



EFFECT OF SCAFFOLDING INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS ON UPPER BASIC YEAR 3 STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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Abstract

This study explore the effect of scaffolding in the teaching and learning of Social Studies. Social Studies, like any other subject, are expected to equip learners with basic knowledge and also with higher cognitive skills which will enable them to solve problems and develop critical and analytical thinking to promote self-development and continuous learning. This study was conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of scaffolded approach in the teaching and learning of Social Studies. To achieve the stated expectation, the study adopted the quasi-experimental pre-test, post-test, control group and comparison group design. Eighty participants from Upper Basic year 3 students were involved in the study. Achievement test was conducted on the two groups. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the data. The study revealed that scaffolding improves academic achievement; it also provides students with the necessary support to grasp complex Social Studies concepts. It is however recommended that there is need for regular in service training for Social studies teachers which must be designed to address new developments in current social issues and ways of integrating those issues into the curriculum.

Keywords: Scaffolding Instructional Methods, Upper Basic Year 3 Students, Academic Achievement, Social Studies

Introduction

Social Studies is a difficult concept to define. This is because of the complex nature of the subject. Over the years, experts in the field of Social Studies have made attempts to define it in various ways. One of the earlier definitions of Social Studies described Social Studies as those aspects of Social Sciences that have been selected and adopted for use in schools. In their own opinion, Obebe and Olatunde (2005) defined Social Studies as the study

of man and his physical and social environments with the problems and issues posed by these interactions and the way by which man seeks solutions and clarification to them. Birth and Shermis in Sofadekan (2003) described Social Studies as a discipline in which teaching and learning, attitude, values and skills overshadow the accusation of facts and information. Onyabu (1980), Wronski (1981), Ikwumelu (1993), Obebe and Olatunde (2005) are of the opinion that



Social Studies is a confused curriculum in terms of its aims and objectives. These scholars suggested that teaching Social Studies is disorganised because teachers do not explore the concepts that underpin factual knowledge acquisition. Okunloye (2000) argued that most non-specialist teachers of Social Studies deliver the subject from the perspective of their own area of specialisation (e.g. History, Geography, or Economics); whereas the aims and purpose of Social Studies is quite different in that it seeks to develop an individual into a sound and effective citizen (National policy on education, 2004). Sofadekan (2012) emphasised the need to teach for conceptual development rather than accumulation of factual details. In other words, rather than having a method of teaching which is about accumulation of fact through rote learning, there is a more interrogative experience where students understand issues better. This view was also supported by Alanazi, Osman and Halim (2024), who pointed out the importance of laying emphasis on the generation of 'concepts' rather than the acquisition of factual information. This implies that Social Studies curriculum is more than accumulation of knowledge; it is actually about been able to understand and use that knowledge within a daily life. This is because 'concepts' serve as a structure into which facts are related in a society of ideas and used in developing analytic skills in students for coping with knowledge, seeing things in proper perspective and making intelligent decisions about problems that presently exist and those they may encounter in the future. Hence, there is the need to move away from the old behaviourist methods of direct teaching (such as the lecture, note copying and dictation) all of which encourage content memorisation and regurgitation. These methods are teacher-centred i.e. the teacher does all the talking and the learners do the listening. In this

scenario, learners are mere spectators, listening and not heard: they receive knowledge, represent the ideas espoused by the teacher. Students learn in many ways, Walqui (2006) pointed out that teachers must strive to develop practices that help students understand and interact with new information. Verenikina (2008) stated that scaffolding is one of the pedagogical tools that can assist students to retain and apply new knowledge.

The idea of scaffolded approach to learning can be traced to scholars such as Jerome Bruner and Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky was of the opinion that children do not operate in isolation but learn by interacting with more knowledgeable others (an adult, an older peer, a teacher or perhaps today even the internet) (Smith, Cowie & Blades, 2003). Bruner agreed with Vygotsky's view that society provides the tools that enables a child to develop their thinking beyond his/her chronological age, and he also developed Vygotsky's ideas further by calling the role that knowledgeable others play in helping a child to learn as a 'loan of consciousness' - a scaffold (Smith *et al.*, 2003). As scaffold in building construction provides a support, function as a tool, extends the range of the worker, allows a worker to accomplish a task not otherwise possible (Greenfield, 1999), so also it serves as a framework to help the student step beyond age-related limitations by breaking up the learning into chunks and then providing a tool, or structure through which a child can gradually build up knowledge, by breaking the task to be learnt into chunks, talking students through the task while they complete it, grouping students together to talk and support each other, referring to models of the task where students can gather additional information and giving students tips and tricks while they work (Alanazi, Osman & Halim 2024; Van de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen, 2010). Hence, scaffolding as a



pedagogical tool enables the teacher to provide temporary support to help students learn new concepts or tasks. As soon as the students become competent, the teacher gradually reduces guidance, allowing the students to work independently.

