order deriving from the aims of the people.
8. To develop such attitudes in the children that are favourable to social, physical, cultural and economic development which will enable the children to participate in the life of the community.
9. To develop social attitudes and values such as cooperation, participation, interdependence on others, open mindedness, honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, hard work, obedience etc.
10. To develop in the children, a spirit of national consciousness and patriotism through interest and involvement in their local, national and world affairs.

Objectives of Social Studies in Junior Secondary School

Teaching social studies in junior secondary schools in Nigeria is design to enable students acquire the following objectives according to Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (2007):

1. Ability to adapt to their environment.
2. To become responsible and disciplined individuals capable and willing to contribute to the development of their societies.
3. To inculcate the right type of values.

4. To develop sense of comprehension towards other people, their diverse culture, history and social contexts.
5. To appreciate and recognize many dimensions of human being in different cultural and social contexts.
6. To develop a sense of solidarity and sharing based on security in one's own destiny.

The above objectives are geared towards instilling a stronger sense of responsibility in learners as citizens of Nigeria. A cursory look at the objectives of social studies at the junior secondary school level of education reveals that they are reflections of the three learning domains. Social studies is interested in developing in learners knowledge and understanding of the environment in which they live (cognitive), the inculcation of positive attitudes, values and action (affective), the acquisition of useful skills for living (psychomotor) for full integration into the society. The teacher as a trained personnel who is at the center of the social studies education process is to act as a guide, model, inspirator, initiator and a facilitator to the learning experiences. He is expected to create opportunities for creativity and self-direction. He is to encourage learners to think rationally, logically and act respectfully. The nature of the social studies classroom should be actively packed, providing practical experiences that enrich learning.

Social Studies Objectives for Secondary Schools in Nigeria

1. To make students aware of the problems of their country (Nigeria) and of the world in general and to appreciate the interdependence between people.
2. To create an awareness and understanding of the evolving social and physical environment, its natural resources together with the rational use and conservation of these natural resources.
3. To develop in students a positive attitude to citizenship and a desire in them to make a personal contribution to the creation of a united Nigeria.
4. To develop a capacity to learn and to acquire skills essential to the formation of a satisfactory professional life.
5. To develop in the students an appreciation of their cultural heritage and a desire to preserve them.

Social Studies Objectives for Higher Education

At the higher education level, Ezeigbo (1988), gave the following objectives of social studies to prepare graduate to make meaningful contributions to the world he lives in both far and near:

1. To give the learner proper information and knowledge about the world.

2. To equip the learner with the right type of attitudes and values that will enable him contribute towards the improvement of world peace and intellectual human relationship.
3. To equip learner with skills, abilities and competence to help contribute towards world development and progress.

Whatever the level of education be it primary, secondary or tertiary education, social studies education should be able to inculcate in the learner the three domains of learning which are, the cognitive, affective and psychomotor in order to achieve national objectives in the following ways:

A. Cognitive: The students should be able to demonstrate-

- An awareness of the cultural and historical heritage.
- An understanding of the historical development and philosophy of social studies.
- A working knowledge, other basic concepts of social sciences and humanities and their relationship in the integrated approach.
- The understanding that the analysis of society is a major teaching resource.
- Knowledge in the art of teaching which includes curriculum development, implementation and evaluation in terms of general and social studies education.

- The understanding that most behaviour is governed by ones value system.

B. Affective: Students will be willing to-

- Develop an open mind and be willing to give and receive constructive criticism.
- Be an active and participating citizen who displays loyalty to the laws of society and to the rights of others.
- Judge and accept judgment on the basis of merit, regardless of sex, race, religion, economic status or other incidental factors.
- Display tolerance and cooperation while working with others within the local environment and wider society.
- Develop a professional concern for the implementation of social studies concepts and strategies in agreement with its philosophy.
- Develop the initiative to be actively involved in decision making and leadership roles in the society.

C. Skills: The students are able to have the ability to-

- Demonstrate the importance of applying judgement to evidence, testing hypotheses, assessing the basis for predictions and other attitudes of effective inquiry.
- State questions that are helpful in observing, interpreting, classifying and using other basic inquiry process.

- Distinguish unwarranted conclusions, factual statements from statement of opinion, generalization from supporting evidence as well as time or space-bound generalization from those of broad applicability.
- Use a variety of data sources including primary and secondary materials, textbooks, library materials, current periodicals, community resources and audio-visual materials.
- Locate, gather, appraise, summarize and report information accurately as read, listen to and analyze social studies materials critically.
- Work as members of groups, participating in decision making, carrying out plans, adhering to group standards and evaluating individual and group efforts.

