
Use of Instructional Materials for Teaching Social Studies

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Abstract

Instructional materials are both human and non-human resources used in teaching and learning activities. Social studies is an integrated subject that encompasses various subjects, such as economic, social, and cultural activities, but this subject can effectively be taught by using instructional materials. The main purpose of this paper is to enlist and describe various instructional materials used while teaching social studies in the classroom. The study was descriptive in nature. Secondary sources such as reports, books, journals, magazines and articles were used to achieve purposes of the study. Textbooks, magazines, newspaper, table, graphs, maps, radio, television are the instructional materials used during teaching social studies. Social studies are centered to old tradition in their teaching-learning activities. As social studies subject is multi-dimensional subject, it is better to use useful teaching materials to make teaching-learning activities effective, easy and long lasting.

Keywords: effective teaching, instructional materials, integrated subject, social studies

Introduction

Students were taught including various aspects of religious, behavioral and social life in ancient period in our country. The subjects like history and geography were included in the curriculum of social studies in S.L.C. of 1990 B.S (Kaiyum, 2068). Although social education was included in the curriculum of college of education in 2011 B.S., it was implemented in primary level only in 2017 B.S. National Education System Plan, 2028 made it more orderly. Big change was seen in the country after the movement of 2047 B.S. Realizing the necessity of restructuring the education system, National Education Council 2049 was formed. Analyzing the past curriculum, this council recommended the necessity and importance of new curriculum including the suggestion of keeping social education in the curriculum up to secondary level.

According to the report of National Education Council, Class 1 to 5 were classified as primary level (Luitel, 2068). This report included 600 full marks social education subjects in class 1-3 and 700 full marks social education subjects in class 4-5. The social education of class 1-3 was integrated with environment and health education. Social education of 100 marks was kept in the curriculum of class 4 and 5. This education divided class 6, 7 and 8 as lower secondary level.

The curriculum of secondary level was changed in 2056 (Kaiyum, 2068). After this change, there were only the subjects of 800 full marks in the curriculum and social education subject was of 100 marks. Subjects of social science were kept as the optional. Social studies were in the list of optional subjects in class 12. One subject was also kept from the nature. These both subjects were each of 100 full marks. Tribhuvan University had kept 'Nepal Parichaya' which was similar to social studies in proficiency certificate level. Similarly, this

university kept 'Social Studies Teaching' of 100 full marks in B. Ed. as optional subject. The modification of school education in 2073 has divided school level into two levels i.e. basic and secondary levels. Class 1-8 are included in basic level and class 9-12 are included in secondary level.

Now social studies have been taught as a compulsory subject upto class 10 and optional subject in class 11 and 12. Curriculum has been developed by Curriculum Development Center by including the teaching policy of Nepal government. To make students understand the subject matters included in the curriculum and useful in their life in the today's context, use of teaching materials are very important. Generally, description, discussion, question-answer method, group work, exploratory method, survey method, field trip method, etc. are used during the teaching of social studies. To make teaching-learning activities effective, various teaching materials, flannel board, pocket chart, word chart, slides, film strip, etc. can be used. Similarly, audial materials like radio, tape recorder, gramophone, telephone etc. are also useful materials. In the same way, audio-visual materials like television, film, video, etc. are also useful in the teaching of social studies. Use of these materials facilitate teachers in teaching and students in understanding the subject matters in better manner.

In relation to this study necessary to find out either social studies subject is suitable and practical in social life or not. Similarly, it is difficult to use of teaching materials in social studies classroom and teaching materials used while teaching social studies. As present society and world is changeable, new exploration, research and scientific invention have caused to change in the field of education. The old structural subject's curriculum has to be changed to develop knowledge, skill and capacity in students as per the changing time. As a result, it cannot fulfill the interest and necessity of the students.

