

COMPARING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DISCUSSION AND INQUIRY METHODS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND ENGAGEMENT IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

¹OLUKOYA, Tajudeen O, ²SANNI, Mufutau Olayiwola, ³JIMOH Akinola Saliu &
⁴SHEKONI Lateef

¹0004-2266-4665, +2348064975055, olukoyatajudeen@gmail.com; ²0000-0003-0233-3020,
+2347066350396, mufutau.sanni@lasu.edu.ng; ³ +2347037288861, lashek8@gmail.com; ⁴0000-
0001-8066-0049, +2348033310592, akinola.jimoh@lasu.edu.ng

Department of Language, Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Lagos State
University, Lagos, Nigeria.

Abstract

The study compares the effectiveness of discussion and inquiry methods on academic performance and engagement in junior secondary social studies classroom. The importance of teaching cannot be overstated, as it exposes learners to a body of knowledge that affects lives in different ways. However, the method the teacher employs in teaching determines how quickly students can comprehend what the teacher teaches. Therefore, the study adopted a quasi-experimental design. Although the control group received instruction using the standard conventional manner, the experimental group received instruction using discussion and inquiry methods. All junior secondary schools in the Amuwo-Odofin Local Government Area of Lagos State made up the study's population, and 200 students were chosen at random. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients for the Social Studies Achievement Test, which was utilised as the instrument for data collection, were 0.78. Using the independent sample t-test and descriptive statistics (simple percentages, the data acquired were evaluated. The study found a considerable impact of the discussion-based teaching style on students' proficiency in Social Studies. The study also found a significant impact of the inquiry teaching style on students' Social Studies proficiency. It was recommended that Social Studies teachers should use the discussion method during their lessons to improve students' performance in Social Studies, and they should also use the inquiry method, as it also aids students' learning in no small measure.

Keywords: Conventional method, discussion method, inquiry method, and Social Studies.

Introduction

One of the main techniques used to evaluate a candidate's performance or progress in the educational system is assessment. Assessment is crucial to the growth and process of education. One method of evaluating students is through tests, which may be objective or essay-based. The teacher's role is vital in educating, training and nurturing students in the school setting. The success of students in Social Studies can be determined by the teacher's method of teaching and the materials used to carry out teaching activities.

Various teaching-learning techniques are created to speed up students' learning. At the moment, passive student behaviour during lessons and a teacher-dominated classroom atmosphere are the majority of school practices in use in Nigeria (Emaiku, 2013). Researchers and educators from all over the world are paying close attention to how teaching methods affect students' performance. How students are taught has a significant impact on what they learn (Abdu-lhamid, 2013). According to Hassan (2002), teaching methods are the approaches, methodologies, and strategies that a teacher uses to

successfully carry out his lesson. (Daluba, 2013). The tools a teacher uses to accomplish the predetermined aims and objectives are called teaching methods. Students use learning techniques to increase their understanding of new material (Liu, 2009). According to Harrison et al (2003) research, students who use the right learning techniques when doing academic assignments perform better than those who do not. In Social Studies classes, a variety of learning techniques are employed to assist students in overcoming some of the obstacles to learning.

The performance of students in Social Studies is not encouraging despite the use of conventional teaching methods. Students have trouble learning because they must fully understand the concept and principles of the subject, which are sometimes impossible to see or difficult to comprehend. In enhancing students' academic performance in Social Studies, teaching and learning methods such as the inquiry method, problem solving, discussion method, cooperative method, simulation method, and many others have been developed to make learning more meaningful and less complex.

To promote students' thinking, learning, problem-solving, knowledge, or appreciation of literature, teachers and students can engage in several open-ended, collaborative discussion techniques (Wilkinson, 2010). According to Derek (2017), discussion is seen as an effective teaching method for fostering higher-order thinking abilities in students so they can evaluate, analyse, and manipulate data. Learners participate actively in discussions rather than being passive recipients of knowledge from an instructor. The discussion method of instruction involves both the teacher and the students or learners in the learning procedure or activities.

