



Research Article

Effects of Dramatization, Discussion and Inquiry Methods on the Academic Performance and Retention of Social Studies Students in Benue State.

Bam C.¹  <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-0447-541X> Iorkaan S.K.²

¹Department of Social Studies, School of Arts and Social Sciences, College of Education, Katsina-Ala

²Department of Political Science, School of Arts and Social Sciences, College of Education, Katsina-Ala.

Corresponding Author E-mail: liambeebam@gmail.com

Abstract- This study examined the comparative effects of dramatization, discussion, and inquiry teaching methods on the academic performance and retention of Basic 8 students in Social Studies in Benue State, Nigeria. The area of study was the Vandeikya and Katsina-Ala Education Zones of Benue State. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The study design employed a pre-test, post-test, non-equivalent group quasi-experimental design. The population comprised 56,080 Basic 8 students (30,544 males and 25,536 females) from 201 UBE schools. The sample of the study consisted of 5,608 Basic 8 students drawn via a multistage sampling technique. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used for testing of hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed a significant effect of dramatization over discussion and inquiry method on academic performance of Basic 8 students. It also revealed that there is a significant effect of teaching method on students' retention in Social Studies. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Social Studies curriculum planners and school management should emphasize the use of the dramatization method in the teaching and learning of Social Studies to enhance students' performance and retention.

Article Key Information

Keywords: Dramatization method, Discussion method, Inquiry method, performance, retention.

Received: 26th February 2025 **Revised:** 14th March 2025 **Accepted:** 11th April 2025 **Published:** 18th April 2025

This is an open-access article licensed under CC BY 4.0.



1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The target of any educational enterprise around the world is to achieve certain aims and objectives for the well-being and progress of society. In Nigeria, the vision for education, as enshrined in the National Policy of Education (FGN, 2014), is to equip individuals to live effectively in the modern age of science and technology. That is producing a crop of people capable of thinking for themselves, respecting the views and feelings of others, and

living as contributory and participatory citizens. It was in a bid to attain such a lofty vision that necessitated the introduction of Social Studies. Mezieobi and Edinyang (2013) define Social Studies as an integrated field of study that probes man's environmental relationships and imbues man with high-level intellectual skills, social skills, and competencies germane to solving man's diverse environmental problems for better and effective living.

For the objectives of Social Studies to be effectively achieved, many believe that the teaching of Social Studies should be learner-centered with innovative strategies. Shah (2019) laments that many teachers still rely on teaching strategies that fail to inspire learners, thereby reducing them to mere listeners and storehouses of facts that can only be retrieved during examinations, with teachers acting as sole disseminators of information. Shamiya (2015) blames the poor performance in Social Studies on teachers who turn the teaching of the subject into storytelling time, using text and lecture methods in what is called the traditional method of teaching, which is criticized by many people. The methods employed by Social Studies teachers should be capable of enhancing the inculcation of not only knowledge and skills but should also enhance the inculcation of values and attitudes, which will not only improve academic performance and retention but will go a long way in improving Nigeria's social rating (Ikwumelu, 2019).

Academic performance is the result of learning prompted by the teaching activity of the teacher and produced by the student. It is the product given by the students, and it is usually expressed through school grades. It is a measure of the indicative and responsive abilities that are expressed in an estimated way, what a person has learned as a result of a process of education or training also affect his/her retention rate. Retention, on the other hand, is defined by Grace-Odeleye (2020) as mental processes that are used to acquire, store, or retrieve information or acts of using information in specific ways to make the information available later or to bring that information back into the current stream of processing. Memory and concentration are considered as twine sisters; hence, students can hardly memorize without classroom concentration. Even when their concentration is good, it may not be useful without memory. Students' performance and retention are said to record higher gains when student-centered methods are employed.

Dramatization as a method simply means to act. It is a play method by which children in schools convert facts or skills to be learnt into a play to make learning of such facts or skills more interesting and real (Ikwumelu,2019). Dramatization could increase students' engagement and motivation by making the learning process enjoyable and interactive. This means that the dramatization method could help learners to easily remember what they have been taught and make learning more meaningful. Discussion as a teaching method involves interactive learning. Muhammed and Alkali (2022) define the discussion method as a "thinking together" process or a type of cooperation in learning. The method can also be described as a learning process that requires teamwork among learners. The method is organized on the principle that the knowledge and ideas of several people pooled together have greater merit than those of a single person. The success of the method lies in the even distribution of opportunities among the participants to contribute to the discussion. Inquiry method, on the other hand, is another student-centered learning approach where students are actively involved in the teaching and learning activity. (Mohammed and Alkali, 2022). That is, it is a teaching approach that encourages students to explore concepts through investigation, questions, and critical thinking. The inquiry method is considered good in Social Studies in studying past events using relevant artifacts and other social issues (Ikwumelu, 2019). This implies that the students take ownership of their learning by engaging actively in the process of discovering facts, which could motivate and sustain interest that leads to high performance and retention of students. It is against this background that this study seeks to compare academic performance and retention of Basic 8 students taught Social Studies using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Social Studies was introduced into the Nigerian school curriculum to produce patriotic citizens with sound values and democratic culture. However, personal observation of social institutions in Nigeria for several decades after the introduction of Social Studies reveal values decay in virtually all the social institutions in the country; that is, values and norms in education, religion, family, economic, health, and political institutions. This could be as a result of decay of desirable values and attitudes such as value of honesty, accountability, integrity, altruism, benevolence, love, co-operation, patience, chastity and value for life amongst others as vindicated in cases of individual and mass killings/ loss of property, farmers/herders clashes, insurgency, banditry, armed robbery and kidnappings, siphoning of common wealth, parading of fake or certificates that cannot be defended amongst others which may account for the weakening of efficient and effective functioning of systems in various places of work.

Most of those ills mentioned above could be a result of poor performance and retention of Social Studies students at the basic level of education.