The teacher as a trained personnel, who is at the center of the social studies teaching learning process is to act as a guide, model, inspirator, initiator and facilitator of the learning experiences. He is expected to create opportunities for creativity and self- direction. He is to encourage learners to think rationally and logically and act responsibly. The nature of the social studies lesson should be activity-packed, providing practical experiences that enrich learning. The learners themselves are to be active rather than passive recipients of information. They are to be involved in the process of active construction of knowledge. They are expected to possess an inquiry oriented spirit. It is this

sort of learning social studies education believe will prepare learners for the task of nation building as required by the national policy of Nigerian education. All these can be enhanced and achieved through the inquiry method of teaching.

CHAPTER THREE

INQUIRY METHOD

Teaching Method

The manner or style by which the teacher presents his materials to learners and engages them in the task of learning is referred to as teaching method. Omwirihihi and Ibrahim (2016), defined teaching method as the means for helping students to study effectively. Teaching methods concerns the tactics teachers use to meet lesson objectives which include instructional organization and techniques, subject matter and the use of instructional tools and materials. Ameh and Dantani (2012), observed that teaching methodology is very vital in any teaching learning situation and the method adopted by the teacher may promote or hinder learning. It may sharpen mental activities which are the basics of social power or may discourage initiatives and curiosity, thus, making self-reliance and survival difficult.

There exist a number of teaching methods for teachers to use which have been categorized under didactic or interactive, teacher centered or learner centered Abdullahi (2009). Different teaching methods will lead to varied instructional outcomes and a teacher can choose methods which are appropriate for his intention in teaching. In choosing teaching methods when planning for instruction in social studies lesson, it is important to

note that selection of suitable teaching methods is best for specific purposes and a good education exposes the students to all (Aibangbe, 2017).

Principles that Guide the Selection of Teaching Method

The following principles guide social studies education teacher in selection of teaching methods:

- ✓ **Learning objectives:** This involves the behavioural objectives to be achieved and must involve, the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. The teaching methods must align with the intended learning outcomes. The method must directly support and enable students to achieve the specific, measurable learning goals.
- ✓ **Characteristics of the students:** The age and developmental levels, abilities, interest and level of attainment, background of the students must be considered. Methods suitable for young children differ greatly from those for adults. Younger learners tend to benefit from play-based methods, while older learners may respond better to discussion or inquiry method.
- ✓ **Nature of subject matter:** The subject matter influences method choice. Skill development often requires demonstration and practice, complex theories might need discussion and analysis. Highly abstract concepts may need concrete examples, analogies or visualization.

Theoretical content might be best delivered through lecture method and reading, while practical content may require demonstration, fieldwork or inquiry method.

- ✓ **Time available for the lesson:** Some methods require more time than others, methods like lecture and storytelling require less time compared to inquiry and excursion methods.
- ✓ **Students' population:** Large groups might require lecture-based methods while small groups can support active methods like group work, seminars and project methods.
- ✓ **Cost implication:** The cost implication of the materials needed to apply the method or the need for the provision of some special materials or trips should be considered.
- ✓ **Teacher's competence and style:** Teachers should be confident and skilled in the method they use. A teacher unfamiliar with tech-based methods might struggle with blended learning unless properly trained.
- ✓ **Active involvement of learners:** Good methods promotes student participation and engagement, methods like inquiry, problem-solving and cooperative methods are often effective. Active methods like discussion, project, problem-solving and peer teaching generally promote deeper understanding and retention.
- ✓ **Safety and well-being:** The physical and psychological safety of students must be paramount. Methods should not

pose undue risk and should foster a respectful, inclusive environment.

- ✓ **Assessment Methods:** Teaching methods should prepare students for the way they will be assessed. If assessment requires application, methods should involve practice in application.
- ✓ **Teaching resources available:** Technology, materials, equipment, budget and support staff influences choice. Availability of teaching aids impacts method choice, lack of resources may necessitate more traditional approach like lecture method.

