

Alternative Method of Teaching Social Studies in Primary Schools: Reciprocal Teaching as the Panacea

Kayode Ezecheal OBAFEMI

Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education,
Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria
ourchildrenyourchildren@gmail.com

Abstract: *This study examined impact of the reciprocal teaching approach on students' academic performance in social studies in Kwara State. A quasi-experimental pre-post-control group research design was used. 82 pupils from two government primary schools were chosen at random. The experimental group was picked at random from the two schools, and the control group was picked from the other school. The "Social Studies Achievement Test" (SSAT), a single research instrument that has been consistently validated, was employed. Using the test-retest method, the SSAT's reliability index was calculated to be 0.77. Analysis of Covariance was used to test three hypotheses. The study's outcomes bared that the treatment significantly impacted students' academic performance in social studies. Gender did not, however, significantly affect students' academic performance in social studies. Finally, the interplay of treatment and gender had no discernible impact on students' academic performance. Conclusively, reciprocal teaching method can raise students' academic performance in social studies. The usage of the reciprocal teaching method should be taught to instructors, according to the conclusion.*

Keywords: Reciprocal teaching, method, pupils, academic achievement, social studies

Introduction

The children are instilled with a love of their nation via social studies, which promotes national cohesion, which is vital to our development as a nation. By relying on its unique methodology, which includes inquiry, topical, problematic, project activities, and other approaches, it helps to achieve national objectives by exposing the kids to the merits and demerits of various situations so they can come to their own independent, reasoned conclusions. Nigerian social studies education has a unique responsibility to carry out in order to make Nigeria a modern state. They include mending the social and political rifts of previous decades, fostering contemporary nationalism and excellent interethnic relations, and promoting positive changes to create a just and progressive society in the country. It also promotes the desire for independence, competence, and pride in one's country (Abubaka, 2013).

The emphasis of social studies, an integrated discipline in Nigeria's educational system, is on the process of recognizing and resolving issues that pertain to human survival, which also includes the capacity to uphold a peaceful, decent, and forward-moving lifestyle (Nwalado & Obro, 2020). Therefore, it is impossible to overstate the value of social studies as a tool for fostering national growth. In order to comprehend people's problems and discover solutions to them, social studies as a discipline studies people in their environment. It is focused with interpersonal relationships, integration, socioeconomic development, and instilling in each person the proper societal values. It is specifically designed to satisfy the needs of Nigerian society because it is a discipline with a social focus that aims to address societal issues.

In order to foster effective citizenship, Daboer, Iorapuu, and Udechukwu (2021) defined social studies as the combined study of the social sciences and humanities. This suggests that social studies offers a coordinated, systematic examination of man in the context of his entire environment, drawing its content from the natural sciences as well as economic, historical, geographic, anthropological, legal, political, religious, psychological, and sociological fields. Social studies were described by Ololobou (2004) as a systematic, integrated study of man and his environment that places an emphasis on cognition, practical skills, and desirable attitudes and behaviors in order to create productive citizens.

The necessary attitudes, values, and skills are instilled and used in social studies education to help people fit into society. By studying and learning, students can improve their awareness of society's diversity and dynamic character as well as their grasp of how cultures, societies, and surroundings interact. Education in social studies is useful and practical in order to have a real impact on society, and as a result, it works to unite society as a whole (Olusanya, 2020). Social Studies, in the opinion of Fan, Usoroh, and Umoetok (2012), expose the youngster to the issues he faces.

The academic performance of pupils in the subject is not encouraging enough, despite the significance of social studies in personal and societal growth. It should not be permitted to remain in this horrible learning environment. Since the trend will impede national progress if left uncontrolled, this raises severe concerns. All hands must therefore be on deck to ensure an improvement in students' academic performance in social studies at the primary school level, where a good foundation for further study could be established. Adamu (2020) ascribed the teachers' instructional strategies as the reason why students performed poorly in social studies. Some

academics and researchers (Molla, Muche, and Kingdom-Aaron, 2018; Kingdom-Aaron, Etokeren, and Okwelle, 2019) advocate using teaching methods that value students' participation in the teaching-learning process. A variable of importance in this study is the reciprocal teaching approach, one of these teaching methods.