Despite the importance of Social Studies education, it has been observed that there is failure by the system to produce the desired result in terms of performance and retention on the part of the students. For instance, a report of The Benue State Examinations Board over five years (2015 to 2019) shows low performance of students in Social Studies, with less than 60% of the students scoring below credit passes in the subject. These are pointers to the fact that there could be poor or unproductive teaching methods utilized in teaching the subject, which may have precipitated the low academic performance and retention, resulting in the social ills mentioned above. Many concerned stakeholders in education like parents, teachers, and the general public tend to blame it on poor motivation of Social Studies teachers, lack of qualified teachers, lack of interested and experienced teachers, and use of poor teaching methods. The researcher, however, considers teaching methods in Vandeikya/Katsina-Ala Educational Zones. The problem of this study, therefore, is put in a question form: What are the comparative effects of dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods on Basic 8 students' academic performance and retention in Social Studies in Vandeikya/ Katsina-Ala Education Zones of Benue State?

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for the study:

- i What is the mean academic performance score of Social Studies Basic 8 students taught using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods?
- ii What is the mean retention score of Social Studies Basic 8 students taught using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods?
- iii What is the interaction effect of teaching methods and school location on students' academic performance in Social Studies?
- iv What is the interaction effect of teaching methods and gender on students' retention in Social Studies?

1.4 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- i There is no significant mean difference in the academic performance of Social Studies Basic 8 students taught using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods.
- ii There is no significant mean difference in the retention level of Social Studies Basic 8 students taught using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods.
- iii There is no interaction effect of teaching methods and school location on students' academic performance in Social Studies.
- iv There is no interaction effect of teaching methods and gender on students' retention in Social Studies.

2. Literature Review

This section focuses on the theoretical framework and a review of literature on variables that are related to the concepts of this study. It also covers empirical studies and summary

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study is hinged on Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory of 1950. The thrust of the theory is that cognitive development is a progressive re-organization of mental processes as a result of biological maturation and environmental experience. Cognitive theory, therefore, primarily deals with the nature of knowledge itself and how the human mind gradually acquires, constructs, and uses knowledge.

According to the theory, knowledge is not merely transmitted verbally but is received, constructed, and re-invented by the learner. Piaget believes that for a child to know and construct the knowledge of his world, the child must act on an object as an interaction that provides the knowledge. The theory explicates that children think and reason differently at different periods of their lives. The theory posits that every individual passes through an invariant sequence of four qualitative distinct stages, which implies that no individual can skip or reorder these stages. The four stages are the sensory motor stage (0 – 2 years), the pre-operational stage (2-7 years), the concrete operational stage (7-11 years), and the formal operational stage (11 years and above) (Barsalou, 2014). According to the theory, children at the concrete operational stage can have their thinking

centered on concrete things while they (learners) can reason about things that exist in their minds at the formal operational stage.

The educational implication of these stages is that the contents of instruction in any class should be consistent with the developmental levels of learners. Teachers, especially at the Basic Secondary School, are expected to consider their learners to be operating at the Piaget formal operational stage. This is because this period is characterized by children applying their logic directly to real-life situations. Reasoning skills at this stage refer to the mental processes involved in the generalization and evaluation of logical arguments. This theory and its tenets are relevant to this study because when learners at the basic level of education are exposed to dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods, they will be able to apply all the cognitive processes of clarifying, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating. The teacher, therefore, becomes a facilitator of knowledge who motivates students' knowledge through dramatization, discussion, and inquiry teaching methods.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

This section reviews concepts that are related to the variables of the study. These include the concept of Social Studies, dramatization method, discussion and inquiry methods, and students' performance and retention.

2.2.1 Concept of Social Studies

There is no concise and generally accepted definition of Social Studies. This is because of the divergence in the cultural backgrounds of those defining it. Besides, Social Studies is also in the process of organizing and reorganizing itself as a discipline. Scholars and Social Studies educators have defined Social Studies in diverse ways. Abosede (2014) defines Social Studies as a process of education that utilizes the study of human lives to allow learners to practice solving problems of crucial importance both for the individual and the society. Mezieobi et al. (2013) look at Social Studies as an integrated approach to learning that helps to equip learners with appropriate knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that would enable them understand better their physical, social and technological environment and also contribute and participate as useful citizens of their societies.

From the above definitions of Social Studies, the importance of Social Studies in the Nigeria Educational System cannot be over emphasized; specially, the focus of Social Studies is to extricate the Nigerian child from the apron strings of colonial education which merely propagated foreign values. The teaching of Social Studies is directed towards building a virile Nigeria nation irrespective of ethnic diversity.

2.2.2 Concept of Teaching Methods

The teaching method is a way of doing something or a position that a teacher adopts to explain a subject matter to learners. Suharsiwi et al. (2023) define teaching as an activity or group of activities that are systematic or planned and purposefully carried out to bring about changes in learners' behavior. They assert that method is the means of reaching predetermined ends. This forms the most important link in the total teaching and learning chain, which has, on one hand, the goals and purposes and, on the other, results and values. Dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods are considered as some of the methods that could enhance learning among students in Social Studies.

2.2.3 Dramatization Method of Teaching Social Studies

This is a teaching method where students are actively involved in the lesson and concretize concepts, thereby making teaching and learning more practical and real. Suharsiwi (2023) state that the dramatization method is derived from the words "to dramatize" or "to act". The authors further state that this is a method used by children in schools to convert facts or skills to be learnt into drama to make the learning of such facts or skills more interesting and more real. This method helps learners to remember what they have been taught, and as such, they cannot easily forget what they have been taught. This means learners can dramatize a court scene and other contents of Social Studies. For instance, students can dramatize a mock parliament, a debate in a House of Assembly, a war between two villages, a traditional, Christian or Muslim marriage ceremony from their villages, and so on. This could, therefore, help improve performance and retention in the subject.

