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DEVELOPING WORK-STUDY SKILLS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM THROUGH THE TABA TEACHING
STRATEGIES VERSUS TRADITIONAL APPROACHES

by

Ruth M. Larmer

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College in the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Elementary Education

Under the Supervision of Professor Rosalie Farley

Lincoln, Nebraska

December, 1972

TITLE

Developing Work-Study Skills in the Elementary School Social
Studies Program Through the TABA Teaching Strategies Versus Traditional
Approaches

BY

Ruth M. Larmer

APPROVED

DATE

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Dedicated in memory of my father
George W. Meyers

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PREVIEW

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The social studies program included in the elementary school curriculum has been undergoing changes in content, strategies, and emphasis. In some of the school systems in the United States, a more traditional approach to teaching concepts in the social studies field has been employed.

During the period between 1960 - 1970 social studies teachers have been urged to lead students to discover, to inquire, and to wrestle with personal and social value issues of their culture.¹ It was during this decade that a new phenomenon appeared in social studies education in the form of the national social studies projects.² Most projects were funded and had an abundance of resources not formerly available for curriculum development.³ Some of the trends and characteristics of these projects are listed as follows:

1. There is greater emphasis on ideas and methodology from anthropology, sociology, political science, economics, and social psychology.
2. Another trend appears to emphasize an interdisciplinary, integrated approach to curriculum development.

¹Norris M. Sanders and Marlin L. Tanck, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-Six National Social Studies Projects," Social Education, XXXIV (April, 1970), 383.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

3. The majority of the projects stress the use of teaching strategies.
4. Some of the projects promote a concern for values or increasing a student's awareness of their values.
5. There appears to be an attempt to make the social studies program more relevant by stressing life more realistic including discussions involving violence, sex, and personal-social conflicts.
6. Another emphasis in the social studies program has been upon the non-Western world.
7. The traditional spiral of expanding students horizons has been frequently abandoned. Some projects pattern curricular sequence to suit the expansion of ideas from simple to complex. There is considerable variety in theories and practices of grade placement.
8. Most projects have used a variety of learning materials which are readily accessible to the student. The projects have developed a greater variety of materials. The single hardcovered textbook has been abandoned in many cases in favor of a pamphlet or booklet for each unit. When used, single texts are largely collections of readings and resources, rather than narration. Audiovisual materials and educational games are important parts of some projects. The majority of projects provide all essential instructional materials rather than relying on school libraries or community resources.
9. In-service programs for teachers have constituted considerable attention in these projects.⁴

The Hilda Taba Teaching Strategies Program is one approach which has been developed along with other approaches during the past ten years. The philosophy and rationale of the Hilda Taba Teaching Strategies Program as developed by the Institute For Staff Development are as follows:

⁴ Ibid., pp. 384-387.

This program is based on the idea that LEARNING IS AN ACTIVE PROCESS in which behavior is developed or modified by means of carefully designed and sequenced learning activities that relate to identified performance objectives. In addition, this philosophy maintains that this approach to learning is applicable to adults as it is to children.

A major goal of the program is to train classroom teachers to identify particular objectives and to know when, why and how to employ particular teaching strategies to accomplish them. Dr. Taba and others have found that in-service programs which produce this type of teacher behavior must operate under the following conditions:

1. sequential training activities which focus on both "how" and "why"
2. training sessions that are spaced over time in which ideas are introduced in "bite-size" pieces in order to permit sufficient opportunity for assimilation and application.
3. systematic follow-up and support in the classroom to reinforce the sought-for behaviors.⁵

During the school year of 1971-1972 there was initiated in the Lincoln Public School System the Hilda Taba Teaching Strategies Program developed by the Institute For Staff Development. This study involved only the students enrolled in the fifth and sixth grades which had teachers trained in the Taba Teaching Strategies. Ten teachers trained in the Taba Teaching Strategies comprised the experimental group and ten teachers employing the traditional group approach constituted the control group. These 20 teachers were employed in 16 of the elementary schools in the Lincoln Public School System. The sample of students

⁵ Institute For Staff Development, "Hilda Taba Teaching Strategies Program for Developing Children's Thinking; Administrator's Handbook," 3000 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 316, Miami, Florida 33137, 1971.

was composed of 953 subjects. There were 644 students in the experimental group and 309 students in the control group. The team teaching situation in the experimental group produced unequal ends for the cells of the 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA. Therefore, the sample was stratified to produce equal ends for the ANOVA analysis.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate and evaluate student performance in the work-study skills in the social studies comprising (a) Map Reading, (b) Reading Graphs and Tables, (c) Knowledge and Use of Reference Materials for those students who were involved in the pilot study group being taught under the Taba Teaching Strategies. A comparison of the students' performance in these work-study skills in the social studies was made with a group of students who were not involved in the pilot study. The performance was based on selected groups of fifth and sixth grade students.

The findings of this study helped determine whether or not students can develop competencies in the work-study skills in social studies more readily and to a higher degree of proficiency under the Taba Teaching Strategy approach than under other approaches.