Instructional methods should be able to enhance the active participation of the students in order to improve their academic achievement. Hence, this study examined the effect of scaffolding instructional methods on the academic achievement of students in Upper Basic year 3 in Social Studies. The teaching of Social Studies in Upper Basic year 3 in Ogun State has been with traditional didactic approach. The academic achievement of students in Social Studies at Upper Basic year 3 has consistently poor. This implies that students do not comprehend properly from the use of traditional didactic approach. This study therefore, examined the effect of scaffolding instructional methods on the academic achievement of students in Upper Basic year 3 in Social Studies.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the **effects** of scaffolding instructional method on the academic achievement of Upper Basic year 3 Social Studies students?
2. To determine if gender have **effects** on students' academic achievement in Social Studies using scaffolding instructional method.

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of scaffolding instructional method on the academic achievement of Upper Basic year 3 Social Studies students?
2. Does gender have effects on year 3 Upper Basic students' academic achievement in Social Studies using scaffolding instructional methods?

Method

The study adopted the quasi-experimental pre-test, post-test, control group and comparison group design.

Eighty participants from Upper Basic year 3 students were involved in the study. The participants were drawn from two public Upper Basic schools. The schools were purposively selected from two Local government areas in Ogun State. Simple random sampling method was used to assign the schools into target and comparison groups. The names of schools in each of the local government were written and wrapped, put in two different baskets as ballot. A twelve year old boy was asked to pick one ballot from each of the basket. The school that was picked in each basket were assigned as target and comparison groups. The instrument for data collection was researcher made achievement test. The target group was taught using scaffolding instructional method, the comparison group was taught using traditional didactic approach. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the effects of scaffolding instructional method on the academic achievement of Upper Basic year 3 Social Studies students?

Table 1: The Effects of Instructional Scaffolding Method on academic Achievement in Social Studies of year 3 Upper Basic students

Group	No of Students	Mean	Standard Deviation
Target	40	26.67	5.13
Comparison	40	18.21	3.94

Table 1 revealed that students that were taught using scaffolding instructional method (target group) had mean score of 26.67 and standard deviation of 5.13, while those that were taught using traditional didactic approach (comparison group) had a mean score of 18.21 and standard deviation of 3.94 indicating that a clear mean difference of 8.46 exists



between the target group and the comparison group in favour of the target group. This implies that scaffolding instructional method enhances students learning and academic achievement more than the traditional didactic approach.

Research Question 2: Does gender have effect on year 3 Upper Basic students’ academic achievement in Social Studies using scaffolding instructional methods.

Table 2: The Effect of Gender on year 3 Upper Basic Students’ Academic Achievement in Social Studies using Scaffolding instructional method

Group	No of students	Mean	Standard Deviation
Target	50	22.46	4.66
Comparison	30	19.84	4.35

Table 2 revealed that male students had a mean score of 22.46 and standard deviation of 4.66, the female students had a mean of 19.84 and standard deviation of 4.35. This shows that there is a clear mean difference of 2.62 and standard deviation of 0.31 in favour of the male students. This implies that male students were better receptors of Scaffolding instructional method.

Discussion

This study confirmed the effectiveness of scaffolded approach to learning which is in line with the study of Alanazi, Osman and Halim (2024), Weinstein and Preiss (2017), Sofadekan (2012), Wass, Harland and Mercer (2011). The group of students taught using traditional didactic approach (comparison group) performed poorly while the group that was taught through a scaffolded approach (target group) performed better. It also revealed that there is need to make the learning process more interactive and exploratory, this view is also supported by Unugo (2021), Alake and Ogunseemi (2013).

The target group performed better because learning has been steeped, the teaching and learning process was interactive, it was exploratory, and it has been scaffolded i.e. using scaffolding scheme worked in promoting students learning around issues relevant to their life in Nigeria.

Recommendations

It can be deduced from this study that there is need to make the learning process more interactive and exploratory, and that learning should be made relevant to the lived experience of students, so as to enable them to be able to utilise it later on in life. This means that the traditional didactic approach where teachers describe or dictate information to students is not effective in making the curriculum meaningful. There is also need for regular in service training for Social studies teachers which must be designed to address new developments in current social issues and ways of integrating those issues into the curriculum.

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