The curriculum of any subject is changed according to the change of time and context (Jabara, 2067). After the political change in the country, republic democratic system has established in Nepal. As a result, the curriculum of social studies also has been changed. To make that changed curriculum effective, it is necessary to use different appropriate teaching materials that help to develop skill and knowledge of students. Regarding this scenario, the main purpose of this study is to enlist and describe instruction materials that are used during teaching social studies in the classroom.

Methods

The study was descriptive in nature. Secondary sources such as books, reports, journals, magazines, and articles were reviewed to complete the study.

Results and Discussions

Based on the review of different secondary sources, the results are presented in this section.

Status of Teaching Social Studies Instructional Materials

Various subject matters related to economic, social and cultural activities of human beings are included in social studies. To teach them effectively, only textbook is not enough. Various teaching materials are needed to teach subject matters included in this subject. Teachers can use the teaching materials that are either available in the classroom or taken by themselves. These materials help to effectively present subject matters in the classroom and help students to precisely understand.

As social studies are multi-dimensional subject, it includes the subject matters from various areas. As a result, various teaching materials are required to teach these multi-

dimensional subject matters. The teaching materials generally used while teaching social studies are categorized as textual materials, visual materials, audio materials and audio-visual materials.

Instructional Materials for Teaching Social Studies

Textual materials are written in script. Students can read the textual materials and try to understand what message has been carried by it. These materials are collected/ prepared by the teachers to make students study. Textbooks, reference books, dictionary, newspapers, magazines, booklet, pamphlets, etc. are included under this type of teaching materials. Some of the important textual used while teaching social studies as mentioned by Adhikari (2066) are discussed below.

Textbooks

Textbook is the most important and most used teaching material. It is textual type of teaching materials. Due to the availability of textbooks of each subject, it is very easy for the schools and colleges to teach their students. Textbooks are developed as per the level, interest capacity of the target readers.

Reference Books

Books that can be used as reference for teaching/learning any subject matters are called reference books. It is textual type of teaching materials. These books provide the information required on subject matters for the learner. Reference books are the best tools for the researcher as they have to explore in detail about the topic on which they are going to do research.

Newspapers

Newspapers are very important textual teaching materials for teaching social studies. Newspapers publish news and events which are the very important subject matters of social studies. Use of these teaching materials make the class interesting to learn for the students as well. Getting news through authentic means also make students remember the subject matters for long time. Students can get the news regarding society, economy, political events, sports, etc. Using newspapers help to increase the general knowledge within students as well. So, these materials are important for developing ability and knowledge within the students.

Magazines

Magazines are also important textual teaching materials similar to newspapers. Magazines are published after certain interval of time. So, magazines can be weekly, monthly, quarterly, half yearly or yearly. They can include political, economic, literary, cultural, etc. information within them. Similarly, magazine can be for children, adult, women, etc. as well. The magazine carries the information of those for whom they are published. Magazines also publish pictures, charts, graphs, etc. which can be used while teaching as well. Magazines may carry more information that is necessary for teachers, if they are published targeting for teachers of certain subject as well. Due to these reasons, magazines are very important teaching materials.

Visual Materials

Visual materials are shown to the students during teaching-learning activities. Teachers can collect/prepare the visual documents and take to the class as per the subject matters so that students see the materials and understand what message has been carried by that visual materials. These materials make teacher easy to teach. Similarly, students learning will also be long lasting. As a result, teaching-learning activities will be effective for both

teachers and students. Flannel board, bulletin, chart, graphs, maps, globe, pictures, posters, post cards, etc. are included under this type of teaching materials. Some of the important visual teaching materials used while teaching social studies are discussed below:

Table

Table is a tool to show set of figures or facts in columns. It is visual type of materials. Subject matters are systematically presented in the table. Subject matters are shown in brief, comparison among the subject matters, organization form and/or sequential order of subject matters. Various forms of tables like organizational chart, division chart, tabulation chart, etc. are used especially in social studies.

