

**THE INFLUENCE OF MULTIMEDIA
ON GRADE 7 SOCIAL STUDIES
STUDENTS' MOTIVATION
IN THE MALDIVES**

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**ASIA e UNIVERSITY
2023**

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A Thesis Submitted to Asia e University in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 2023

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to examine the influence of multimedia on student's motivation in grade 7 social studies in the Maldives. It is a case study using qualitative method. The objectives of the study are to identify how multimedia influences students' motivation in learning, to recognize students' perspectives of using multimedia in learning, identify teachers' perspectives of using multimedia in teaching and to study the multimedia teaching methods that incorporated in the class. One of the primary schools in Male' involving 20 grade 7 students have been purposefully selected. For focus group interviews, 10 participants who had extensive exposure to learning social studies through multimedia were interviewed, while the remaining 10 participants were selected from a class that rarely uses multimedia. Furthermore, 2 teachers who frequently and rarely use multimedia were used for the observation. Qualitative data was collected through a series of ongoing classroom observations of the teachers and students. Interviews with teachers and students were conducted at the beginning and at the end of the data collection phase. Coding and memo writing were used to evaluate data obtained through in-depth field interviews. The findings of this study indicated that lessons conducted in multimedia presentation are much better than the traditional method. Students' interest, motivation and participation were reported to have increased using multimedia presentation. On the other hand, traditional instruction had no influence on the students' academic achievement and motivation. The traditional method had difficulties in grasping abstract topics and thus made learning process harder. The multimedia elements used in the multimedia presentation group caused the students to be attentive and enjoyable (satisfaction) while the use of pictures and text, videos and animations influence motivation and enhanced learning. Students in the multimedia group were more involved in the learning process due to increased class participation. The use of multimedia integrated instructional methods, such as multimedia presentations, games, demonstrations and simulations, helps to improve instruction and motivation towards learning.

Keywords: Multimedia, motivation, instructional methods, visual aids, elements

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, for the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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[17 April 2023]

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation presented at the completion of the PhD degree is my own work and the contribution made by any other person or source is appropriately and correctly cited. I would also say that no material, in whole or in part, was submitted for this university or any other university degree. At the time of issuing this Declaration, I understand and acknowledge that any breach of this Declaration constitutes academic mismanagement, which may result in my exclusion from the program and / or exclusion from the Degree Award.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I begin by expressing my deepest gratitude to Allah, the Almighty, for granting me the courage and fortitude to successfully complete this dissertation. Following this, I extend heartfelt thanks to my supervisor, Professor Dr. Yusuf Bin Hashim, for the extensive time spent discussing and guiding me through this dissertation. I am truly appreciative of your patience, wisdom, and unwavering encouragement. Your role as my supervisor has been invaluable, and I recognize that this achievement would not have been possible without your dedicated support.

I extend sincere appreciation to my coordinator, Mrs. Swa Lee Lee, for her professional assistance and consistent encouragement throughout this study. I am also indebted to Professor Dr. Siow Heng Loke, Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, for his enduring guidance, advice, and motivation. Furthermore, I wish to thank all the staff of Asia E-University for their prompt responses, genuine encouragement, and timely guidance during crucial moments. I am equally grateful to the students, teachers, and leading educators who willingly participated and generously gave their time. To each of you, I offer my heartfelt thanks.

I am deeply thankful for the unwavering support received from both my own family and my husband's family. I wish to particularly express my gratitude to my mother for her constant support and encouragement, which has propelled me forward on this journey. I consider myself immensely fortunate to have such a loving and supportive family beside me, providing their boundless love and unconditional support. To all my family members, I extend my deepest appreciation for being there for me. As I celebrate this achievement, I want to convey my profound indebtedness to my dear Husband for his enduring love, steadfast support, and exceptional understanding

throughout my pursuit of a Ph.D., which made it possible to complete this dissertation. His encouraging words have been a source of great strength. Completing a dissertation of this nature and reaching this significant milestone in my career would have been an arduous task without the motivation, encouragement, and generous support of so many well-wishers. I therefore want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all those who have played a part in making this achievement possible.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ADE	Asian Development Bank
CTML	Cognitive theory of Multimedia Learning
CTR	Computer Technology Research
ICT	Information Communication Technology
MHESS	Ministry of Higher Education, Employment and Social Security
MNC	Maldives National Curriculum
MNU	Maldives National University
MOE	Ministry of Education
MPND	Ministry of Planning and National Development
PHC	Population & Housing Census
WDE	World Data on Education