2.2.4 Discussion Method of Teaching Social Studies

This is a teaching method that involves brainstorming to discover facts. Ikwumelu (2019) defines the discussion method as a "thinking together" process or a type of cooperation in learning. The method can also be described as a learning process that requires teamwork among learners. The method is organized on the principle that the knowledge and ideas of several people pooled together have greater merit than those of a single person. Ikwumelu (2019) added that, in discussion method, the leader, who may be either the teacher or an appointee of the class, is responsible for regulating the conduct of the discussion group ensuring that all students have the opportunity to contribute in the discussion and to develop oral communication skills which could develop self-confidence. This implies that the method is cooperative or interactive learning, which requires teamwork among learners as they engage in verbal activities in explaining a learning concept. This calls for reflective thinking and active participation, which could help facilitate the retention and performance of Social Studies Students.

2.2.5 Inquiry Method of Teaching Social Studies

Inquiry Method, according to Ikwumelu (2019), is an approach of learning in which the learner is the active agent in the discovery of concepts, ideas, and generalization. It is based on the assumption that teaching and learning activity is one in which the teacher guides the pupils to search for ideas. It helps the learner to think critically and actively about ideas, problems, and issues and strive towards finding solutions to them. This means the inquiry method allows the students to be in charge of their learning activities, with the teacher only providing the guide. It may, therefore, be good in studying the past and present and investigating personal and public issues which could help enhance students' performance and retention in Social Studies.

2.2.6 Academic Performance in Social Studies

Academic performance is something that a student has been able to accomplish through teaching/ learning exercises. Olalekan (2016) describes academic performance as a demonstration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that one acquires through learning. It is a product of effort or a series of efforts. Academic performance could be good or poor. York et al. (2019) assert that academic performance refers to the achievement of set objectives to various types of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These objectives are established based on the age, prior learning, and capacity of individuals about education, socialization, and qualification.

2.2.7 Retention of Students in Social Studies

Retention is the ability of the student to recall, retain, and apply knowledge, skills, concepts, and attitudes learnt over some time. Muhammed (2022) argues that one may be able to memorize facts in the short-term, but the concern is how well his/her retention will be over the long-term; that is the ability to recall or recognize what has been learned or experienced over a considerable period time; that is the continued possession, use or control of learned knowledge; it is required for permanent magnet of what is learned over time.

2.2.8 Academic Performance and Retention in Social Studies and Gender

Another pertinent issue associated with contemporary teaching methods is striking a balance between male and female students' learning differences (Imoko and Jimin, 2016). Gender is defined as a set of characteristics, roles, and behavioral patterns that distinguish males from females socially and culturally. Literature shows that gender is a vital predictor of human conduct, and many differences have been identified between the behaviors, attitudes, and academic performance and retention of male and female students. This explains the effect of gender on the learning outcomes of students. Adeyemi (2014) and Barton and Avery (2016) noted that many researches in Social Studies have not reached a consensus on the effect of gender on students' performance and retention. There are still controversial findings in the performance and retention of male and female students. Dania (2014), for instance, reported that gender had no significant effect on students' achievement in Social Studies when exposed to the inquiry method. There is a need, therefore, to employ teaching methods that could arouse students' performance and retention in Social Studies across gender. The problem of this study, therefore, is put in a question form: What are the comparative effects of dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods on Basic 8 students' academic performance and retention in Social Studies in Vandeikya/Katsina-Ala Education Zones of Benue State?

2.3 Empirical studies

This section discusses studies conducted that are relevant to the variables of the study.

Ugwu et al. (2020) investigated the impact of the discussion method on performance and retention in biology among senior secondary students in the Katsina Education Zone, Katsina State, Nigeria. The population was 1,176 second-year senior secondary biology students. The sample size was 214 SS II students selected from the population using a simple random sampling technique. The research design was quasi-experimental design involving pretest, posttest, experimental and control groups. The instrument used was the Biology Performance Test (BPT). The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.84. Three research questions (RQ) were raised to guide the study. Three hypotheses (Ho) were postulated to guide the study and tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while the t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The major findings showed that significant differences exist between the academic performance of students taught biology using the discussion method over those taught using the lecture method. Based on these findings, the following recommendation was made: Biology teachers should be trained on the use and importance of the discussion method in teaching biology concepts. The study is similar to the present study because both examine the effects of the discussion method with the same design, while the concern of the latter is on comparative effects of dramatization, Discussion, and Inquiry methods on academic impact and retention in Social Studies. Besides, the location of the two works varies, thereby creating a gap for the present work to fill.

Ugwu et al. (2017) investigated the effects of the drama method on students' academic achievement in the Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) curriculum in senior secondary schools in the Nsukka Local Government Area (NLGA) of Enugu state. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. A quasi-experimental research design was used to collect data from 115 students, randomly selected from 1328 senior secondary two (SS11) students offering CRK in public coeducational secondary schools in Nsukka LGA. The instrument for data collection was the Christian Religious Knowledge Test. Mean and Standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant levels. Results revealed that students taught using the dramatization method performed better than those taught with the lecture method in CRK. Also, gender does not matter as far as achievement in CRK is concerned when using the dramatization method. The reviewed study is similar to the present study; hence, both are concerned with the investigation of the impact of the dramatization method on the academic performance of students. Both used the same design and statistical instruments. The former investigated the impact of the dramatization method on CRK students in the Nsukka local government without carrying out a study on the comparative effect of drama and other methods on students' performance and retention. The present study, therefore, fills the gap by researching the same variables in Benue state on Social Studies students, comparing the impact of the dramatization approach on their performance and retention with discussion and inquiry methods.