Maps

Map is visual type of materials. It signifies the picture of the surface of the earth. Map may be of any country or continent or seas and oceans. Map can show houses, temples, rivers, lakes, roads or any natural resources that are available anywhere on the surface of the earth. It can also present the political division like zones, districts, municipalities/rural municipalities. As geography has been included as the part of social studies in the curriculum of school level, this is very important teaching material. Maps that show the natural resources, political division, economic division, etc. are used in the classroom of social studies.

Graphs

Graphs are also visual teaching materials that show the subject matters symbolically in the pictorial form. Graphs make easy to show the comparison, increment-decrement ratio, etc. Bar graph, pie chart, line graph, etc. are used to present subject matters in social studies.

Audial Materials

Audial materials are generally prepared by the teacher to make students listen and understand the subject matters. Specifically, these materials are used to show the authenticity of the knowledge included in the curriculum or textbooks. For example, teacher can play the materials broadcasted from distance or recorded and let the students listen. Radio, record player, gramophone, etc. are included under this type of teaching materials. Some of the audial materials of social studies are discussed below:

Radio

Radio is one of the very important materials of social studies. It is one of the medium of audial news for the common people. Every day's news, interview with recognized people in history, geography, politics, etc. are some of the programs that students can listen on the radio. Teacher should convince students to listen these useful programs rather than taking radio in the classroom because programs in radio are broadcasted on their own schedule and it may not be suitable for the teachers to play in the class.

Record Player

Record player is another audial material which can be used as teaching materials. It is more useful teachers and students than radio because teacher can record useful news or any other audial subject matters and play for the students in the classroom.

Audio-Visual Materials

Audio-visual materials include audio along with visual scenes. Students can watch and listen these materials at the same time. Television, films, drama, videos, documentaries,

etc. are included under this type of teaching materials. Some of these audio-visual materials are briefly discussed below:

Television

Television is one of the audio-visual materials which is very common to the people especially in the places where there is access of electricity. Teacher can convince students to watch news or any other programs related to history, geography, politics, etc. on television so that they can learn many things from there. Teacher may tell the name of programs or channels along with the time and tell the students watch it.

Video

Teacher can show video of certain programs to the students in the classroom. It will be easy for them to show if projector is available there. Teacher can search the program especially related to geography, history, etc. and show to the students so that they can memorize for a long time. Even useful and topic related dramas, documentaries, films, etc. can be taken to the class and played to the students by the teacher.

Effective Way of Using Teaching Materials

Teachers use teaching materials in social studies to make their teaching-learning activities effective. These materials can be used on the basis of necessity and suitability. As being a dynamic subject, its subject matters go on changing according to the change of time. Single book cannot give all information necessary for the students. So, it is necessary for the teachers to find out necessary and suitable materials as per the subject matters. Due to that reason, varieties of teaching materials are prepared and used to make the teaching effective in social studies. The effective way of using of some specific teaching materials is discussed below:

Complement Text Materials

Social studies subject is one of the changeable subject. The subject matters and textbook of this subject are changed time and again to include the change in the society according to the change of time. Due to that reason, teacher of this subject has to prepare the subject matters by using various sources and collect the information for any particular subject matters. For this reason, complement text materials are useful. Teacher has pay attention in following things while using complement text materials of social studies in the classroom.

Teacher has to tell students time and again about various text materials available while teaching. Teacher has to tell about the sources where students can get information about specific subject matters. Teacher has to tell students to note down important facts and message while teaching. Teacher has to develop the habit in students of going to the library as per the need and study available materials there. Teacher has to encourage the students discuss about the information they have noted down after studying the complement/reference books. Teacher has to tell students about the source, characteristics, advantages/disadvantages of those materials.

Blackboard/Whiteboard

The most used teaching material while teaching social studies is blackboard/whiteboard. Blackboard/whiteboard is hung on the wall at the front of every classroom. As the color of this board is black, we call it blackboard; however, whiteboard or board in any other color can also be used. Teacher has to pay attention over the following things while using blackboard:

- Blackboard/whiteboard should be hung on the place where it is visible for all the students of the classroom.
- Teacher has to use blackboard/whiteboard to write the subject matters on which they want to clarify to their students.
- Teacher has to use blackboard/whiteboard to write main points about which he/she is discussing about.
- Teacher may draw pictures on it as well if necessary.
- Teachers may write main theme of the text on it.