Inquiry Method

To inquire is to ask for information about something or to investigate something. Inquiry is about asking for information or getting information. As a teaching method according to Meziobi (1992), it is an activities- oriented, thought-provoking, creative method in which students, out of curiosity and on their own or under the guidance of the teacher probe, investigate and interpret relevant solutions through reflective thinking and rational decision-making, which this method develops in the learner. He went further to explain that it involves the scientific approach of identifying problems, formulating hypotheses, collecting relevant data to authenticate the data, drawing conclusions even

if tentatively and developing generalizations. Callahan, Clark and Kellough (2015), defined inquiry method as a method of teaching where the learner is seeking to discover and create answers to recognize problems through procedure of making a diligent search, sometimes with minimum guidance from the teacher. Inquiry method is a way students learn when they are left alone. According to Sola and Ojo (2017), Inquiry method is also a term used in science teaching that refers to a way of questioning, seeking knowledge or information or finding out about phenomena. It involves investigating data and arriving at a conclusion. Abdul-Raheem (2019), sees inquiry method as an active approach to teaching and learning in which learners are the active agents in discovering ideas. These scholars opined that it has to do with searching for knowledge, critical thinking about issues, finding answers to them and drawing necessary conclusions.

From the above definitions therefore, inquiry method can be said to be an approach to instruction designed to seek answers to identified problems. It is a student-centered approach where learning is driven by students' questions, curiosity and investigation rather than direct instructions. It is a discovery method of learning, observation, posing questions, examining sources, gathering, analyzing, interpreting and synthesizing of data; proposing answers, explanation and prediction; communicating findings through discussion and reflections;

applying findings to real situation and following up new questions that may arise in the process. It emphasizes student's ability to critically view, question and explore various perspectives and concepts of the real world sometimes with minimum guidance from the teacher. It involves investigating data and arriving at a conclusion. In inquiry situation, students learn not only concepts but also self-direction, responsibility and social communication. It also permits students to assimilate and accommodate information. It is the way people learn when they are left alone. Inquiry is carried out by students under the guidance of the teacher, it is normally preceded by a classroom discussion on the problem prior to investigation.



Teacher as a Facilitator or a Guide in Inquiry Method Classroom

Types of Inquiry Method

There are three types of inquiry method which are as follows:

1. Structured Inquiry: This is the most teacher-centered of the three types of inquiry. The teacher provides the question and procedure, while students carry out the investigation. This is often used with beginners or young students. It is described as

the most traditional method of inquiry . This type of inquiry method is commonly seen in science classrooms in the form of laboratory exercises, e.g. Students follow a step by step experiment to observe how photosynthesis of plants takes place. Structured inquiry method can be described as the most traditional method of inquiry and it is a great way to introduce inquiry- based methods to students. It allows them to exercise their questioning abilities in order to get ready for deeper and more autonomous inquiry. Aiding students through inquiry unit often requires personalized coaching to help students formulate and approach questions, to ensure that everyone can keep up with the process. In this, teacher provides problem and method.

2. Guided Inquiry: The teacher provides the question but the students design the procedure and carry out investigation. The learners are asked by the teacher to make tools or develop a process that results in desired outcome. The guidelines are usually in the form of questions that guide. This type of inquiry method helps develop planning and analytical skills, e.g. the teacher can ask a question such as, what are the causes of corruption in Nigeria? The students can plan how to find out. Guided inquiry falls in the middle of the inquiry instructional spectrum. This is a method where students learn through personal experience with limited subtle guidance from the teacher. It is activity-based instruction where the students are helped to develop inquisitive, conceptional, manipulative and problem-

solving skills by systematic presentation of the basic ideas that can provoke students learning on their own. In guided inquiry, students learn to recognize a problem, characterize what a solution would look like, search for relevant information, develop a solution strategy and execute the chosen strategy. In this, teacher provides problem, students design method.

3. Open Inquiry: This requires the least amount of teacher intervention and is student-centered. Students often work in groups and plan all phases of their investigations. Students formulate their own questions and conduct investigation and communicate results. This type is suitable for advance learners, promotes creativity and independent thinking, e.g. Students choose a topic in social studies and conduct a full research project. Open inquiry is the most complex level of inquiry method. Teachers define the knowledge framework in which the inquiry will be conducted, but allows the students to select a wide variety of inquiry questions and approaches (student-designed or selected). The students are engaged in continuous decision-making throughout each stage of the open inquiry process, starting from the stage of finding the interesting phenomenon to be inquired. In this, students formulate questions and design investigations.

The above types of inquiry method can be summarized in the table below:

Inquiry Type	Question Provided	Procedure Designed	Student Independence
Structured Inquiry	Teacher	Teacher	Low
Guided Inquiry	Teacher	Student	High
Open Inquiry	Student	Student	High

Source: ChatGPT AI (2025).

Characteristics of Inquiry Method

The following are the characteristics of the inquiry method:

- **Question-driven.** The process begins with asking questions or identifying problems that needs investigation.
- **Active learner involvement.** Learners actively participate in finding answers rather than passively receiving information.
- **Exploratory and investigative.** It involves exploring, observing, experimenting and gathering data.
- **Critical thinking and reasoning.** Learners analyze information, evaluate evidence and draw conclusions based on logic.
- **Hands-on and experimental.** Emphasizes learning through direct experience and practical activities.