Issaka (2024) investigated the Impact of the Inquiry-Based Teaching Method on Students' Academic Achievement and Retention of Concepts in Integrated Science against the traditional methods in some selected senior high schools in the Obuasi municipality. The sample for the study was 292 students in SHS two from Christ the King Catholic Senior High School and Obuasi Secondary Technical in the Obuasi Municipality. The study utilized pretest-posttest research design, mean and standard deviation were used in analyzing the research question for the study while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant levels. The result from the study indicates that the students in the experimental group performed better than the students in the control group. The findings also show that students who were instructed with the inquiry-based method have higher retention capacity than their counterpart students who were exposed to the traditional method. There was a slight gender disparity in the achievement and retention capacity of both male and female students taught Integrated Science with Inquiry-Based Methods in favor of the male. This means that the Inquiry-Based Method is very rewarding to students in terms of achievement and retention regardless of gender. The following recommendation was made: Biology teachers should be trained on the use and importance of the inquiry method in teaching biology concepts. The reviewed study is similar to the present work because both examine the impact of inquiry method on performance and retention and use the same design. The difference with the present study is that the present study is comparing the inquiry method with the other two methods, and the locations of the two studies are not the same. Also, the formal study was carried out in Integrated Science while the latter was in Social Studies, thereby creating a gap for the present study to fill.

2.4 Summary

This study adopted Piaget's (1950) Cognitive Development Theory. This theory is related to the learner-centered learning methods – dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods because they involve construction of meaning gained through social interaction. The general conclusion of the review is that effective teaching of Social Studies is tilting towards the learner-centered methods. Dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods require the Social Studies teacher to set purpose and actively engage students in the teaching and learning of the subject.

The review also shows that adopting appropriate methods in the teaching of Social Studies could improve students' academic performance and retention. This is because when students actively participate in the teaching/learning process of the subject, their academic performance and retention will improve. A review on gender shows no gender differences in academic performance and retention of students taught Social Studies using Dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods. The summary on the empirical review of the study indicated that exposing learners to student-centered methods – dramatization, discussion, and inquiry often yielded positive results in academic performance and retention. It is, however, pertinent to note that most of the studies reviewed were carried out in other subjects (not in Social Studies) and in other parts of Nigeria or outside Nigeria. Even studies in Benue State on the same variables did not examine comparative effects of dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods on Social Studies students' performance and retention in Vandeikya and Katsina-Ala Education Zones of Benue state. This highlights the need for the present study on the comparative study of the effects of dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods on Social Studies students' academic performance and retention in Vandeikya and Katsina-Ala Education Zones of Benue State

3. Methodology

This section covers research design, area of study, population, sample and sampling, instrumentation, method of data collection, and method of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a quasi-experimental research design. Justification for the choice of this design is hinged on the fact that interact classes were used, and there was no possibility of randomization. Also, the researcher had no control over participants, and the design better addresses ethical concerns. This agrees with Emaikwu (2015), who said that pure experimental studies are hardly carried out in a classroom setting; hence, certain classroom situations do not permit excessive manipulation and control. The design is made up of three experimental groups. All the groups took a pre-test before the treatment and a post-test at the end of the intervention, followed by a retention test. Experimental group $Q_i \times Q_{ii} \times Q_{iii}$ where Q_i , Q_{ii} , and Q_{iii} are pretest observations while $Q_1 \times Q_2 \times Q_3$ are posttest observations.

Besides, the quasi-experimental research was adopted to achieve effective results by enabling the researcher to make reliable and valid predictions; the extraneous variables that might alter the results of the study were controlled by employing the following measures to hold the threat of the following constant. This agrees with Emaikwu (2015), who says that a good design should be strong in both internal and external validity.

- i. **Teacher Variable:** Lesson plans and lesson notes that had been highlighted by the researcher were handed over to the research assistants. The essence was to reduce research assistants' effect on lesson presentation. The use of research assistants with the same qualifications and years of experience was to further minimize differences that may arise in the treatment effects due to teacher characteristics.
- ii. **Subject Interaction:** Conscious of the imminent interaction between the three experimental groups, the participating teachers were instructed not to give comprehensive notes or assignments and any instruction outside the methodology instructional package (MIP).
- iii. **Initial Group Differences:** The researcher made use of ANCOVA, which can take care of initial differences
- iv. **Hawthorne Effect:** This happens when students' performances are affected as they are conscious of the fact that they are involved in an experiment. To forestall this problem, the researcher used their teachers. The intention was to make the students in all the groups feel that they were merely holding normal lessons, a condition that was aimed at reducing Hawthorne effects

Effects of Pre-Test on Post-Test: The period between the pretest and posttest was four (4) weeks. This period was long enough to prevent the pretest from affecting the posttest scores or interfering with the experimental treatment. Pretest and posttest items were the same in content but different in organization. That is, swapping of the numbering.

The independent variables are the methods of teaching, which are dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods, while the dependent variables are students' performance and retention in Social Studies. Gender served as a moderator variable. A pretest was used to establish the homogeneity in the performance before the posttest performance and retention

3.2 Area of the Study

The area of study was the Vandeikya and Katsina-Ala Education Zones of Benue State. These zones comprise seven local government areas, namely Konshisha, Kwande, Ushongo, and Vandeikya (for Vandeikya zone) and Katsina-Ala, Logo, and Ukum (for Katsina-Ala). The zones have 116 grant-aided secondary schools and 201 Universal Basic Education schools (Benue State Universal Education Board, Makurdi, 2025). The choice of these two educational zones of Benue state is based on the researcher's experience as a teacher in the zones for over two decades where students' academic performance and retention in Social Studies are observed to be at variance with the objectives of the Social Studies hence the need for the study in the area. The content area coverage was marriage, family, religion, and technology, all based on the current curriculum UBE (Benue State Universal Education Board, Makurdi, 2025)

3.3 Population

The population of the study was made up of all the 56,080 Basic 8 students in all the 201 UBE schools in Vandeikya/ Katsina- Ala education zones of Benue State (Benue Universal Basic Education, 2025). The choice of Basic 8 was because the class was stable. It was neither facing the problem of being freshly introduced to secondary education nor preparing for an end of course or external examination.