The discussion method is an interactive learning process that encourages learners to think critically and creatively at higher cognitive levels. The use of this method, according to Mezeiobi (2018), is a consensus learning and encourages participatory learning where participants put their ideas together and contribute meaningful ideas that can help conclude a topic. The teacher and the students debate the issue's benefits and drawbacks before coming to a concrete decision. The teacher and the students debate the issue's advantages and disadvantages before coming to a concrete decision. As a result, "discussion involves a deliberate evaluation of relationships involved in the topic or problem under study. These relationships need to be examined, contrasted, and evaluated before conclusions can be reached. The facts that will be analysed must be stated or listed for the discussion. Simple assertions without supporting data are of little use in discussion. According to Bridges (2019) in Dilion (1984), for a discussion to be appropriate or effective, the subject must be open for discussion, the discussants must be open-minded, the discussion must be open to all points of view, it must be open to anyone, the time limit must be flexible and unpredictable, and the discussion's goals and procedures must be clearly stated and unbounded by the need to reach a specific conclusion. Since the instructor takes on the position of a co-learner during the learning process, the instructor's role is facilitative, coaching, simulative, and provocative in ways that enable learners to participate in critical and creative thinking, analysis, and synthesis of ideas. Successful facilitators, according to Tenant, Philip, and Tough (2019), should see themselves as participating in a dialogue between equals, be open to change and new experiences, be genuine when establishing personal relationships with students rather than consistently adhering to the instructor's prescribed roles, be able to accept and trust the student as a valuable human being, and have empathy for the learners' point of view.

According to Okogu (2013), the majority of studies have demonstrated the importance of discussion methods in the teaching and learning of Social Studies due to the nature of education. Naturally, group discussion is facilitated by Social Studies instruction. The majority of the topics mentioned are societal issues and everyday events that touch both teachers and students equally. The discussion method of instruction was defined by Bello (2017) as verbal exchange of views, thoughts, or ideas between two or more persons. The discussion approach is used in this activity, in which the teacher assigns a topic for the class to discuss. They give the issue significant thought, engage in democratic discussion, make recommendations, and reach a conclusion. A brief conversation among the students may occasionally occur during a lesson where another method is predominantly used. This could be a drill or a way to emphasise something. While Ajaja (2009) described the method as a planned, preset process of instruction, he was in favour of its application.

The application of this methodology is viewed as a pre-planned educational experience. As a result, some research suggests that using this strategy requires careful planning beforehand. According to Callahan and Clark (2017), the instructor must first think about the topic to make sure it is open-ended and can be viewed from a variety of perspectives before preparing to employ the discussion approach. The subject should be understandable and at the learner's level. This indicates that the students should be able to discuss it. Formal and informal are the two main kinds that Kochhar (2015) defined. Informal conversations, such as debates, panels, symposia, etc., are guided by a predetermined set of norms. While formal conversations may include a large group they may also be broken into smaller groups to discuss themes.

They are not subject to a pre-established set of regulations. A small-group discussion is preferable to a class-wide debate. By allowing for unrestricted engagement, it motivates more students to express their own opinions. Little groups of four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine students are given a task or subject to discuss before reporting back. There should be a group leader in charge of overseeing the discussion in each group and reporting back on what was said. The group setting arrangements should be made such that students are at ease, can hear each other clearly, and can see each other. A well-planned conversation should follow general rules, and the instructor should comprehend the subject matter, substance, and objectives of the lesson to be discussed. In order to encourage open conversation, the instructor's method of instruction must be expressed clearly and effectively. Instructors shouldn't make fun of or denigrate students; instead, they should pique their attention by making encouraging remarks and preventing outspoken group members from dominating the conversation. A teacher who supports shy and reticent students is doing more good than harm by giving the student a chance to participate. Rahman (2011) asserts that the instructor must strike a balance between directing the group and encouraging participation.

The idea of a discussion is to encourage students to engage in a deliberate conversation about the course topic. Instead of providing information, the instructor moderates the dialogue. The teacher shouldn't speak exclusively during the discussion for it to be meaningful, or talk to one learner at a time. It should be kept in mind that the conversation is an opportunity for the students to contribute ideas, not merely for the instructor to communicate with them. The instructor's duty in a discussion is not to be in charge; rather, it is to initiate it, define objectives, summarise, mediate, and make sure everyone is heard. Rahman et al. (2017) suggested the following duties for an instructor in a discussion: I.

Ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to participate. It was emphasised that after a question was given, the instructor should wait for someone to respond to it. Occasionally, the instructor may try having students write down their responses, which would give more reserved students time to gather their thoughts before speaking.

