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EFFECTS OF ROLE PLAY AND CONVENTIONAL METHODS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OSUN STATE.

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Abstract

The study investigated the effect of role play method on academic performance of Junior Secondary School students in Osun State. The study used a quasi-experimental pre-test, post-test design. Data were collected from 200 JSS II students using a stratified random sampling procedure from four Local Government Areas of Osun State. The instrument used for the data collection was (SSAT) Social Studies Achievement Test and was developed by the researcher, validated by expert in Social Studies Education. The research questions were answered using mean and Standard deviation scores, while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test. The study showed that students taught with role play method performed significantly better than those taught using conventional method. It was therefore concluded that the use of role play method is better than the conventional in improving academic performance in Social Studies. Based on the findings, it was recommended that government should encourage and emphasized the use of role play method while teaching the students.

Keywords: Role play, Method, Academic performance, Students

Introduction

It is worthy of note that Social Studies is an eclectic discipline which integrates various concepts from various fields of the social sciences, although it goes beyond the factual knowledge of the social science discipline. There are many teaching methods which social studies teachers should be aware of and use at the appropriate time. A sound knowledge of these teaching methods would help the

Social Studies teacher to know, in what situation he/she could employ a particular method or a combination of methods. The point here is that a teacher should employ several teaching methods in a social studies lesson in order to arouse and sustain the interest of the social studies students. The teacher has a great role to play in imparting knowledge, in educating the child with the use of appropriate strategy. The parents therefore, put their hope and high

expectation on the teacher. It is this important calling that teachers have accepted, and, therefore, much is expected of them (the teachers).

Research has also shown that the commonly used instructional strategy in Nigeria Social Studies classroom is the lecture method. Lecture method is the oldest way of teaching. It is teacher centred. The traditional view of teaching is that the learner is almost blank and therefore does not give possible outcome from the learners (Lawal, 2004). Based on this background, the researcher feel that lecture method would only allow the teacher to participate alone but would not allow full participation of students in Social Studies. Therefore, there could be poor performance of students.

It is observed that what children learn depends not only on what they are taught but also how they are taught, their development level, and their interest and experiences. These beliefs require that much closer attention should be paid to the method chosen for presentation of materials. A given teaching method is not equally effective in all conditions. The effectiveness of a method depends on who uses it, who learns it, what is taught, in what particular conditions and for what purpose. Educators are concerned with attempt to encourage and popularize the use of carefully planned instructional strategies to see to their efficacy in improving the performance of students in Science and other related disciplines as asserted by (Seweje and Jegede, 2002).

Role playing is a valuable method of helping learners to develop confidence and self-esteem. In all the methods used to teach social studies, role playing seems to be one of the most effective teaching methods for stimulating the interest of learners in what

they are to learn. Costant (2011) reported that role playing method includes simple techniques such as play-lets, field trip, textbook, discussion and dramatization – all of them especially are useful in lower classes. Students are immediately involved, their attention held by the situation or events dramatized in the classroom. This method allows for great deal of participation by learners and enlivens the routine procedure of teaching and learning. The students can participate physically, emotionally and mentally. When the content of a lesson is dry or uninteresting, role playing may be an effective way of attracting and holding the learners' attention. Blatner (2000) explained role playing as a process whereby facts or skills to be learnt are converted into play in order to make learning of such facts or skills more interesting and real. Role playing method enhances the learners' full and direct participation. It is learners' centred and practical. It develops the learners' power of imagination and their moral character. Role play makes learning exciting and purposeful.

Role playing is a way of developing the skills of initiative, communication, problem-solving self-awareness and working cooperatively in teams. Blatner (2000) described role play as a methodology derived from socio-drama that may be used to help students understand the more subtle aspects of literature, social studies and even some aspects of science or mathematics. Edige (2007) reported that role play can be described as spontaneous and organized activities in which players pretend to be someone else. Students act out the role of people to show a specific situation for study. Learners are able to play many roles, for example, a man and a woman who intend to marry; father, mother and children in a family. In role playing, there is no prepared

script, no rehearsal, no memorization of the part to be played.