- **Teacher as facilitator.** The teacher guides and supports rather than simply providing answers.
- **Open-ended and flexible.** The inquiry can lead to multiple solutions or answers, encouraging creativity.
- **Collaboration.** It often involves group work and sharing of ideas among peers.
- **Reflective.** It encourages learners to reflect on their learning process and outcomes.

Principles of Inquiry Method

The general principles of inquiry method according to Meziobi (2012) and Andrini (2016) are:

1. In the utilization of the inquiry method, the teacher or students may introduce a problem which may be difficult, controversial and investigation-oriented. In order to guide inquiry through a clear definition of the problem, students are made to answer a number of questions related to the identified problem. In this method, rather than the teacher becoming the knowledge encyclopedia or the giver of knowledge to the students, as is characteristic of the conventional expository method, the students strike out on their own, individually or in groups, to seek solutions to the problem while the teacher merely functions as a facilitator or a collaborator in learning rather than a dispenser of knowledge. It is through exposing students to the more or less

independent activities which the inquiry method entails that the students develop intellectual skills essential for problem solving. In this, learning begins with open-ended questions by the teacher or the students. The role of the teacher in an inquiry-oriented lesson is very minimal, the teacher in an inquiry lesson does not properly fit into the traditional lesson plan format.

2. Questions that are asked in the inquiry-oriented lesson are not cognitive memory or low level questions, but thought-provoking questions which begins with Why, What, How and Show that, e.t.c.

3. The developmental level or maturation of students, their interests and age should be given high premium in structuring inquiry-based learning activities and experiences.

4. The teacher utilizing this method should make value of it as well as make it what it should be. The teacher could make it boring or exciting, the teacher could personalize learning in such a manner as to arouse the curiosity of the students and stimulate reflective thinking.

Phases of Inquiry Method

Phase	Students Actions
Questioning	Pose questions, define problems.

Investigating	Gather data (experiments, research observation).
Analyzing	Interpret data, identify patterns.
Creating	Developing explanations/solutions.
Reflecting.	Evaluate process, share findings, and revise.

The above table can also be summary in the diagram below



The Inquiry-Based Approach: A Teacher's Guide

The Inquiry-Based Approach: A Teacher's Guide

Procedures in Inquiry Method

The general procedures in inquiry method as provided by Ololobou (2010) and Suwondo (2013) are as follows:

1. Identification of the problem or issue involved: This is simply the sensitization of the teacher and students to a problem in the social domain which may arise from real life contemporary situation, reflection of reading, a conflict within the classroom itself or a number of other sources. The important criterion is that all consider it a problem. The starting point can be a question that calls for an exploratory relationship, solution or policy. The teacher or students pose open- ended questions that provoke curiosity.

2. Examination of the problem identified: This is the responsibility of the teacher. He has to explain properly to the students, highlighting the pros and cons of the issues involved. The students decide how to approach answering the question, they plan experiment, surveys or research. Teacher acts as a facilitator or a guide.

3. Hypothesis: This is the development of a hypothesis that expresses as possible the antecedents and consequences of the

proposed explanation, policy or solution to the phenomenon. The hypothesis will serve as a guide to the inquiry that follows, where students attempt to verify the elements of the problem to see whether those elements do indeed relate to the proposed solutions and to determine whether the solution holds up or others need to be generated. There can be more than one hypothesis advanced and in fact many of the most interesting applications of this method occur when there appeared to be more than one competing solutions to the same problem.

4. Collection of Information or Data on the Problem: Learners can be grouped or they can be made to work on individual basis. Data can be collected within or outside the classroom depending on the issues involved. Also resource person may be invited to the school or visited by the class during which relevant information can be gathered. Student collect data through observation, experimentation, interview or secondary research. After gathering the data, the students are expected to prepare them for presentation in the class.

5. Presentation and Analysis of the Finding: The students are expected to present their findings to the class orally or in written form based on the earlier arrangement. The presentation can be on group by group basis or on individual basis in line with how the work was assigned. In the course of the presentation, issues raised must be thoroughly analyzed during which the teacher will try to emphasize important points and discourage generally

unacceptable values. Every member of the class must be encouraged to actively participate while diagrams and materials that accompany the reports should be displayed in the class.

6. Generalization: This is the last stage of the inquiry and is an expression of the solution of the problem. The teacher and students use the answers or solutions from their findings to make generalization. They make inferences or draw conclusions based on their evidence.