Delimitation

For the purpose of this study, the work-study skills in Map Reading, Graphs and Tables and Knowledge and Use of Reference Materials were investigated and evaluated. The comparison between the student performance under the Taba Teaching Strategies and the traditional

approaches pertain only to a group of selected students in the Lincoln Public Schools.

Hypothesis 1

There is no difference between the progress of males and females on any of the three tests and their total scores.

SH_1 = Map Reading Test 1

$$H_0 : \mu_M = \mu_F$$

$$H_1 : \mu_M \neq \mu_F$$

SH_2 = Reading Graphs and Tables Test 2

$$H_0 : \mu_M = \mu_F$$

$$H_1 : \mu_M \neq \mu_F$$

SH_3 = Acquiring Knowledge and Use of Reference Materials Test 3

$$H_0 : \mu_M = \mu_F$$

$$H_1 : \mu_M \neq \mu_F$$

SH_4 = Total Work Study Skills Test 4

$$H_0 : \mu_M = \mu_F$$

$$H_1 : \mu_M \neq \mu_F$$

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the progress of pupils on any of the three tests and their total scores according to socio-economic levels.

SH₁ = Map Reading Test 1

$$H_0 : \mu_H = \mu_M = \mu_L$$

$$H_1 : \mu_H \neq \mu_M \neq \mu_L$$

SH₂ = Reading Graphs and Tables Test 2

$$H_0 : \mu_H = \mu_M = \mu_L$$

$$H_1 : \mu_H \neq \mu_M \neq \mu_L$$

SH₃ = Acquiring Knowledge and Use of Reference Materials Test 3

$$H_0 : \mu_H = \mu_M = \mu_L$$

$$H_1 : \mu_H \neq \mu_M \neq \mu_L$$

SH₄ = Total Work Study Skills Test 4

$$H_0 : \mu_H = \mu_M = \mu_L$$

$$H_1 : \mu_H \neq \mu_M \neq \mu_L$$

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in their scores on any of the three tests and their total scores.

SH₁ = Map Reading Test 1

$$H_0 : \mu_E = \mu_C$$

$$H_1 : \mu_E \neq \mu_C$$

SH₂ = Reading Graphs and Tables Test 2

$$H_0 : \mu_E = \mu_C$$

$$H_1 : \mu_E \neq \mu_C$$

SH₃ = Acquiring Knowledge and Use of Reference Materials Test 3

$$H_0 : \mu_E = \mu_C$$

$$H_1 : \mu_E \neq \mu_C$$

SH₄ = Total Work Study Skills Test 4

$$H_0 : \mu_E = \mu_C$$

$$H_1 : \mu_E \neq \mu_C$$

Procedures

The following procedures were involved in the current study.

1. Review of the literature concerning the Taba Teaching Strategies and the traditional methods used in developing work-study skills in the social studies program on the elementary school level.
2. Consult with the directors of the pilot program in the Lincoln Public Schools concerned with the development of the Taba Teaching Strategies in regard to the procedures, materials and equipment and evaluation processes.
3. Cooperate with the directors of the Taba Teaching Strategies project in the selection of teachers using traditional methods in the social studies program on the fifth and sixth grade level.
4. The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills to be used as the evaluative tool for pre (September, 1971) and post (May, 1972) testing of sections W-1: Map Reading; W-2: Reading Graphs and Tables; and W-3: Knowledge and Use of Reference Materials.
5. Investigate the following situation through discussions with school personnel of the Lincoln Public Schools:
 - (a) the types of materials and equipment available in teaching the social studies program,
 - (b) the socio-economic backgrounds of the students as indicated in the records of the local schools, and

- (c) the methods of presentation of the work-study skills involved in the social studies program on the fifth and sixth grade levels.
- 6. Compile and analyze the data concerning pupil progress in the work-study skills.
- 7. Summarize the findings of the study and recommend procedures for developing work-study skills in the social studies program in the elementary school.

PREVIEW

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A discussion of the field of social studies as it is currently recommended by authorities was considered by the writer to be appropriate prior to investigating the work-study skills which are an essential part of the program. The emphasis in the social studies field has been described as follows:

. . . those portions of the subject matter of the social sciences, particularly history, economics, political science, sociology, and geography, which are regarded as suitable for study in elementary and secondary schools and are developed into courses of study, whether integrated or not, and of which both the subject matter and the aims are predominantly social; not to be confused with the social sciences or with subjects having a social aim but not social content (as in the case of courses in English, art appreciation, and personal health), nor to be confined to too narrow or rigid a combination of studies.¹

Dunfee and Sagl point out that the term social studies is a part of the curriculum revision of twentieth century design:

Since the National Education Association sanctioned the term in the early part of this century, the gamut of definitions of social studies has ranged from those concepts or experiences that are social in nature to formalized recitations focused on information in geography and history textbooks.²

¹Carter V. Good, Dictionary of Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1959), p. 509.

²M. Dunfee and H. Sagl, Social Studies Through Problem Solving: A Challenge to Elementary School Teachers (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966), p. 15.