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Education is the main economic development pillar of any country. With the advancement of technology, globalization, and the influence of social media, education is not only locally controlled but also highly influenced by global factors. The traditional approach to teaching involved only a classroom in which the teacher taught and students were required to listen. However, this has changed dramatically over the years for both learners and educators. Today, learning activities take a more student-centered approach, where students are accountable for their own studies, and teachers usually act as facilitators. So, to teach social studies in an engaging and captivating manner, educators must connect the power of creativity and innovation. By infusing interactive activities, real-world connections, and dynamic multimedia resources, teachers can transform the study of society, history, and global affairs into an exciting learning adventure for their students. This approach not only deepens comprehension but also sparks curiosity, encouraging students to actively explore and critically analyze the world around them. This study examines effective strategies and techniques that teachers can employ to make social studies an enthralling and meaningful experience for their students.

The essence of effective teaching and learning in social studies lies in a profound understanding of the subject and its specific objectives. Social studies education equips students to recognize, comprehend, and address the challenges facing our diverse nation in an increasingly interconnected world. It aims to foster responsible and informed citizens who actively participate in their communities, engage in politics, and exhibit moral and civic virtues. The subject social studies is characterized by

several key qualities. Firstly, it should be meaningful, building a network of knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes centered around enduring understandings, essential questions, important ideas, and goals. This involves delving deeply into key concepts and themes rather than superficially covering a wide array of topics. It also emphasizes critical skills necessary for thriving in a rapidly changing world. Additionally, social studies content is reflective, with teachers being well-informed about the subject and continuously expanding their understanding of the disciplines they teach. It includes extensive and reflective study of the Maldives and other nations' histories, religions, and cultures.

Furthermore, social studies teaching is integrative, recognizing the rich interrelation between its various disciplines, such as history, economics, geography, and political science. The curriculum should integrate content from these disciplines and incorporate materials from the arts, sciences, and humanities. Moreover, a social studies content is value-based, instilling democratic values like justice, equality, and freedom of thought and speech. It encourages students to think critically, assess competing arguments, and make reasoned decisions. This helps in developing fair-mindedness and respecting differing viewpoints. social studies instruction is challenging, striking a balance between recalling content and critically examining concepts. It emphasizes disciplined inquiry, delving deep into fewer topics to encourage detailed study. Additionally, it requires active participation, engaging students in meaningful activities that stimulate their intellectual capabilities. So, social studies content is not only imparting knowledge but also cultivates critical thinking, active citizenship, and an understanding of our complex world. It is an integral part of preparing students to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century.

Social studies contents as described above, can be significantly enhanced through the integration of multimedia resources. By incorporating visual aids, videos, interactive presentations, and other digital tools, educators can create a more engaging and dynamic learning environment. This multimedia approach caters to diverse learning styles and encourages active participation, which is crucial in keeping students motivated. For example, when studying historical events or global issues, multimedia resources can provide vivid visual representations, making the content more accessible and relatable for students. Interactive maps, virtual tours, and documentaries can transport students to different time periods and locations, offering a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Furthermore, multimedia allows for the incorporation of current events and real-world examples, connecting the curriculum to the students' everyday lives. This relevancy can ignite their interest and demonstrate the practical applications of social studies concepts. In terms of values and civic education, multimedia can present diverse perspectives and promote critical thinking. Students can analyze various sources, evaluate arguments, and engage in discussions, fostering a deeper appreciation for democratic values and informed decision-making. In addition to this it makes the curriculum more meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging, and active. By incorporating digital resources and multimedia into the teaching of social studies, educators have the opportunity to revolutionize the learning experience. This dynamic approach not only facilitates the acquisition of knowledge but also ignites a genuine interest and involvement from students. Through interactive tools and engaging visuals, students can explore the complexities of social studies in a way that feels relevant and stimulating. This not only enhances their understanding but also encourages them to take an active role in their own learning journey.

According to Odunta (2011), multimedia is an effective tool to make the learning process more efficient and enjoyable for students. Multimedia presentations provide an outstanding opportunity for teaching. Teachers must use a variety of activities to stimulate students' interest and attention. In addition to this, multimedia serves as an aid for both teachers and students. Odunta (2011) declared that multimedia plays an important role, providing abundant information to stimulate students' attention and interest, promoting self-regulated learning, and encouraging transcultural communication. Additionally, it is considered an effective tool to support students' learning and enhance their comprehension by using multiple media formats for the presentation of information. It has allowed everyone to transition from using candles to electric lighting.