A teaching strategy that will improve students' performance is reciprocal teaching. The process is best described as a dialogue between the teacher and the students. The nature of interactions is referred to as "reciprocal" since one person reacts to another. Four strategies—questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting—are used to structure the discourse. Both the teacher and the pupils take turns acting as the leader (Omema, 2015).

One of the teaching strategies that includes anticipating, coming up with questions, elaborating, and summarizing is the reciprocal teaching strategy. The purpose of reciprocal teaching is to increase students' motivation overall by using dialogue to increase their understanding, build self-control, and check their progress (Mohammed & Abbas, 2012).

Regardless of the subject matter taught in a specific class, reciprocal teaching enables the students to keep track of their development and take full responsibility for their learning (Slater & Horstman, 2002). With the use of this technique, students can take charge of their education (Hashey & Connors, 2003). Students may also improve their reading self-regulation skills by taking charge of their education while they are studying (Hacker & Tenet, 2002) Since all students can engage in group discussions and are expected to do so, reciprocal teaching significantly raises the level of discourse in the classroom (Hashey & Connors, 2003; Seyyed & Mohammad-Reza, 2011).

A number of studies (Hacker & Tenet, 2002; Slater, & Horstman, 2002; Hashey & Connors, 2003; Bess, 2007; Seyyed & Mohammad-Reza, 2011; Mohammad & Abbas, 2012; Maysaa, 2013; Sydney, 2021) have been conducted on reciprocal teaching strategy on students' learning outcomes but none of these studies attempted to examine the effect of reciprocal teaching strategy on the academic achievement of pupils in Social studies.

Gender is another important factor. The characteristics that set femininity and masculinity apart and identify them are referred to as gender. Among these characteristics could be biological sex, being male or female (Kevin, 2017). Several studies have been done on the impact of gender on students' academic achievement in various subject areas (Nnamani & Oyibe, 2016; Pirmohamed, Debowska & Boduszek, 2017; Lori, Michelle, Glenda & Brian, 2019), but the studies produced contradicting results. As a result, this supports the inclusion of gender in this research.

Statement of the Problem

The adoption of the teacher-centered technique of teaching, which is frequently utilized by some teachers, has been partially blamed for the students' persistently poor performance in internal and external examinations in social studies. Researchers and academics have advocated for the employment of instructional strategies that encourage students' active participation in both teaching and learning activities. Several studies have been undertaken and a number of teaching tactics have been advocated in an effort to raise students' performance in social studies, but none of these strategies has been proven to be successful, especially at the primary school level. In light of this, this study assessed the impact of the reciprocal teaching technique on students' academic progress in in Social studies particularly at the primary school level of education. Hence, this study examined the effect of reciprocal teaching strategy on the academic achievement of pupils' in Social studies.

Research Hypotheses

- Ho1: There is no significant effect of treatment on the academic achievement of pupils in Social studies.
- Ho2: There is no significant effect of gender on the academic achievement of pupils in Social studies.
- Ho3: There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on the academic achievement of pupils in Social studies.

Methodology

The study used a quasi-experimental research design. All pupils in primary 6 in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State were the target population. Two government primary schools were picked using a simple random selection procedure. The experimental group was one of the two schools, and the control group was the other. Each of the chosen schools had primary six students participate in the study. The "Social Studies Achievement Test" (SSAT), a test of academic achievement created by researcher, was the research tool employed in the study. Twenty (20) multiple-choice questions made up the Social Studies Assessment Test (SSAT), which was based on the Social Studies Curriculum for primary 6. The SSAT, Reciprocal Teaching Instructional Guide (RTIG), and Conventional Instructional Guide (CIG) draft questions were distributed to academics in the Kwara State University, Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education who validated the instruments. Test-retest method was

applied to determine the SSAT's reliability. 26 primary six students who were not involved in the study were given the test twice, in an interval of two weeks. The reliability coefficient was determined to be 0.73 after data from the two administrations were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The study ran for six weeks, and Analysis of Covariance was used to examine the data acquired.