3.4 Sample and Sampling

The sample for this study comprised 5,608 Basic 8 students drawn from 56,080 Basic 8 students in the 2024/2025 academic session using a multistage sampling technique. The sample size represented 10% representation of the population. This agrees with Emaikwu (2015), who suggested that where the population is more than 1,000, a sample size of 10% and above will be considered ideal. The aim of using a multistage sample procedure was to be systematic in selecting the sample size.

A stratified sampling technique was employed to group schools in Vandeikya/ Katsina- Ala education zones into strata based on the seven Local Government Areas that constitute the area. A proportionate sampling was thereafter used to select schools evenly based on the population and number of UBE schools found in each of the local government areas that make up the Education Zones. This is to avoid being biased of each local government area.

In the same vein, purposive random sampling without replacement was used to select 40 co-educational basic schools from the 201 schools spread all over the zone, representing 20% of the basic schools in the area. The choice of purposive random sampling without replacement is to ensure that all the schools stand equal chances of being picked. A purposive sampling technique was used because the moderation effect of gender was considered in the study. Simple random sampling without replacement was used to randomly select 45 intact classes with 5,608 Basic 8 students from the 40 co-educational basic schools in the Vandeikya and Katsina-Ala Education Zones of Benue State. The choice of simple random sampling was because every school based on gender stands equal chances of being selected to constitute the sample size of the study.

3.5 Instrumentation

The researcher developed the instrument for the study titled Social Studies Students Performance Test (SOSPET), which was a multiple-choice test containing 40 items with four options each. The questions were drawn from the

current curriculum for Basic 8 students in Social Studies. The format of the test instrument was adapted from the Basic Education Certificate Examination Board (2022).

3.6 Method of Data Collection

A pre-test was administered to the three experimental groups a week before the treatment by trained Social Studies teachers who were teaching in the selected schools. After the treatment, the instrument was reshuffled and administered as a post-test on the three groups. Finally, the instrument was again reshuffled and administered as a retention test on the three groups after three months, and scripts were collected and coded for data analysis and interpretation for two weeks

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the four research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test hypotheses 1 to 4 at 0.05 level of significance. The use of ANOVA was to control errors that may occur due to non-equivalents arising from the use of intact class studies. The analyses were done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The method was adopted because it allowed for adjustment, and it attempts to remove the effect of intervening variables that may occur in the study.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

Research question 1: What is the mean academic performance of Social Studies Basic 8 students taught using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods?

Analysis of data relating to the above research question is presented in Table 3.

Table 1: Mean Achievement Score and Standard Deviation of Students Taught Social Studies using Dramatization, Discussion, and Inquiry Methods?

Group	N	Pretreatment		Post-treatment		Mean Gain
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	
Dramatization	181	4.34	0.43	50.86	5.56	46.52
Discussion	1876	5.93	2.80	41.74	9.35	35.81
Inquiry	1851	4.66	1.36	36.40	11.5	31.74
Mean		4.97		7.46		14.78
Difference						

In Table 1, the mean pretest scores for the students taught Social Studies using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods are 4.34, 5.93, and 4.66 with standard deviations of 0.43, 2.80, and 1.36, respectively. However, the mean post-test score for the dramatization group is 50.86 with a standard deviation of 5.56, while that of the discussion is 41.74 with a standard deviation of 9.35, and for inquiry is 36.4 with a standard deviation of 11.5. The mean gain for the students exposed to dramatization is 46.52; discussion is 35.81 while the mean gain for those exposed to inquiry method is 31.81. The pre-treatment mean difference between the three groups, however, was found to be 4.97, while the post-treatment mean difference was 14.78. This clearly shows that the students who were taught Social Studies using dramatization had a higher achievement score than those who were taught using the other two teaching methods.

Ho1. There is no significant difference in the mean academic performance of Social Studies Basic 8 students taught using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods.

Analysis of data related to the above hypothesis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of ANCOVA Result of Students' Achievement by Methods

Source	Type III Sum of squares	D f	Mean Square	F	S i g .
Corrected Model	2214.619 ^a	3	1107.3392	0.510	.000
Intercept	201279.7	395	201279.7	473728.138	.000
Pre A c h t M e t h o d	1125.273	2	1125.273	20.843	.000
Error	946.488	2	946.488	17.531	.000
Total	24187.228	5604	53.989		
Corrected Total	1129535.000	5608			
T o t a l	26401.907	5607			

a. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = .000)

From Table 2, the p-value for the group is 0.000. Hence, $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant mean difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught Social Studies with dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods. This implies that the students who were exposed to dramatization performed higher in the social studies performance test that was delivered during this period more than those students in the other groups.

Research question 2: What is the mean retention score of Social Studies Basic 8 students taught using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods?

Analysis of data relating to the above research question is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean Retention Scores and Standard Deviation of Students taught Social Studies using Dramatization, Discussion, and Inquiry Methods.

G r o u p	P r e - t r e a t m e n t		P o s t - t r e a t m e n t		M e a n G a i n	
	N	\bar{x}	S D	\bar{x}		S D
D r a m a t i z a t i o n	1881	21.69	0.18	24.87	9.95	14.91
D i s c u s s i o n	1876	11.70	0.20	17.87	11.37	6.17
I n q u i r y	1851	11.45	0.12	16.73	13.22	5.28
Mean Difference		0.41		3.12		7.9

In Table 3, the mean pretest retention scores for the students taught Social Studies using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods is 21.69, 11.70, and 11.45 with standard deviations of 0.18, 0.20, and 0.12 respectively. However, the mean post-test score for the dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods was 24.87, 17.87, and 16.73, with a standard deviation of 6.95, 11.37, and 13.22, respectively. The mean gain for the students exposed to dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods was 14.91, 9.67, and 5.28, respectively. The mean difference between the three groups, however, was found to be 7.9. This clearly shows that the students who were taught Social Studies using dramatization had a higher achievement score than those who were taught using the other two methods.

Ho2. There is no significant difference in the mean retention scores of Social Studies Basic 8 students taught using dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods.