The above procedures can be summarized in the table below:

Procedures of Inquiry Method

Phase	Students actions	Teacher Role
Questioning	Pose questions, define problem.	Facilitate curiosity, help refine questions.
Investigating	Gather data, through experiment, research.	Provide resources/guidance, avoid giving answers and observation.
Analyzing	Interpret data, identify patterns.	Ask probing questions.

Creating	Develop explanations/solutions.	Encourage evidence-based reasoning.
Reflecting	Evaluate process, share findings, and revise.	Create forum for discussion.

Source: ChatGPT (2025).



Using Inquiry Method in a Lesson

Importance of Inquiry Method

In inquiry method, teachers and students play important roles in asking questions, developing answers and structuring of materials and issues. The application of inquiry method is very important in transition from lecturing method to other teaching methods, which are less clearly structured for alternative solutions. Inquiry activities help students develop their individual responsibility, cognitive methods, report making, problem solving and understanding skills.

The inquiry method is vital because it moves education beyond the transmission of facts to empowering students as active, critical and capable learners. It equips them with intellectual tools, curiosity and skills necessary not just to succeed academically, but to thrive as informed, adaptable and engaged citizens in the 21st century. While implementing it effectively presents challenges, the long term benefits for student development make it an indispensable method

Inquiry method has been indicated by researchers as an effective method for teaching social studies because it has much academic gains, it increases students understanding of concepts, principles and facts, enhances students achievement and interest, encourages active participation of students in the teaching learning process and enables students construct meaningful social studies knowledge. Inquiry method is therefore, necessary

for teaching and learning social studies because when students understand concepts and principles of a subject, knowledge of such subject can be constructed, sustained and transferred to a similar situation. Inquiry method is one way of making sense out of what we experience and hence requires thinking. Students learn best when they take an active role and practice what they have learned. It is very important that, in order to facilitate inquiry based learning, the teacher make simple changes and organize the classroom in such a way as to manage transition and gain attention as the students use hands-on investigative activities and guide them to reflect on their learning process. It fosters deeper learning and critical skills essential for navigating this complex, information-rich world, moving beyond memorization to genuine understanding and application. According to Deepseek (2025), the key importance of inquiry method are:

1. It develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills:

Students learn to ask meaningful questions, analyze information, evaluate evidence, identify biases and synthesize findings to form conclusion.

2. It promotes deeper conceptual understanding: By actively investigating questions and constructing their own explanations, students build stronger, more connected and enduring knowledge. They understand the why, how not just the what.

3. It enhances intrinsic motivation and engagement: Learning is driven by curiosity and personal interest. Students take ownership of their learning journey, leading to higher engagement, persistence and enjoyment. Answers feel earned, not given.

4. It builds essential research and information literacy skills: Students learn how to effectively find, evaluate, synthesize and ethically use information from diverse sources, a vital skill in this digital age.

5. It cultivates scientific reasoning and process skills: It explicitly teaches the scientific method such as questioning, hypothesizing, investigating, analyzing and communicating. Develops observation, experimentation, data analysis and interpretation skills.

6. It improves communication and collaboration: Inquiry often involves discussion, debate, presenting findings and collaborative projects. Students learn to articulate their reasoning, listen to others and work effectively in teams.

7. It prepares students of lifelong learning and future challenges: It teaches students how to learn, adapt and find answers independently. This fosters adaptability, resilience and the ability to tackle unknown future problems crucial in a rapid changing world.

8. It encourage curiosity and a love for learning: By valuing questions and exploration, it nurtures students' natural curiosity and instill a positive disposition towards learning as an ongoing process.

Advantages of Inquiry Method

A good number of scholars such as Ololobou (2010), Suwondo (2013), Aibangbe (2025), enumerated the following as the advantages of inquiry method:

- It is particularly appropriate for use in social studies education classes in that, it allows students to deepen their understanding of ideas issues and wants by having to examine and interpret them in a formal way, because when using inquiry method, the teacher involves the students in activities of investigation, collection and understanding of information.
- It promotes skills of observation, information gathering and the analysis of information.
- It encourages students to be objective and to see varied dimensions and aspects of ideas and problems.
- The reflective thinking acquired through inquiry method enables the students, to independently or in collaboration with knowledgeable others solve personal and social problems thereby living and surviving successfully in a complex society.