These aid in organising and maintaining the direction of the class's conclusions. The correct parts of a learner's comments should be reiterated by the instructor. By expanding on a learner's ideas, deferring judgment until after several learners have spoken, or writing multiple responses on the board and allowing the students to organise them, the teacher can demonstrate attention. Summarise their points and relate them to the initial questions that were given at the start of the session as you wrap up the lesson. It enables students to form their own judgments and aids in structuring and analysing them. Also, it enables tolerance of opposition. This in turn allows students to support interpretations but disagree with their opponent(s) or conclusion(s), and to help structure and analyse them. This is because, naturally, conversations, most especially open conversations and discussions, call for learners to disagree with interpretation, opposition, or conclusion while supporting their claims. It's sometimes more necessary to learn what the students are considering and how they will reply to a topic than to exert immediate control. A good classroom technique, particularly when employing discussion, should be explorative, evocative, experimental, immersive, challenging, and involved to elicit the most response from each learner, according to Majasan (2017), Perrott (2014), and Clement (2013).

The pragmatic/constructivist instructor, according to Agatha (2004), should not be an authoritarian figure but rather a major organiser and regulator of learners' learning activities. When the instructor is not an authoritarian, this will create an environment where students will view themselves as coworkers with their teacher who together devise plans, discover goals, share experiences, see connections in what they learn, and evaluate their progress. Also, Learners would be steered toward accomplishments that bring them satisfaction, challenge, and new interests while taking individual variances into account. Indeed, when Learner-centered learning and teaching methods are practiced, the instructor's main responsibility is to inspire and direct students. The learning atmosphere should be one in which the students as groups are in control rather than the instructor and where everyone feels safe and can contribute. Thus, it is the responsibility of the teachers to exhaust every effort to place each learner in a group where they would advance academically. Teachers have a lot of impact on the success of learners and so, teaching should be a process that aids in the identification and growth of others' latent talents. Therefore, it is the job of the instructor to guide students to achieve success in the activities they find enjoyable or have a strength in. In order to promote learning, the educational process should identify the reasons why people learn slowly or don't learn at all and figure out how to help them do so (Vannier, 2014), as discussed in Carew (2002).

On the other hand, an inquiry model, which is best used in the learning process, was one of the strategies recommended in the 2013 curriculum. With the help of this model, students learn how to identify issues and then use science to fix them. The constructivist theory or inquiry technique refers to an active learning process in which students create new ideas or concepts based on prior knowledge and experience. The use of intellectual inquiry, according to Derek (2017), is a method of learning with students on how to locate and arrange the concepts and principles into an order of significance based on the student. According to Kardi (2013), inquiry is a form of learning intended to educate students how

to analyse problems and questions that are founded on facts. The process of investigating and discovering is highlighted by the inquiry paradigm. According to this paradigm, a teacher serves as a facilitator who helps students learn while students' roles are to seek out and discover their solutions in a subject. Generally speaking, inquiry is a process that includes observation, formulating pertinent questions, critically evaluating books and other information sources, planning, investigating, or reviewing what is already known, carrying out or conducting experiments using a tool to collect data, analysing and interpreting the data, making predictions, and communicating the results. The inquiry model is a strategy used in the learning process to provide students the ability to ask questions, analyse, or research something. It involves all of the students' abilities to seek and investigate in a systematic, critical, logical, and analytical way so they can create their own.

According to Carlson (2018), five steps need to be completed to implement the inquiry model: (1) formulation of the problem being solved by students; (2) setting a non-permanent answer (hypothesis); (3) students eliciting information, data facts needed to answer the problem; (4) drawing conclusions or generalizations of the answer; and (5) the conclusions or generalizations applying in new situations. According to Sajaya (2016), it is: (1) orientation, (2) formulating the problem, (3) proposed a hypothesis, (4) collecting data, (5) test the hypothesis and; (6) formulating conclusions. Sund and Trowbridge (1973) "suggest three kinds of methods of inquiry as follows: 1) Guided Inquiry where the learners acquire in accordance with the required guidelines. The guidelines are usually in the form of questions that guide. This approach is used primarily for students who have not experienced learning by the inquiry method; 2) Free inquiry in which the learners do their own research like a scientist. At this teaching, learners should be able to identify and formulate a range of issues to be studied; 3) Modified free inquiry; on this inquiry the teacher gives the problem and then the students are asked to solve these problems through observation, exploration, and research procedures".