Analysis of data related to the above hypothesis is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of ANCOVA Result of Students' Retention by Methods

Source	Type III Sum of squares	D f	Mean Square	F	S i g
Corrected Model	1.420 ^a	3	.710	5.571	.000
Intercept	15.741	395	15.741	123.467	.000
Pre Reten Method	1.420	2	1.420	11.141	.001
Error	31.236	5604	.127		.948
Total Corrected	2191.525	5608			
Total	32.656	5607			

a. R Squared = .004 (Adjusted R Squared = .984)

From Table 4, the p-value for the group is 0.000. Hence, $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the mean retention scores of students taught Social Studies with dramatization, discussion, and inquiry methods. This simply means that the students who were exposed to the dramatization method had higher scores in the Social Studies retention test that was delivered during this period than those students in the other two groups.

Research question 3: What is the interaction effect of teaching methods and school location on students' academic performance in Social Studies?

Table 5 shows the interaction effect of teaching methods and school location on students' academic performance in Social Studies and is shown in Figure 1.

Table 5: Interaction effect of teaching methods and school location on students' academic performance in Social Studies

Estimated Marginal Means of Performance	Urban Schools	Rural Schools
0.00	-	-
46.00	39.00	30.00
48.00	37.00	34.00
50.00	33.00	36.00
53.00	26.00	39.00

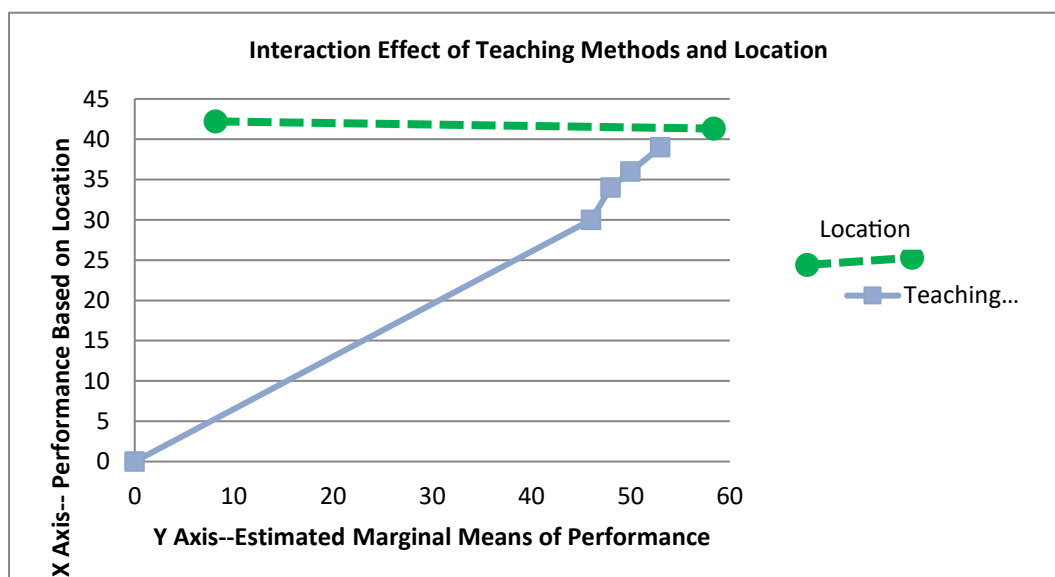


Figure 1: Interaction effect of teaching methods and school locations on students' academic performance in Social Studies.

From Figure 1, the lines represent the teaching methods in both urban and rural areas. The blue line represents the location of students, while the green line represents the teaching methods. The dots at the edge of the lines represent the mean scores of urban and rural students. The dots at the edge of the lines represent the mean scores of urban and rural students for each teaching method. The lines are not parallel, and they slightly cross each other. Hence, there is a slight interaction effect of teaching methods and school location on students' academic performance in Social Studies. The post-ANCOVA EMM output is shown in Table 6:

Table 6: Post-ANCOVA EMM output

Group	Estimate	Std. Error	Df	F-value	p-value
Dramatization	12.5	1.2	5606	2.3	0.03
Discussion	11.8	1.1	5606	1.6	0.01
Inquiry	10.2	1.2	5606	1.6	0.02

Based on the post-ANCOVA EMM output, we can conclude that teaching methods have an interaction effect on school location and students' academic performance in Social Studies.

Hypothesis 3: There is no interaction effect of teaching methods and school location on students' academic performance in Social Studies. The summary of the result is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Summary of ANCOVA Result of Interaction Effect of Teaching Method and School Location on Students' Achievement.

S o u r c e	Type III Sum of squares	d f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3 1 2 7 1 . 9 1 1 ^a	3	1 0 4 2 3 . 9 7 0	7 3 . 4 0 8	. 0 0 0
I n t e r c e p t	2 7 8 0 8 2 1 . 8 3 4	1	2 7 8 0 8 2 1 . 8 3 4	1 9 5 8 3 . 1 4 4	. 0 0 0
G r o u p	2 5 7 8 7 . 0 9 6	1	2 5 7 8 7 . 0 9 6	1 8 1 . 5 9 8	. 0 0 0
L o c a t i o n	1 3 4 9 . 8 6 9	1	1 3 4 9 . 8 6 9	9 . 5 0 6	. 0 0 2
Group * Location	1 2 7 7 . 7 9 1	1	1 2 7 7 . 7 9 1	8 . 9 9 8	. 0 0 3
E r r o r	6 3 4 7 4 . 3 5 0	5 6 0 4	1 1 1 5 . 0 0 1		
T o t a l	3 0 8 4 9 4 3 . 0 0 0	5 6 0 8			

a. R Squared = .330 (Adjusted R Squared = .326)

From Table 7, the p-value for Group* Location is 0.03. Hence, $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant interaction effect of teaching methods and school location on students' academic performance in Social Studies. This simply means that the teaching method and school location interact with each other to create a specific combined effect on students' academic performance in Social Studies.