- It engenders real learning because it fosters self-reliance which is consistent with one of the laudable Nigerian national objectives, the building of ... self-reliant nation (NPE, 2004).
- It arouses the curiosity of the learners, stimulates their interest and makes them actively involved in the teaching learning process.
- The rigours of the inquiry process inculcates in the students the virtue of patience, discipline and sense of responsibility which are essential for effective citizenship and harmonious social living.
- Rarely does this method lend itself to forgetfulness because the inquirers are actually involved in the approach.
- It has rendered the conception of a teacher as an all knowledge bank of the learner void. The teacher is made the leader of the activities in which students discover or find their own answers. Therefore, it reduces heavy dependence on the teacher.
- It serves as a link between the school and the community which is one of the tenants of social studies education in fostering political and social awareness.

Disadvantages of Inquiry Method

- In problematic situations within the reach of gifted or creative students, the inquiry method could lead to breakdown, frustration and the killing of the interest of the below average students in learning generally.
- It's time consuming and as a result the syllabus is rarely covered. It requires more time than the direct instruction to explore topics deeply.
- In terms of classroom management, active, student driven learning can be noisier and require different management strategies.
- It can be very expensive in terms of trip making to places where facts can be obtained
- It requires formative and performance-based assessments that measure process skills and understanding, not just factual recall.
- It puts a lot of responsibility on the students.
- The planning of a good inquiry lesson is not easy.

Pitfalls to Avoid when using the Inquiry Method

In as much as the inquiry method is a powerful teaching method in the teaching and learning process, there are some common pitfalls teachers should avoid to make it effective and they are:

- 1. Lack of Clear Guidance:** Using the inquiry method approach doesn't mean no direction. Without enough support from the teacher, students may become confused or frustrated and fail to achieve the lesson objectives.
- 2. Insufficient Preparation:** Teachers and students not preparing appropriate questions or resources can lead to shallow inquiry or students going off track without meaningful outcome.
- 3. Ignoring Diverse Learner Needs:** Teachers need to take into cognisance different learning styles and students abilities. Otherwise, some students might struggle, get discouraged and get disengage.
- 4. Overemphasis on Process not Content:** Focusing only on the inquiry process can sometimes mean students missing out on mastering key content knowledge.
- 5. Time Management:** Using the inquiry method can be time consuming. And without good planning, the lesson can overrun or leave little time for reflection and conclusion.
- 6. Failure to Encourage Reflection:** Reflection helps students to consolidate learning. Skipping this step reduces the depth of understanding gained from inquiry.
- 7. Not Facilitating Discussion or Collaboration:** Inquiry is often more effective when students share ideas and work

collaboratively. Without this, learning can be isolated and less rich.

8. Lack of Assessment or Feedback: Without formative assessment or feedback during the inquiry process, students might continue with misconceptions or not realize how to improve.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONSTRUCTIVISM THEORY

Constructivism Theory

The idea of the inquiry method of teaching social studies education is based on the theory of constructivism propounded by Jean Piaget (1972), Vygotsky (1978) and Brunner (1990). The key tenet of which is that an individual learner must actively construct knowledge. This theory argues that human beings generate knowledge and meaning from an interaction between their experience and their ideas. Constructivism is used to emphasize learners contribution to teaching and learning through both individual and social activity (Woolfolk, 2008). Thus as posited by Joyce and Weils (1980), despite whether or not there is objective reality, it is the individual who constructs his or her own reality through their experience and interactions with the environment. As individual experience something new, he or she filters this information through a mental structure (schemata) that incorporates prior knowledge, beliefs and perception to make sense of the information (Prince and Felder, 2006).

There are two main forms of constructivism, cognitive and social. Cognitive constructivism draws mainly on Piaget's cognitive development which holds that individuals must construct their own knowledge and that they build knowledge

through experience. These experiences allow creation of schemas or mental nodes and this leads to learning. In contrast to cognitive constructivism, social constructivism places more emphasis on the social context of learning. Vygotsky is the main proponent of this theory and suggests that cultural history, social context and language play very important role in the rate of development of children. Thus, according to this theory of learning, effective teaching must offer experience that:

- Build on what students already know, so they can make connections to their existing knowledge structures.
- Encourage students to become active, self-directed learners.
- Provide authentic learning opportunities.
- Involve students working together in small groups (that is in collaboration or cooperative learning).