The Connection of Inquiry Learning Objectives and the Learning Model The learning process is the most significant activity in the whole educational effort since it is through it that educational objectives will be met in the form of individual changes in learners' behaviour. The model of learning that develops throughout time is always evolving. Understanding the teaching style of educators is necessary to execute successful learning and enhance learning results. Because each learning model has a different goal, set of guiding principles, and primary emphasis, it must be applied in accordance with the demands of learners. The professionalism of teachers in delivering lessons affects the learning model's efficacy. Teachers require a consistent, comprehensive understanding of the actions involved in teaching and learning in order to perform their tasks competently. A teacher must have a broad understanding of the teaching and learning process and the stages required for assignments to be successfully completed and yield the desired results. The pedagogy that outlines how to act in order to attain the stated objectives is one of the demands to have an insight into the teacher. With this approach, educators have rules for the different alternatives that may, can, or ought to be used to improve teaching and learning activities can take place on a regular, systematic, purposeful, smoothly and effectively. There are numerous options in the teaching and learning strategies when the "inquiry" learning model is part of the teaching and learning system. The learning results for students should be improved by this inquiry-based learning approach. This supports

Dimiyati and Mudjiono's (1999) assertion that the learning outcomes can be viewed from the perspectives of both students and teachers. The learning strategy employed is one aspect of the teaching. According to Sumiati (2009), the learning methodology places a strong emphasis on the active pursuit of learning goals. Using effective learning techniques to address issues that develop during the learning process. There is no doubt that it can enhance student learning results. According to Zimmerman and Risemberg (2006), an increase in academic quality is strongly connected with students' confidence and awareness to become autonomous learners. The teaching and learning process in the classroom can be improved with the help of this viewpoint, along with other contextual elements that unquestionably influence student learning and motivation. Glasser and Brunstein (2007) examined 113 German primary school pupils' responses to a diary using experimental and qualitative methodologies. In this study, students who employ composition thinking strategies or learning styles as part of their self-regulation procedures were compared to students who do the same but did not receive self-regulation instruction, as well as to students who received didactic lectures. The students who use the composition thinking or learning style self-generating process of learning and learning outcomes are more comprehensive and qualitatively have a story of the experiences during the learning process that are written better in diary than students who do not accept self-regulation instructions, according to the results of the post-test after five weeks of treatment implementation. In a study using both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, Akinoglu and Tandogan (2007) investigated the effects of problem-based learning as an active role in scientific education on students' academic performance and concept learning. Throughout the academic years 2004–2005, research studies were undertaken in 50 classes with 7 pupils in Istanbul public schools. According to study findings, the learning model has a good impact on both students' academic performance and conceptual growth. According to Suwondo & Wulandari's (2013) study, students' attitudes altered after utilising the inquiry learning methodology. Also, the results showed that most students from the two groups achieved at a good level, according to the inquiry learning model's learning outcomes.

This indicates that one strategy for raising student achievement is to adopt inquiry-based learning. According to Abdi (2014), there are discrepancies in the learning results of students who use the group inquiry learning model and those who use the conventional learning model, with the inquiry learning model students achieving better values than the conventional learning model students. According to Avsec & Kocijancic (2014), inquiry-based learning is an effective teaching strategy in the field of education. This affects the growth of technological information acquisition, the improvement of problem-solving abilities, and the capacity for making important decisions. According to Trianto (2007), the investigation fosters the growth of all potential pupils, including their emotional and skill development.

Abimbola (2004) asserts that to reduce the difficulty students face in learning concepts, teachers must analyse concepts meant for learning and specify their level of complexity, abstractness and sophistication. This analysis would enable teachers to lead students to know the relationships between concepts. Hence, determining the effectiveness of discussion and inquiry methods on Social Studies instruction is useful to help teachers know what to teach, how to teach it and how to evaluate students in social studies is the focus of this study.

Research Questions

- i. What is the difference in academic performance between students taught using the discussion method and those taught using the conventional method?
- ii. What is the difference in academic performance between students taught using the inquiry-based method and those taught using the conventional method?
- iii. How does the academic performance of students taught using the discussion method compare with that of students taught using the inquiry-based method?