Flannel Board

Flannel board is prepared by use the flannel cloth. This board can be used to show different teaching materials like pictures, graphs, charts, posters, etc. prepared by the teachers. Different teaching materials can be pasted by using nail on it so that students can see on it. So it is taken as one of the useful teaching materials in the class of social studies. Teacher has to pay attention over the following things while using flannel board:

- The size of the flannel should be suitable as per the size of the classroom.
- Simple clothes can also be used to make this type of board.
- These board should be hung at the place in the classroom where students can see clearly.
- Only necessary teaching materials have to be hung on this board.
- Teacher has to place the materials on this board orderly.

Bulletin Board

Every school keeps bulletin board nowadays. Materials that could be used in teaching are written or typed and pasted on this board. Similarly, maps, information regarding different events, cartoon pictures, etc. prepared by the students can also be pasted on this board.

Only useful materials have to be pasted on this board, the materials pasted on this board should be clean and clear, teaching materials should be pasted in order according to the subject matters, and necessary materials only should be pasted on this board are some points that teacher has to pay attention while using bulletin board.

Atlas

Geographical maps are included in atlas. It also includes size, distance, political division, available natural resources, etc. of various geographical areas. As many colors are used to represent various matters in it, students feel easy to learn from it. The teacher has to pay attention on some aspects such as there should be enough symbols in the atlas, diverse colors should be used in atlas to show varieties of things, there should be enough maps necessary for the students of certain level for whom it has been prepared, and clarity of order, list and topic of the maps while using atlas.

Charts

We use charts to present the information in comparative, divisional and/or organizational manner. Charts are used to make information easily visualize within the learners. Charts can be used for the following reasons while teaching social studies in the classroom:

- Charts should be used to show suitable subject matters.
- Charts should be big, clear and attractive so that all the students can see and understand it.
- Charts can be shown by pasting on the flannel board.
- Teacher has to explain the subject matters that is presented in the form of chart to the students.

Model Objects

Model objects are the things that we can find in the locality. These objects may be pieces of wood, iron, rocks, etc. Showing the students, the real object while teaching make them memorize the knowledge for long time. Model objects brought by the teachers should be suitable to the subject matters. Teacher has to pay attention in following matters while using model object:

- Model objects should be of appropriate size so that students can see clearly in the classroom.
- Model objects should be related to the local environment.
- Model objects should be according to the level of the students.
- While using model objects, teacher has to identify the suitable circumstance so that students can understand in better manner.

Quality of Instructional Materials for Affective Social Studies Teaching

Various teaching materials can be used in the class of social studies. Some teaching materials can be used frequently whereas some teaching materials can only be used while teaching specific topics. So, it is necessary for the teachers to identify the effectiveness of teaching materials while teaching the particular topic. Along with the suitability of the teaching materials, teachers also have to give attention on size, color, clarity, etc. Some of the quality of good teaching materials are given below:

Objective of subject matter, clarity, usability, size, level of students, validity, knowledgeable and availability are important qualities of instructional materials that should be considered while teaching (Adhikari, 2066).

Conclusion

Although 21st century is science and technology friendly, many teachers and students of social studies are centered to old tradition in their teaching-learning activities. It is better to identify the present time and move ahead. As social studies subject is multi-dimensional subject, it is better to use useful teaching materials such as textbooks, magazines, newspaper, table, graphs, maps, radio, television, charts, atlas, bulletin board, flannel board, and model object to make teaching-learning activities effective, easy and long lasting. Usability, availability, validity, clarity and appropriate size are the important qualities of instructional materials that should be considered while teaching social studies in the classroom. Today's time also demands that teacher has to prepare the appropriate teaching materials according to the subject matters of social studies and use them in their classroom so that students will find their classroom learning friendly.

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