Multimedia has played an advanced role in today's classrooms and is becoming increasingly predominant. Touchscreens are replacing textbooks, creating a more engaging and exciting learning environment for the present generation. Learners can be transported to new worlds where they can distil complex ideas and information into more manageable pieces, leading to greater engagement in the activity. Through observation, experience, and analysis, learners are able to gain practical experience, enabling them to develop a curious mind that is open to learning and adept at seeking out details and drawing conclusions. This situation provides a solid platform for learners to be motivated to discover new things. The main aim of this dissertation is to identify the influence of multimedia on students' learning of Social Studies. According to the Maldivian Constitution, all children between the ages of 6 and 18 are entitled to free and equal access to primary and secondary education. The national curriculum framework has identified four main phases of schooling (See Table 1.1). These are foundation, primary, lower secondary, and higher secondary. Each of these phases is

targeted towards specific age groups according to their developmental level. Therefore, the pedagogy and the focus of learning differ from phase to phase. In each phase, it is mandatory to provide a creative learning environment for the students. At each phase, the learning outcomes and indicators that students need to achieve are specified. Furthermore, the learning outcomes at primary, secondary lower, and higher secondary grades are divided into key stages.

Table 1.1: Phases and key stages

Phase	Key stage	Grade
Foundation	Foundation	UKG, LKG
Primary	Key stage 1	1,2,3
	Key stage 2	4,5,6
Lower Secondary	Key stage 3	7,8
	Key stage 4	9,10
Higher Secondary	Key Stage 5	11,12

Foundation Phase

The main aim of this phase is to ensure that children have access to play-based, "active" learning experiences that will facilitate the development of their coordination skills as well as psychomotor skills. During this stage, learning should be enjoyable and engaging to maintain their attention and motivation in the classroom environment. A strong foundation for lifelong learning should be established, with a particular emphasis on the well-being of the students. The primary focus in this phase is on developing skills rather than acquiring knowledge, aiming to foster confidence and self-esteem. Additionally, there should be increased encouragement for literacy and numeracy. To provide evidence of learning, teachers should observe and document students' achievements in various forms such as a portfolio containing annotated samples, teachers' notes, and photographs.

Primary Phase

Primary education begins at Key Stage 1 (Grades 1-3) and concludes at Key Stage 2 (Grades 4-6). The primary aim of this phase is to offer students numerous opportunities to relish learning, explore, and unearth new knowledge by utilizing diverse methods to present information in a meaningful manner. There is a heightened emphasis on encouraging students to take risks independently and affording them opportunities to learn from their mistakes, fostering independence in their learning. These six years of primary education are obligatory for all students.

Lower Secondary Phase

This phase of education encourages students to explore potential career pathways and offers opportunities to prepare for higher education and lifelong employment. It is divided into two key stages, Key Stage 3 and 4. During this stage, students continue to acquire a diverse set of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that equip them to become productive and creative members of society, rooted in moral and Islamic values. This phase exposes students to both core subjects and elective courses, paving the way for their future careers.

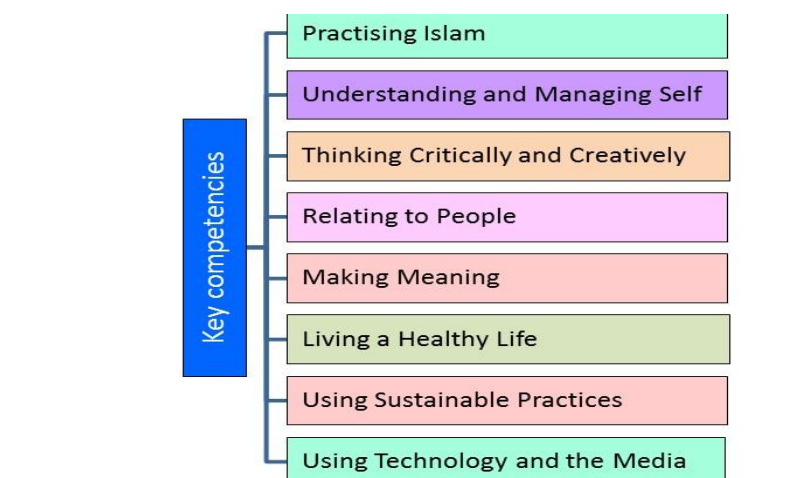
Higher education Phase

During this phase, students spend two years at Key Stage Five. This period is dedicated to delving deeper into specialized areas, aiming to equip students for enhanced opportunities in further education and employment. This phase of education encourages students to develop advanced cognitive abilities, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. These skills empower students to venture beyond their comfort zones.

Key learning areas and key competencies identified in the national curriculum.