Null Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students taught with the Discussion method and students taught with the conventional method.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students taught with the Inquiry method and students taught with the conventional method.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students taught with the discussion method and those taught with the inquiry method.

Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative, quasi-experimental research design, featuring pre-test and post-test with both experimental and control groups. The design enabled the researchers to measure the effects of discussion and inquiry-based teaching methods on students' academic performance in Social Studies. The study targeted junior secondary school students in Lagos State, with a total population of 11,077 students across 20 public junior secondary schools.

A total of 200 students aged 12–17 were randomly selected from three co-educational schools within Education District V, specifically from the Amuwo-Odofin zone. These intact classes of JSS II students participated in the study. The sample was drawn using simple random sampling techniques, and co-educational schools were chosen to allow for analysis of gender as a moderating variable. The main instrument for data collection was the Social Studies Achievement Test (SSAT), which consisted of biographical information and 25 multiple-choice questions adapted from past JSCE exams, validated by the Lagos State Examination Board. Reliability was established through a test-retest procedure with a Kuder-Richardson (K-R21) coefficient of 0.78.

Data collection began with a pre-test for all participants, followed by an eight-week instructional intervention. The experimental groups received lessons through discussion and inquiry-based methods, while the control group was taught using conventional methods. After the intervention, a post-test was administered to assess learning outcomes. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) to answer the research questions and t-tests at a 0.05 significance level to test the hypotheses.

Results

Table 1:

Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	92	46.0
Female	108	54.0
Total	200	100%

From the table above, 46.0% of the respondents were male, while 54.0% were female. This implies that the majority of the respondents were female. Therefore, the inference drawn from this depicts that female respondents were more than male respondents.

Table 2: Descriptive Data on Students' Class

Class	Frequency	Percentage
J.S 2A (Discussion Method)	60	30
J. S 2B (Inquiry Method)	60	30
J. S 2C (Conventional Method)	80	40
Total	200	100%

This above frequency count table shows information on the students in J.S 2A (Discussion Method) with a frequency of 60, J.S 2B (Inquiry Method) with a frequency of 60 and J.S 2C (Conventional Method) with a frequency of 80. Therefore, the inference drawn from this depicts students' respondents.

Table 3:
Descriptive Data on Age

Age(s)	Frequency	Percentage
10 – 14 years	88	44
15 – 19 years	96	48
20 years & above	16	8
Total	200	100

From table 3 above, it revealed that students between 10 – 14 years have a frequency of 88 (44%) those between 15 – 19 years have a frequency of 96 (48%) and those between 20 years and above have a frequency of 16 (8%) respectively. Therefore, the inference drawn from this depicts that the majority of the respondents are within 15-19years.

Research question 1

What is the academic performance of students taught with the Discussion method over those taught with the conventional method?

To answer the research question, the data collected were analysed with the descriptive statistics of Mean and standard deviation. The descriptive statistics of Mean and standard deviation are presented in Table 4.

Table 4:
Effectiveness of Students Taught with the Discussion Method Performed Better Than Students Taught with the Conventional Method

Methods	Type of Test	Mean	Std. Dev
Discussion Method	Pre test	0.93	1.034
	Post test	3.23	0.956
Conventional Method	Pre test	0.67	0.690
	Post test	1.21	0.872

Table 4 shows that students taught with the discussion method have pre-test and post-test mean scores and standard deviation of 0.93 (1.034) and 3.23 (0.956), respectively. Those taught with the conventional method have pre-test and post-test mean scores and standard deviation of 0.67 (0.690) and 1.21 (0.872), respectively.

Research question 2

Do students taught with the inquiry method perform better academically than students taught with the conventional method?

To answer the research question, the data collected were analysed with the descriptive statistics of Mean and standard deviation. The descriptive statistics of Mean and standard deviation are presented in Table 5.

Table 5:
Effectiveness of Students Taught with the Inquiry Method Performed Better Than Students Taught with the Conventional Method

Methods	Type of Test	Mean	Std. Dev
Inquiry Method	Pre test	0.93	1.034
	Post test	3.23	0.956
Without Discussion Method	Pre test	0.67	0.690
	Post test	1.21	0.872

Table 5 shows that students taught with the inquiry method have pre-test and post-test mean scores and standard deviation of 0.93 (1.034) and 3.23 (0.956), respectively. Those taught with the conventional method have pre-test and post-test mean scores and standard deviation of 0.67 (0.690) and 1.21 (0.872), respectively.