Research question 4: What is the interaction effect of teaching methods and gender on students' retention in Social Studies?

Table 8 shows the interaction effect of gender on students' retention in Social Studies and is displayed in Figure 2.

Table 8: Interaction effect of gender on students’ retention in Social Studies

Estimated Marginal Means of Retention	Male			Female		
	Demonstration	Discussion	Inquiry	Demonstration	Discussion	Inquiry
0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
21.00	39.00	25.00	26.00	30.00	23.00	20.00
26.00	37.00	26.00	28.00	34.00	24.00	21.00
32.00	33.00	28.00	29.00	36.00	26.00	26.00
37.00	29.00	29.00	31.00	39.00	29.00	27.00

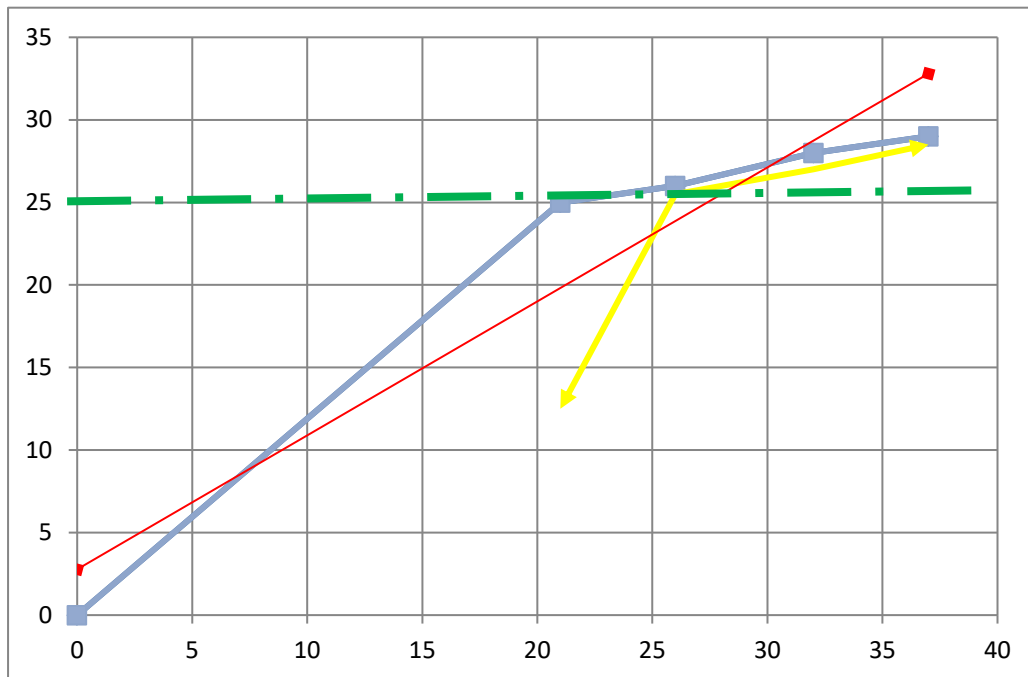


Figure 2: Interaction effect of gender on retention.

From Figure 2, the lines represent the teaching methods used for both male and female students. On the X axis, the blue line represents the dramatization, the red one discussion, while the yellow line represents inquiry. The dots at the edge of the lines represent the mean scores of male and female students for each teaching method represented by the Y-axis. The lines are not parallel, and they intersect each other. Hence, there is an interaction effect of teaching methods and gender on students’ retention in Social Studies. The post-ANCOVA EMM output is shown in Table 9.

Table 9: The post-ANCOVA EMM output of interaction effect of teaching methods and gender on students’ retention in Social Studies

Group	Estimate	Std. Error	df	F-value	p-value
Dramatization	8.11	0.33	5606	1.54	0.00
Discussion	7.22	0.15	5606	1.11	0.02
Inquiry	4.57	0.24	5606	1.32	0.04

Based on the post-ANCOVA EMM output, we can conclude that gender has an interaction effect on retention in Social Studies.

Hypothesis 4: There is no interaction effect of teaching methods and gender on students' retention in Social Studies.

Table 10: Summary of ANCOVA Result of Interaction Effect of Teaching Method and Gender on Students' Retention

S o u r c e	Type III Sum of squares	d f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	39543.968 ^a	3	13181.323	106.736	.000
I n t e r c e p t	2602552.025	1	2602552.025	21074.138	.000
G r o u p	15603.851	1	15603.851	126.352	.000
G e n d e r	7007.302	1	7007.302	56.742	.000
Group * Gender	5107.729	1	5107.729	41.360	.000
E r r o r	55202.293	5604	123.495		
T o t a l	3084943.000	5608			

a. R Squared = .417 (Adjusted R Squared = .413)

From Table 10, the p-value for Group*Gender is 0.00. Hence, $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant interaction effect of teaching methods and gender on students' retention in Social Studies. This simply means that the teaching method and gender combine in such a way to give a difference specific effect on male and female students' retention in Social Studies.

5. Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study reveals that students taught Social Studies with the dramatization method had higher academic achievement scores than those taught with discussion and inquiry methods. This implies that dramatization has a higher potential of affecting students' achievement than other methods of teaching. This finding agrees with Ikwumelu (2019), who found that dramatization could increase students' engagement and motivation by making the learning process enjoyable and interactive, indicating that the dramatization method could help learners to easily remember what they have been taught and make learning more meaningful. Ukume and Agbiny (2019) recommend that dramatization should be employed in teaching, especially in the basic education section, as it can enhance students' academic performance.