According to authorities in the social studies field, the vast accumulation of knowledge in the social sciences can enter the school curriculum via the social studies in selected amounts that can be readily understood by today's youth.³ Jarolimek believes ". . . these curricular materials should be included which will be most useful in developing desirable behavior patterns for a free society."⁴ He states further that the problems and institutions of the world and how humans relate to these must be built upon sound judgment.⁵ Jarolimek states that in a world of rapid change the ability to assess and react in an appropriate fashion to benefit oneself is a concern of society in general.⁶ According to La Forse, the new social studies is neither new or startling.⁷ He emphasises that it embodies a logic of inquiry largely derived from Dewey's thoughts.⁸ La Forse indicates that the new social studies advocates run the risk of making method an end in itself when first attempting hypothesis testing.⁹

Jarolimek believes that the American, democratic way of life is perpetuated through the following:

³J. Jarolimek and H. M. Walsh, Readings for Social Studies in Elementary Education, 2nd ed. (London: The Macmillan Co., 1969), p. 5.

⁴Ibid., pp. 5-6.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid., p. 6.

⁷Martin LaForse, "The New Social Studies Mania: Pause for Thought," The Social Studies, LXI (December, 1970), 326.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

1. Keeping well informed on issues which affect society, and of relating principles and knowledge derived from the social sciences to the study of contemporary problems.
2. Using democratic means in seeking agreement, reaching solutions, and taking group action on social problems.
3. Assuming individual responsibility for carrying out group decisions and accepting the consequences of group action.
4. Defending constitutional rights and freedoms for oneself and others.
5. Respecting and complying with the law, regardless of personal feelings, and using legal means to change laws deemed inimical or valid.
6. Supporting persons and organizations working to improve society by desirable action.
7. Scrutinizing the actions of public officials.
8. Participating in elections at local, state, and national levels and preparing oneself for intelligent voting in these elections.
9. Opposing special privilege whenever it is incompatible with general welfare.
10. Being prepared and willing to render public service and to give full-time service in emergencies.
11. Engaging in continual re-examination of one's personal values as well as the value system of the nation.¹⁰

The report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education of the National Education Association presented in 1916 established the pattern by which most of the social science courses of today are

¹⁰J. Jarolimek and H. M. Walsh, Readings for Social Studies in Elementary Education, 2nd ed. (London: The Macmillan Co., 1969), pp. 7-8.

patterned after.¹¹ If students in the elementary and secondary schools are to operate in a technological society built upon constantly up-dated ideas, then it is appropriate to expect the elementary social studies program to be built upon recent research findings dealing with the vast expansion of knowledge from the areas of the social sciences.¹² Jarolimek and Walsh point out that the social sciences have been given explicit recognition in the school curriculum only in the last 90 years, roughly speaking, through the establishment of courses in the areas of history, geography, and civics.¹³ Dunfee and Sagl commented that not only is social studies one of the newest areas of the curriculum, but it is also one of the least understood and most misinterpreted area of the curriculum today.¹⁴ In the past 50 years wrote Berelson and others:

. . . the world has changed by a great order of magnitude. The major war in progress when the NEA report came out in 1916 now appears minor compared with the ones we have had since, let alone the one we fear; the economic depression of the 1930's may be only a few pages of history to today's students but it was personally experienced by their teachers; developments in transportation and communication have pulled the world dramatically together while the national aspirations of newly emerging powers threaten in conflict to pull it apart. . . .¹⁵

¹¹J. Jarolimek and H. M. Walsh, Readings For Social Studies In Elementary Education (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1965), p. 4.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Dunfee and Sagl, op. cit., p. 15.

¹⁵Bernard Berelson and others, The Social Studies and the Social Sciences: Sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies and the National Council for the Social Studies (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1962), p. 5.

Survey wrote that our reactions are determined somewhat by our everyday social education.¹⁶ Each individual from the moment of birth until death is caught up in the reactions of the society in which he finds himself living.¹⁷ While the informal aspect of social education comes with just being born, the formal aspect of social education begins at the threshold of the school door.¹⁸ The informal aspect of social education can be pervasive as Survey points out:

. . . amenable only to slow change after harsh testing of innovations. The formal aspect of social education, much of which is contained within social-studies programs in the schools, is specialized and organized. The formal aspect is much more amenable to change and is, in fact, innovation-seeking.¹⁹

Dunfee and Sagl refer to the social studies as a synthesis, a composite of important generalizations about human relationships and allied problems and institutions drawn from the social sciences, together with the facts needed to make these generalizations meaningful to the children of today's world.²⁰

Survey felt that the word social studies served as a "benchmark" between the close of the last century and the beginning of the twentieth century.²¹ He describes the twentieth century as being marked by individual or child centered innovations in the social studies;

¹⁶Richard E. Survey, Social-Studies Instruction In the Elementary School (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1967), p. 2.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 2-3.

²⁰Dunfee and Sagl, op. cit., p. 18.

²¹Survey, op. cit., p. 4.