Marcus (2007) revealed that in role play, two important things must be said about this method. First, that they should not be considered as something for use only on special occasions. Second, they should be carried out by both the students and teacher. Students should be divided into two groups – participants and observers. He went further to highlight the advantages of role play method which include: It helps develop vocabulary, language use and speech. It also provides opportunities for learners to express themselves freely. Role playing helps students to realize that other people have feelings, problems, and experiences often quite different from their own. It provides a good basis for later discussion and review of the topic and its issues. Interest is maintained and also a feeling of confidence as students learn to express themselves. Students learn through role playing. owing to active participation and involvement in the lesson. The method provides the teacher with information about the student which can aid in a better understanding of students. Teaching by role playing, leads to positive attitudinal change because a student, through active involvement in role playing with fellow students, may find his or her own values and beliefs challenged.

Ajaja (2011) explained that students' sensory modalities are in full operation as they are actively involved in classroom activities. He went further to say that students have the opportunity of participating through the use of their senses other than old traditional/conventional type of learning. He therefore suggested that role play gears up students, stimulate them, arouse students interest and

high communication level of performance and class is made lively.

Statement of the Problem

One of the major problems confronting the educational system in Nigeria today has been traced to the poor academic performance of students at Junior Secondary School levels. Some blame the poor performance of students on the wrong choice of teaching method, while others concentrate their blame on poor attitude of students towards the subject and classroom environment, which may not be conducive for practical learning situation. To put the teaching of Social Studies in its proper perspective, especially as regards students performance and transfer of morals into the society, there is the need to consider a change in the method being used in teaching the subject. Owing to the problems Social Studies students encounter through just one method of teaching (conventional method), the researchers deemed it necessary to investigate effects of role play and conventional methods on students performance in Social Studies. Thus, the problems stated above and the choice of the method of teaching to be studied generated the fundamental questions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of role play and conventional methods on academic performance of junior secondary school students in Osun State. It would also determine the method that will be appropriate in improving the performance of students in Social Studies in Osun State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the performance of students in the post-test?
2. Which of these methods will determine the academic performance of students in Social Studies?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are tested in the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the academic performance of Social Studies students exposed to role play method and those exposed to conventional method.
2. There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test mean score of Social Studies students exposed to role play method.

Methodology

The research design for this study is quasi-experimental design of non –randomized pre-test, post-test control group. The population of the study consisted of all students of Public Junior Secondary Schools 2 (JSS2) in Osun State. Four secondary schools were purposefully selected for the collection of data among the Junior Secondary Schools in Osun State from which a total 200 students were randomly selected. The students were grouped into two different parts such that role playing method and conventional teaching method were used to carried out the study independently.

The students were selected to provide answers to the Social Studies Achievement Test (SSAT) in form of pre-test and post-test questions before and after the treatment using role playing method and conventional method. The Social Studies Achievement

Test consisted of 20 multi- choice objective items based on the topic treated. The items used for the pre-test were reshuffled for the post-test. The items were subjected to face and content validity through the help of experts in Social Studies Education and Tests and Measurement in the Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti.

The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using test re-test method. The instrument was administered to 40 Junior Secondary School II students outside the targeted population two times within an interval of two weeks. The two scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained for the SSAT. The value was considered high enough for the study. The research procedure took three forms namely, pre-treatment stage, the treatment stage and post-treatment stage. The researcher also involved the subject teachers (social studies) as research assistant in the conduct of the test. The researcher commenced the treatment after which the post - test was administered. The hypotheses were tested using t-test, at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Question 1: What is the performance of students in the post-test?

The post test scores of students in the two groups were used to answer this question.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of post-test scores of students exposed to role playing method and conventional method

Groups	N	Mean	S.D
Role Playing	100	13.79	1.60
Conventional	100	9.98	1.57
Total	200		

Table 1 shows the mean post-test scores of students' performance in Social Studies. The mean post-test score for role playing group is 13.79 while conventional group is 9.98. Thus, role playing method which has the highest mean of 13.79 appears to be the better method out of the two methods in the teaching of Social Studies.