Results

Testing of Hypothesis One

Table 1: Summary of Analysis of Covariance showing the effect of treatment in pupils' academic achievement in Social studies

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	233.588 ^a	4	58.397	25.946	.000
Intercept	6.146	1	6.146	2.731	.103
Pretest	1.501	1	1.501	.667	.417
Treatment	220.201	1	220.201	97.838	.000
Gender	.927	1	.927	.412	.523
Treatment * Gender	1.633	1	1.633	.726	.397
Error	173.302	77	2.251		
Total	14343.000	82			
Corrected Total	406.890	81			

The impact of treatment on students' academic performance in social studies is depicted in Table 1 below. Social studies student academic achievement was significantly impacted by the treatment ($F(1; 77) = 97.838, P 0.05$). Given the outcome and the fact that the significant value (.000) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is thus rejected. This suggests that the treatment major impact on students' academic success in social studies. Table 2 below shows the basis of the significant difference.

Table 2: Summary of Bonferroni's Poc Hoc Pairwise Comparison of the scores between the two groups

Treatment	Mean Difference	Experimental	Control Group
Reciprocal Teaching	14.99	*	
Conventional Method	11.63		*

While the conventional method is known as the control group, the reciprocal teaching strategy is referred to as the experimental group. This suggests that those exposed to the reciprocal teaching strategy (14.99) outperformed those exposed to the Conventional method significantly (11.63).

Testing of Hypothesis Two

The impact of gender on students' academic performance in social studies was also shown in Table 1. Gender had no discernible impact on students' academic performance in social studies ($F(1; 77) = .412; P > 0.05$). In view of the outcome, the hypothesis is therefore not ruled out because the significant value (.523) is higher than 0.05.

Testing of Hypothesis Three

Table 2 also showed how gender and treatment interacted to affect students' academic success in social studies. The interaction between treatment and gender had no discernible impact on students' performance in social studies ($F^{(1,77)} = .726$; $P > 0.05$). In view of the outcome, the hypothesis is therefore not ruled out because the significant value (.397) is higher than 0.05.

Discussion of Findings

The study's findings showed that treatment had a considerable impact on students' academic ability in social studies. This suggests that the students' academic success in Social studies was significantly impacted by the reciprocal teaching technique. This result supported Omema's (2015) research, which showed that the intervention technique of reciprocal teaching had a substantial impact on the learning outcomes of elementary school kids in the fifth grade who had reading difficulties. These results concur with those of Maysaa's (2013) study, which found a major difference in favor of the experimental group.

The study's findings also revealed that there was no discernible main effect of gender on students' achievement in Social studies in Kwara State. This result concurs with that of Attah and Ita (2017), who unfolded that performance in English Language was found to be unaffected by gender. Pirmohamed, Debowska, and Boduszek (2017) reported that there were gender-based substantial differences in the performance of final-year undergraduate students.

The study's findings also unfolded that there was no discernible interaction effect of treatment and gender that would have affected students' performance in social studies. This result supports Yusuf's (2019) finding that there was no discernible interaction effect of therapy and gender that would have affected learners' performance in numeracy. Similar findings were made by Obafemi (2022), who found that gender and treatment had no appreciable interactions in terms of how well students performed academically in mathematics.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the outcomes, peer tutoring instructional strategy can improve the performance of pupils in Social studies regardless of gender. Based on the conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

- Teachers should embrace the use of peer tutoring instructional strategy in teaching Social studies.
- Trainings should be planned for teachers on how to use peer tutoring instructional strategy.
- Peer tutoring instructional strategy should be contained within teacher training programme courses.

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