Research Question 3

Do students taught with the discussion method perform better academically than students taught without the inquiry method?

To answer the research question, the data collected were analysed with the descriptive statistics of Mean and standard deviation. The descriptive statistics of Mean and standard deviation are presented in Table 6.

Table 6:
Effectiveness of Students Taught with the Discussion Method Performed Better Than Students Taught with the Inquiry Method

Groups	Type of Test	Mean	Std. Dev
Discussion Method	Pre test	0.76	0.861
	Post test	3.23	0.784
Inquiry Method	Pre test	0.65	0.803
	Post test	3.43	0.872

as shown in the table 6 above, students taught using discussion method had a pretest mean score of (M= 0.76; SD= 0.861) and a post-test mean score of (M= 3.23; SD= 0.784) while students taught with inquiry method had a pretest mean score of (M= 0.65; SD= 0.803) and a post-test mean score of (M= 3.43; SD= 0.872) respectively.

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: Students taught with the discussion method in English perform better than students taught with the conventional method.

Table 7:
Summary of t-test analysis showing the difference between students' performance using the discussion method and conventional methods.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	DF	Sig	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Discussion Method	60	29.7	31.4	98	0.05	0.98	0.784	Rejected
Conventional method	80	27.5	29.7					

Table 7 shows that there is a significant difference between students' performance using the discussion method and conventional methods ($t = 1.98$, $df = 98$, $p = .0784$). Hence, the hypotheses state that there is no significant relationship between students' performance using the discussion method and conventional methods. is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference between students' performance using the discussion method and conventional methods.

Hypothesis two

Students taught with the inquiry method do not perform better than students taught with the conventional method.

Table 8:

Summary of t-test analysis showing the relationship between students' performance using the inquiry method and the conventional method.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	DF	Sig	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Inquiry Method	60	29.7	31.4	98	0.05	0.98	0.784	Rejected
Conventional method	80	27.5	29.7					

Table 8 shows that Students taught with the inquiry method do not perform better than students taught without the conventional method ($t = .98$, $df = 98$, $p = .784$). Hence, the hypothesis that states that students taught with the inquiry method do not perform better than students taught with the conventional method is rejected. This implies that students taught with the inquiry method perform better than students taught with the conventional method.

Hypothesis three

There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students taught with the discussion method and those taught with the inquiry method.

Table 9:

Summary of t-test analysis showing the relationship between students' performance using the discussion method and the inquiry method

Variables	N	Mean	SD	DF	Sig	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Discussion Method	60	15.6	34.7	48	0.05	1.98	0.784	Rejected
Inquiry method	60	16.72	54.3					

Table 9 shows that Students taught with the discussion method do not perform better than students taught without the inquiry method ($t = .98$, $df = 48$, $p = .784$). Hence, the hypothesis that states that students taught with the discussion method do not perform better than students taught without the inquiry method is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the academic performance of students taught with the discussion method and students taught with the inquiry method.

Discussion of findings

The study explores the effectiveness of discussion and inquiry methods on social studies instruction in Lagos State junior secondary schools. The result of the findings shows there is a significant difference between the academic performance of students taught with the discussion method over students taught without the discussion method and there is a