The second finding of the study reveals that students taught Social Studies with the dramatization method had higher retention scores than those taught with discussion and inquiry methods. This implies that dramatization has a higher capacity of enhancing students' retention than other methods of teaching. This finding agrees with Ugwu et al. (2017), who found that students taught using dramatization had higher retention scores than their counterparts taught with other methods. This agrees with Sweet and Michaelsen (2023), who opine that dramatization involves transforming a text, book, or event into a play that becomes exciting and stimulating, thereby facilitating the acquisition of skills by the learner. To facilitate learning and retention, the dramatization method employs imaginative powers that assist learners in exploring new horizons of knowledge. It presents the learner as an active participant in the process of learning, which could lead to high performance and retention as compared to other methods of teaching.

The study also found that there was an interaction effect of teaching methods and location on students' academic performance in Social Studies and that there is an interaction effect of teaching methods and gender on students'

retention in Social Studies. These findings corroborate previous findings by York et al. (2019), who found that there is an interaction effect of teaching methods and location on students' academic performance as well as teaching methods and gender on students' retention in school subjects.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has found out that there is a statistically significant mean difference in the achievement and retention scores of Basic 8 students taught Social Studies using dramatization and those taught with discussion and inquiry methods of teaching. To ensure that Basic 8 students come out with high achievement and retention scores and are capable of competing favorably in the labor market at the international scene at the same time displaying elements of national consciousness and unity, efforts must be put in place to ensure the best teaching methods are employed during their programs, hence, the following recommendations.

- i Teachers of Social Studies should often utilize dramatization as the instructional strategy as it has been found to have a higher potential in enhancing students' academic performance and retention in the subject matter.
- ii The school management should frequently organize workshops and seminars on the application of the dramatization method in the teaching of Social Studies so that they will be constantly using it in teaching the subject matter to facilitate students' academic performance and retention.

Declarations

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate:

Informed consent, both verbal and written, was obtained from all participants before data collection. The study was conducted with full transparency.

Consent for Publication:

All authors consent to the publication of this manuscript and confirm that the work is original, has not been published elsewhere, and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Competing Interests:

The authors declare no competing interests related to this study.

Funding:

This research work was funded by Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), Abuja, Nigeria.

Data Availability:

The datasets generated and analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Authors' Contributions:

Bam C: Conceptualization, methodology, and manuscript drafting. Bam C, Iorkaan S.K: Data collection, analysis, and figure preparation. Bam C, Iorkaan S.K: Literature review and critical manuscript revision. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Acknowledgments:

The authors thank the editor and the entire editorial team of *Convergence: Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Innovation* for their support and understanding.

REFERENCES

- Abosede, O.O. (2014). *Effect of self-directed learning and collaborative task methods on junior secondary school students' learning outcomes in Social Studies in Oyo state.* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Ibadan).
- Adeyemi, M.B. (2014). *Social Studies in Nigeria: Social Studies in Africa education.* Gaborone: Pyramid Publishing.
- Barton, K. C., & Avery, P. G. (2016). Research on Social Studies education: Diverse students, settings, and methods. In *Handbook of research on teaching* (5th ed., pp. 985-1038). DOI: 10.3102/978-0-935302-48-6-16
- Benue State Examinations Board (2022). Makurdi: Department of Statistics, Benue State Exams Board.
- Benue State Universal Basic Education Board (2025). Makurdi: Department of Statistics, Benue State Universal Basic Education Board.
- Dania, P. O. (2014). Effect of gender on students' academic achievement in secondary school social studies. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 5(21), 78-84.
- Emaikwu, R.E. (2015) *Fundamentals of research methods and statistics.* Makurdi: Destiny Publishers LTD
- Federal Government of Nigeria (2014). *National policy on education.* Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Grace-Odeleye, B. (2020). Integrated support strategies for promotion of students' retention and achievement during first years of college. *International Journal of Contemporary Education*, 3(1), 9-22. RePEcfa:ijcejlv:y:2020:1: p:9-22
- Ikwumelu, S.N. (2019). *Social studies education in Nigeria.* Outrite Publishers.
- Imoko, B. I., & Jimin, N. (2016). Effects of inquiry-based learning on students' achievement in geometric construction. *Journal of Science, Technology, Mathematics and Entrepreneurial Education*, 1(1), 42-49.
- Issaka, M. (2024). Effect of inquiry-based teaching method on students' achievements and retention of concepts in integrated science in senior high school. *Texila International Journal of Academic Reserch*, 7 (2), 2520-3088.
- Mezieobi, D.I., & Edinyang,S.D. (2013). Social Studies: An introduction. In Edinyang, S.D., Mezieobi, D. I., & Ubi, E.I(Eds). *Selected themes in Social Studies Education.*
- Mezieobi DI, Ogaugwu, L. Ossai, J. & Young S (2013). Agenda for A Transformative Implementation Of Social Studies Curriculum in Nigeria University. *Development Country Student* 3(12), 100-112.
- Muhammad, L. & Alkali, H.S. (2022). Comparison of lecture and discussion methods on academic performance of students offering Physics. *International Journal of Research in Education and Sustainable Development*, 2 (11) 2782-7666.
- Olalekan, A. B. (2016). Influence of peer group relationship on the academic performance of students in secondary schools: A case study of selected secondary schools in Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo State. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science*, 16(4), 89-94.
- Piaget, J. (1950). *The development of thought: Equilibrium of cognitive structure.* New York: Viking.
- Shah, R. K. (2019). Effective constructivist teaching and learning in the classroom. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 7(4), 1-13. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34293/education v7i4.600>
- Shamija, T.A. (2015). *Social Studies education: An introductory text.* Makurdi: Selfers Academic Press Limited.
- Suharsiwi, S., Usmiyatun, U., & Siddique, M. (2023). Current social studies learning: Technology-based learning media for character education. *AMCA Journal of Science and Technology*, 3(2).20-34.
- Ugwu,I., Jatau, A & Gwamna,S.K. (2020). Impact of discussion method on performance and retention in Biology among senior secondary school students in Katsina education zone, Katsina state, Nigeria.
- York, T. T., Gibson, C., & Rankin, S. (2019). Defining and measuring academic success. *Journal of Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation*, 20(5), 5-28