Eight key learning areas are identified in the National Curriculum, defining the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, and values that all young students should acquire in order to become successful, confident, competent, responsible, and productive individuals. These key competencies are essential for individuals to thrive, learn, and contribute as active members of both the nation and the global community. They serve as a foundation for lifelong learning and employment in an ever-progressing and complex world. Each core competency is constructed upon a blend of cognitive and practical skills, knowledge, values, attitudes, as well as other social and behavioral components. The curriculum provides a range of opportunities to help students master these skills. They are exposed to various aspects of these components at different stages of their learning journey. Throughout their school life, students are presented with diverse opportunities that challenge them to acquire these eight interconnected key competencies. The goal is for students to have engaged with various aspects of these key competencies at different stages of their educational experience, ultimately acquiring all eight by the end of their schooling.

Figure 1.1: Key competencies that are highlighted in the national curriculum



Details of learning outcomes for each Key Stage in every key learning area are outlined in the respective syllabus for each subject. This study will center its attention on the learning areas highlighted within 'Social Studies', which serves as the primary focus for the purpose of this research. The social studies syllabus encompasses anthropology, geography, economics, history, philosophy, law, political science, psychology, sociology, as well as elements of natural science. Moreover, it delves into the past, present, and future of the Maldives and the interconnectedness of the world. The primary emphasis of this subject enables students to appreciate their heritage, explore history while situating themselves in the global context as both global citizens and Maldivian nationals. This, in turn, leads them to recognize the significance of interpersonal relationships between individuals. Through social studies, students gain insight into how societies function, acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions as active members of society. The learning areas encourage students to respect themselves and embrace the diverse forms of humanity around them through kindness and tolerance.

Social studies are organized into six strands, spanning from the foundational stage to Key Stage Three. Key Stage Four specifically sharpens in on the Maldivian context, with special attention given to Civic Education. Furthermore, students are afforded the opportunity to explore History and Geography as independent learners. In Key Stage Five, students have the option to choose from a range of subjects including Sociology, History, Geography, Government and Politics, Psychology, and Law.

The six strands of social studies are:

Culture and Identity: This component helps students identify diverse cultural perspectives stemming from varying systems of beliefs, knowledge, values, and traditions. It aids students in understanding the ongoing evolution of cultures.

People, Places, and Environment: This strand involves studying the interactions between individuals, locations, and the human-environment relationship. It fosters spatial and geographical perspectives of the world, establishing a deeper connection between individuals and their surroundings.

The Economic World: This component provides insight into how individuals engage in economic activities, including consumption, production, and distribution of goods and services. It assists students in managing their needs, which often surpass limited resources. Additionally, students are taught about the interdependence of the global economy and the role of technology in economic decision-making.

Time, Continuity, and Change: Students explore events, experiences, and actions, learning how to interpret them over time. This enables them to grasp life in the past and understand the ongoing transformations, allowing them to envision possible futures.

Active Citizenship: This strand supports students in building an understanding of the historical development of power structures, authority, and government, along with their evolving roles in society. Through this chapter, students study the dynamic relationship between individual rights and responsibilities, the needs of social groups, and the concept of a just society.

Investigation, Communication, and Participation: This strand encourages students to examine how individuals interact with each other and their environment to make informed decisions and implement relevant social actions. Students scrutinize

aspects of time, place, culture, resources, and systems to understand and take action on significant issues within their communities. Additionally, systematic planning is imperative for the Social Studies curriculum. It is crucial for social studies teachers to be well-versed in all outcomes and indicators at each level, and to deliver them to students in a meaningful and engaging manner. To ensure students receive a rich learning experience, it is important for social studies teachers to prepare lessons using the latest multimedia resources in the classroom. This integration enhances the educational environment, making the learning process more interactive and effective.

The use of well-organized and integrated approaches within social studies and between social studies and other curricular areas plays an important role in the teaching/learning of social studies at all levels. Systematically organized and integrated disciplines can provide the context in which knowledge and skills can be developed in different areas. In this regard, the child's environment, especially the local natural environment, provides an effective context and ideal basis for the integration of education. Similarly, many components of science, Islam, mathematics and language curriculum can be found parallel to social studies and much of the work involved will continue to develop the child's oral language, literacy and numeracy along with their communication skills. As children grow, they begin to recognize that there are different ways or means of viewing the world and organizing human knowledge, therefore learning strategies should include a holistic approach, some curriculum integration, and a subject-centered focus.

Additionally, the teaching approach should acknowledge a child's social, emotional, attitude and moral development are intertwined with the acquisition of knowledge and skills. There is a need to understand that each subject gives a specific view of the world and equips children with certain skills. So, to deliver the social