Question 2: Which of these methods will determine the academic performance of students in Social Studies?

The pre-test and post-test scores of students in the two groups were used to answer this question.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of pre-test and post-test scores of students exposed to role playing and conventional methods

Groups	Test	N	Mean	S.D	Mean Diff.
Role Playing	Pre Test	100	9.30	2.01	4.49
	Post Test	100	13.79	1.60	
Conventional	Pre Test	100	9.60	2.35	0.38
	Post Test	100	9.98	1.57	
Total		200			

From the Table 2, it is shown that the mean difference in students' performance in Social Studies between pre-test and post-test scores for role playing is 4.49 while conventional method is 0.38. It appears that the use of role playing and conventional methods influences students' performance in Social Studies with role playing being the

more effective method in the teaching of Social Studies.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of Social Studies students exposed to role playing method and those exposed to conventional method.

Table 3: t-test analysis for Post – test Mean Scores of Students in the two groups

Variations	N	Mean(\bar{X})	SD	Df	t_{cal}	P-value	Rem.
Role Playing	100	13.79	1.60	198	17.01	0.00*	Significant
Conventional	100	9.98	1.57				

*P<0.05

Table 3 shows that the t-cal value of 17.01 is significant because the P value (0.000) <0.05 at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there was a significant difference in the academic performance of Social Studies students exposed to role playing method and those exposed to conventional method. The mean

score showed a significant difference of 3.81 in favour of students exposed to role playing method.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test mean scores of Social Studies students taught with role playing method.

Table 4: t-test analysis for pre-test and post-test mean scores of students exposed to role playing method

Variations	N	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Df	t _{cal}	P-value	Rem.
Pre-test	100	9.30	2.01	198	17.50	0.00*	Significant
Post-test	100	13.79	1.60				

*P<0.05

Table 4 shows that the t-cal value of 17.50 is significant because the P value (0.000) <0.05 at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there was a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test mean scores of Social Studies students taught with role playing method. The mean score showed a significant difference which indicates that role playing method was very effective.

Discussion

The findings of the study also revealed that students that were exposed to role play method of teaching had better academic performance compared to those exposed to conventional method. The above was confirmed by hypothesis one which revealed that there was a significant difference in the academic performance of Social Studies exposed to role play method and those exposed to conventional method. The reason for this may be as a result of the exposure they have undergone and role play method aided to the better understanding of the subject matter. The finding of this study agreed with the finding of Blatner (2000) who reported that role playing is a process whereby facts or skills to be learnt are converted into play in order to make learning of such facts or skills more interesting, understandable and real. Role playing method enhances the learners' full and direct participation thereby, better understanding.

The finding also revealed that the mean score of post-test group students was higher than the pre-test group. This implies that post-test group had superior mean score when compare to pre-test group exposed to role play teaching methods in Social Studies. The researcher is of the opinion that teacher must teach his/ her students in such a way that the students will have little or no difficulty in mastering the subject matter since it is believed that effective teaching brings on the healthy interaction between the teacher and the students. This agreed with the finding of Seweje and Jegede (2002) who reported that the educators are concerned with attempt to encourage and popularize the use of carefully planned instructional strategies to see to their efficacy in improving the performance of students.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the finding of this study that role play method of teaching is an essential method that will improve the academic performance of students in Social Studies than the conventional method of teaching. The use of role play method helps the students to derive maximum benefit from the lesson, hence, it is more effective in the teaching of Social Studies concepts. It also goes a long way in making the lesson interesting.

Recommendations

Based on the findings above, it is recommended that:

1. Role play method should be used as a method of instruction in teaching Social Studies in Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) rather than the conventional method of teaching.
2. Government should encourage teachers on the need and use of role play method of teaching by organizing seminars and workshops through the Ministry of Education.

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