The propounders of this theory believe that teachers should act as a guide on the side providing opportunities to test the adequacy of student's current understanding (Hoover, 1996). Hoover also argues that because new knowledge has to be actively built, it takes time to do so. This means that any constructivist course like social studies education should take ample time for students' reflection about new experiences and how these fit or not fit with current understanding. According to Suchman (1962), students should be aware of the point of view of a second person to enrich

their own thinking. The development of knowledge is facilitated by the help and ideas from colleagues if students can learn to tolerate alternative point of view. Thus, Suchman in his theory holds that:

- People inquire naturally when they are puzzled.
- They can become conscious of and learn to analyze their thinking strategies.
- New strategies can be taught directly and added to the students existing ones.
- Cooperative inquiry enriches and help students to learn about the tentative emergent nature of knowledge and to appreciate alternative explanations.

In line with the above theory, social studies education is a part of the educational process that aims at giving the learner the skills, competencies and intellectual capability necessary for them to lead a useful life in the society. Social studies education is a complex educational process that aim at the process of cooperation and communication between the teacher and the learner on the one hand and between the learner and other learners on the other hand. It is a clear means by which students are assisted to acquire new skills, values, attitudes, appreciation, knowledge and understanding.

assisted to acquire new skills, values, attitudes, appreciation, knowledge and understanding.



Teacher as Guide and Facilitator in the Inquiry

Teacher as Guide and Facilitator in the Inquiry Method Process in a Social Studies Class

The idea of inquiry method of teaching social studies is based on the view of Freiere (1970), Ulrich (1970), about the negative contribution of the prevailing teacher-dominated instructional method of domination, oppression and dehumanization of the learner. Consequently, they advocated a radical pedagogy that seek to identify, understand and critically examine the effects, consequences and power of methods, mode and the environment of teaching and learning in formal educational settings in the achievement of optimum performance of the learner in social studies education. In their conclusions, inquiry method is the core of all teaching methods in social studies education. Learners are expected to go into the environment to investigate, collect and analyze data to make inferences and conclusions on social and political issues and phenomenon.

Relevance of Constructivism Theory in Inquiry Method of Teaching Social Studies

The relevance of constructivism theory can be seen in that, in using the inquiry method of teaching social studies, the major emphases are awareness, development of good attitude and values as well as development of rational skills for human survival in the community. A social studies student is made not only to know his environment but also to understand why he has

to know all these facts, how they affect him as an individual and how he can use them for his own survival. Therefore, inquiry method becomes an indispensable method of teaching social studies.

Furthermore, the implication and relevance of the constructivism theory is that this theory transforms today's classroom into a knowledge construction platform where information is absorbed and knowledge is built by the learners, where teacher serves as a guide and a facilitator who plans, organizes, guides and provide directions to the learners who is responsible for his learning. This is so very applicable to social studies teaching and learning process where the teacher acts a guide in the use of inquiry method. The teacher supports the learners using suggestions which arise out of ordinary activities, by challenges that inspire creativity and with projects that allow for independent thinking and new ways of learning information. Students work in groups to approach problems and challenges in real world situations, this in turn lead to creation of practical solutions and a diverse variety of student product. Hence, constructivism has as its goal, helping learners learn how to learn. A good example is when teachers of social studies education insist that students learn social studies by doing, by creating their own meaning for a concept or a term. When social studies teachers practically do this in their classroom instructions, this would be enough evidence that the

inquiry method under the constructivism theory is an effective method for the teaching of social studies.

The theory is also relevant to inquiry method in social studies because it incorporates a learning process where in the students gain knowledge through the creative aid of the teacher as a facilitator, instead of having students rely on someone else's information and accepting it as truth which has been the case with students getting political information from adults alone without verification. Students are exposed to data, primary sources and the ability to interact with other students so they can learn from the incorporation of their experiences. They will also be able to create solutions or support for developing issues, then justify their own words and actions, while encouraging those around them to do same and respecting the differences in opinions, for the contributions that they can make to the whole situation.

Constructivism also emphasize that involvement with others create opportunities for students to evaluate and refine their understanding as they are exposed to the thinking of others (Tyavbee, 2012).

Influence of Inquiry Method in Social Studies Education

In the inquiry method of teaching, social studies students are encouraged to behave like scientists in the process of their investigation. Therefore, for the social studies students to

meaningfully engage in inquiry, there is need for the teacher to practically involve the students, from the planning stage to the evaluation stage. This method is one way of making sense out of what we experience and therefore requires thinking. This implies that the method requires putting learners into situations in which they must be engaged in intellectual operations that constitute finding out. Inquiry method as a teaching method enable social studies students to examine ideas, existing issues, processes and questions freely and practice on their own or with little guidance from the teacher. The students seek for information to answer or solve problems. Therefore, using inquiry method of teaching in social studies education is educative and experimental and produces a lot of fun and joy as students learn by doing activities (Aibangbe, 2017). There is an ancient Japanese proverb which says " give a man a fish and he will not be hungry for a day, teach a man how to fish, he will not be hungry for a life time" (Mathias, 1988). By this proverb, it means teaching people how to tackle and solve problems by themselves becomes an asset which is what inquiry method stands for.