significant difference between the learning outcome of students taught with the inquiry method over students taught without the inquiry method. The findings revealed that students who were taught using the discussion method performed better in Social Studies than those who were not. For instance, in reading class, students participate more actively when the teacher switches to discussion method. This finding supported Stahl's (2018) finding that students' comprehension of texts was greatest with the use of discussion method than other control conditions. Discussion method espoused the teacher guidance using purposeful questions aimed at directing learners' attention to important ideas and assisting them with hard-to-grasp concepts in a way that other methods do not offer. The finding is also in agreement with those of Beck and Mckeown (2020) who found that using discussions as part of a read-aloud may increase vocabulary acquisition and comprehension in Social Studies. This is because discussion creates opportunities for students to reflect on the storyline or the text language and this promotes comprehension. Gall (2015) reported that "for classroom questions to exert positive impact on students' learning and achievement, classroom instruction should include posing questions during lessons". The finding also confirmed the finding of Isiugo-Abanihe (2021) that reading was handled poorly in most schools and that teachers' methods and pupils' activities were inadequate for any meaningful reading instruction to take place. Oyetunde (2019) also found that poor instructional practice in schools lead to poor performance of the students in reading concepts. These findings resonate with those of the current study where the performance of the students exposed to conventional reading instructional method was significantly lower than that of those exposed to discussion methods. The statistically significant mean performance gains under discussion method compared to conventional reading instructional method showed that it is no longer tenable for the teacher to wait for students to complete the reading exercise before questions are asked. The questioning and prediction activities of discussion method help to arouse and maintain students' attention and curiosity to follow the concept. It, therefore, means that inattentive or daydreaming students could gain from such reading lessons and other lessons when they are involved in the process.

From the study, students taught using inquiry and discussion methods performed better over students taught without inquiry method. This supports Dimyati and Mudjiono's (1999) assertion that the learning outcomes can be viewed from the perspectives of both students and teachers. The learning strategy employed is one aspect of the teaching. According to Sumiati (2009), the learning methodology places a strong emphasis on the active pursuit of learning goals. Using effective learning techniques tries to address issues that develop during the learning process. There is no doubt that it can enhance student learning results. According to Zimmerman and Risemberg (2006), an increase in academic quality is strongly connected with students' confidence and awareness to become autonomous learners. The teaching and learning process in the classroom can be improved with the help of this viewpoint, along with other contextual elements that unquestionably influence student learning and motivation. Glasser and Brunstein (2007) examined 113 German primary school pupils' responses to a diary using experimental and qualitative methodologies. In this study, students who employ composition thinking strategies or learning styles as part of their self-regulation procedures were compared to students who do the same but did not receive self-regulation instruction, as well as to students who receive didactic lectures. The students who use the composition thinking or learning style

self-generating process of learning and learning outcomes are more comprehensive and qualitatively have a story of the experiences during the learning process that are written better in diary than students who do not accept self-regulation instructions, according to the results of the post-test after five weeks of treatment implementation. In a study using both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, Akinoglu and Tandogan (2007) investigated the effects of problem-based learning as an active role in scientific education on students' academic performance and concept learning. Throughout the academic years 2004–2005, research studies were undertaken in 50 classes with 7 pupils in Istanbul public schools. According to study findings, the learning model has a good impact on both students' academic performance and conceptual growth. According to Suwondo & Wulandari's (2013) study, students' attitudes altered after utilizing the inquiry learning methodology. Also, the results showed that most students from the two groups achieved at a good level, according to the inquiry learning model's learning outcomes. This indicates that one strategy for raising student achievement is to adopt inquiry-based learning. According to Abdi (2014), there are discrepancies in the learning results of students who use the group inquiry learning model and those who use the conventional learning model, with the inquiry learning model students achieving better values than the conventional learning model students. According to Avsec & Kocijancic (2014), inquiry-based learning is an effective teaching strategy in the field of education. This affects the growth of technological information acquisition, the improvement of problem-solving abilities, and the capacity for making important decisions

Conclusion

The main goal of this study generally is to explore the effectiveness of discussion and inquiry methods on social studies instruction in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools. This study equally seeks to find the moderating effect of the treatment; that is, discussion and inquiry methods on the basis of gender (male/female). It was affirmed that students exposed to discussion and inquiry methods had improved positive performance in Social Studies. Thus, this study has shown that the treatment (discussion and inquiry method) is relevant and efficacious in enhancing students' Social Studies instructions.

In view of the above, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Social Studies teachers should use discussion and inquiry method in their class to improve students' performance in Social Studies.
2. Practicing Social Studies teachers without professional qualification should undergo postgraduate diploma in education so that they can acquire requisite knowledge of content and methodology (e.g. discussion and inquiry methods).
3. Government should encourage and fund periodic in-service training for Social Studies teachers on how to use discussion-teaching methods among others to enhance students' performance in Social Studies.
4. Qualified teachers who are proficient in both content and methodology should be given the opportunity to occupy our classrooms
5. Government should also provide the needed infrastructure for effective teaching and learning in schools

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