Inquiry method encourages exploration beyond surface level facts. It enable social studies students to connect historical events, cultural practices and social dynamics, fostering a more comprehensive grasp of social studies. The activities in inquiry method often involve group work, discussion and debate, which help students develop communication skills, respect diverse

viewpoints and learn to work collaboratively. It equips students with tools to continue learning and adapt to new information throughout their lives by cultivating curiosity, investigative habits and reflective thinking.

The inquiry method aligns with the constructivism learning theory which sees learners as active constructors of knowledge, allowing social studies education to be more meaningful and relevant to students own experience and interests. According to NCSS (2017), studies show inquiry learners in social studies outperform their peers in analysis, writing and civic knowledge. The inquiry method transforms social studies from a subject of memorization into an active, student driven exploration of human societies. This leads to improved critical thinking, engagement, research skills and deeper understanding, ultimately making social studies more relevant and effective. Social studies involves understanding complex social, political, historical and economic issues which require critical thinking and analytical skills. The inquiry method encourage social studies students to critically examine sources, question assumptions, analyze evidence and form reasoned conclusions. Hence, the influence of inquiry method in social studies

Social Studies Education and Inquiry Method of Teaching

Mary Oyere Aibangbe

education cannot be overemphasized



Inquiry Method Section

CHAPTER FIVE

LESSON PLAN

Lesson Plan Showing the Use of Inquiry Method in Social Studies Education

Here is a sample lesson plan using the inquiry method to teach social studies topic:

Subject: Social Studies

Topic: Urbanization- Causes and Effects

Class: JSS

Time: 8.30-9.15am

Duration: 1 Hour

Sex: Mixed

Method: Inquiry Method

Resource Materials: Whiteboard or flip chart, internet access or pre-printed materials, sticky notes, case studies or articles on urbanization (e.g., growth of Lagos, Nigeria or Mumbai, India)

Behavioural Objectives: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify the causes and effects of urbanization.
- Formulate questions about urbanization and seek answers through research and discussion.
- Analyze real life case studies of urban growth and its consequences.
- Present their findings using evidence and critical thinking.

Previous Knowledge: Students are familiar with large cities and villages and are aware of the difference between the two.

Introduction: The teacher introduces the lesson by asking the following questions:

1. Name four cities in Nigeria.
2. Give two characteristics of a city.
3. List two differences between a city and a village.

Lesson Presentation:

Step1 Asking Questions: (10 minutes)

Teacher Activity- The teacher show the students pictures of a bustling city vs a rural area and ask:

- What do you notice?
- Why do you think people move to cities?
- What problems or opportunities might come with that?

This is to facilitate curiosity in the students.

Students Activity: Students share their observations and questions.

Step 2: Formulating Inquiry Questions- (10 minutes)

Students Activities:

- In groups, students write 3-5 questions they have about urbanization, such as:
 - Why do cities grow so fast?
 - What are the benefits and challenges of urbanization?
 - How does urbanization affect the environment?

Step 3: Investigate-Research and Discussion- (15 minutes)

Students Activity:

- Groups choose one question to investigate.
- They use textbooks, articles or teacher provided materials to find information.
- They record their findings and connect them to real world examples (e.g., slums, traffic, job opportunities).

Teacher Activity: Provide resources, scaffold research and encourage deeper thinking.

Step 4: Sharing Findings- (10 minutes)**Students Activity:**

Each group presents:

- Their inquiry question.
- Key findings.
- A visual or quick explanation (chart, diagram or short talk).

Teacher Activity: Ask guiding questions, help clarify concepts and highlight connections.

Step 5: Reflect - Drawing Conclusions- (10 minutes)**Students Activity:**

- As a class, revisit the original images.
- Discuss:
 - What did we learn about urbanization?
 - How do causes and effects connect?
 - What questions do we still have?

Students can write a short paragraph summarizing what they learned or pose a new inquiry for homework. The teacher can also make a summary of the lesson on the chalkboard.

Assessment:

The teacher can assess the following:

- Participation of the students in the inquiry discussions.
- Group research notes and presentation.
- Reflective paragraphs at the end.
- Optional extension: Create a poster or info graphic on the impacts of urbanization.

Conclusion:

The lesson uses the inquiry method to encourage critical thinking, collaborative learning and evidence based reasoning.

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