Factors Affecting the Achievement of Senior High School Social Studies Lesson Objectives in the Kumasi Metropolis, Ghana

David Adjei

Lecturer, Valley View University, Kumasi Campus, Ghana, School of Education (Social Studies Department) and Prempeh College (Tutor), Kumasi, Ghana (Social Studies Department).

Abstract

This paper uses questionnaires and observation guides to examine factors affecting the achievement of Senior High School Social Studies lesson objectives in the Kumasi Metropolis of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Purposive and random sampling techniques were used to select a sample size of twenty-four (24) teachers and One-hundred and twenty (120) students. A-24 item questionnaire and eight (8) detailed observation guides for teachers' lesson presentation as well as a- sixteen (16) item questionnaire were used in the collection of data for the study. The study focused on the nature and purpose of Social Studies, academic and professional qualification of Social Studies teachers, class size, teaching-learning resources, methods and assessment procedures employed by teachers in teaching Social Studies and suggestions to improve the teaching of Social Studies for effective achievement of lessons objectives in the Senior High School. It is revealed from the results of the study that large numbers of teachers were academically qualified to teach at the Senior High School but majority of them did not posses professional qualification in Social Studies. Teaching of Social Studies was mostly done by the use of lecture and discussion methods without paying attention on the other methods of teaching Social Studies. Inadequate teaching learning materials, in-service training courses and inexperience of teachers were major challenges facing Social Studies teaching. The researcher recommended that deployment of teachers by GES should be strictly based on both academic and professional qualification in Social Studies. Regular in-service training should be organized and teachers should be encouraged to use appropriate teaching learning resources and methods and strategies in teaching Social Studies in the Senior High School.

Keywords: Social Studies, Citizenship Education, Qualification, Objectives and Goals

1. Introduction

Social Studies is one of the core subjects in the Senior High School Curriculum in Ghana. According to Saxe (1991:16) the term "Social Studies" was first used by Thomas Jesse Jones who indicated that the popularity of Social Studies did not rise appreciably until the decades of the 1920's and into the 1930's, when the term did have a limited but significant history before 1913. Social Studies has been fully implemented into the Senior High Schools in Ghana for almost seventeen (17) years now for the purpose of citizenship education which according to Maxim (1997), the purpose of Social Studies is to develop reflective, competent and concerned citizenship for the individuals as a single entity and the nation as a whole. There is therefore enormous gap that exist between the intended changes and the teaching and learning of Social Studies for effective achievement of its lessons' objectives. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (1996) identified and described five basic principles of teaching and learning that assure excellence in Social Studies as; powerful when they are meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging and active. Based on the foregoing therefore, effective teaching of Social Studies is not only to prepare students at the Senior High School for examination but also to serve as an avenue to give the students the necessary skills and attitudes to enable them function effectively in their various societies and the nation as a whole. In view of this, Payne (1975) stated that students come to school to learn to be healthy, acquire civic practices, and participate actively in home betterments, to learn to participate in groups, to properly utilize leisure and the like. It is therefore the role of the Social Studies teacher to utilize all the available opportunities to impart the ideals of education for citizenship. Even though Social Studies is being taught in all the Senior High Schools in Ghana as one of the core or compulsory subjects for the purpose of citizenship education yet there has been a number of challenges militating against the achievement of its lesson objectives. In addition, there are conflicting perception of citizenship education and other objectives of Social Studies in the Ghanaian school system. According to Pecku (1994:42) citizenship education varies from author to author because of their areas of specialization and breadth of activities they envisage about the concept. Hence, the need to examine factors affecting the achievement of Social Studies lessons objectives in the Senior High School system.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although the inclusion of Social Studies in the new educational system in Ghana has been there for almost seventeen years now, after critically examining the teaching and learning process of Social Studies in some selected Senior High Schools in Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti Region of Ghana, the researcher observed some developments in the school system and the society call into question whether Social Studies objectives are

being achieved in the school system. For instance, The Acting Director-General of the Ghana Education Service (GES), Mrs. Biney (2011) called on school heads to act firmly to maintain discipline in the schools when she was addressing the opening session of the 14th annual congress of the Ashanti Regional Students' Representative Council (ARSRC) at Jamasi in the Sekyere South District. Prof. Ellis, Vice Chancellor, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology also reminded students to be disciplined. He said students should refuse to have anything doing with violent acts, alcohol and other socially reprehensible lifestyle (www.vibeghana.com.../knust-vc-calls-for-academic-discipline). It is upon these reasons why the researcher is prompted to investigate into factors affecting the achievement of Senior High School Social Studies lesson objectives in Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

1.3 Aims or Objectives of the Study
This study aims to examine the factors that affect the achievement of Senior High School Social Studies lessons' objectives in the Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Specifically the objectives of the study are to;
- Examine the nature and purpose of Social Studies in the Senior High School.
- Examine the factors which influence the achievement of Senior High School Social Studies lesson objectives in the classroom situations
- Suggest ways to improve on the teaching and learning of Social Studies for effective achievement of lessons objectives.

1.4 Research Questions
The following sample research questions were posed to guide the study:
- What is the meaning and purpose of Social Studies in the Senior High School?
- What are the factors which influence the teaching and learning of Social Studies for effective achievement of lesson objectives?
- How best can we improve on the teaching and learning of Social Studies for effective achievement of lesson objectives?

2.1 Meaning of Social Studies
Since the inception of Social Studies in 1916 there has not been consensus among the practionners of the subject as to what the term Social Studies means. As indicated by Shane and Longstreet (1993:262) the question of definition has plagued the field of Social Studies since its inception in 1916. From the onset, scholars have never agreed on common definition, that is, whether Social Studies uses a singular verb *'is'* or a plural verb *'are'* (Zevin,2000). Based on the above argument, Ravitch (2003:1) posed these questions, "What is Social Studies? Or what are Social Studies? Is it History with attention to current events? Is it a merger of History, Geography, Civics, Economics, Sociology, and all other Social Sciences? Is it a mishmash of courses such as career education, gender studies, and environmental studies? Is it a field that defines its goals in terms of cultivating skills like inter-personal relations and critical thinking"? He added that over time leaders of the field have frequently wrestled with their definitions of the subject. If this has been the situation concerning the definition of Social Studies then one would definitely agree with Tabachnick (1991:726) when he indicated that in trying to find out what the term "Social Studies" is then one needs to examine the general definitions for Social Studies offered by educators whose special interest is in Social Studies education which will serve as guidelines and statements of purpose for Social Studies. This will therefore be based on the different schools of thought for the term "Social Studies".

2.2 Goals and Objectives of Social Studies
For goals of Social Studies to be achieved, specific objectives need to be stated. Hamot (2000) is of the view that since citizenship education is the central purpose of Social Studies as well as the bed rock upon which schools function, teachers should provide reflective classrooms to help close the chapter on problematic areas of our society. Different educators of Social Studies state specific objectives for the realization of the general aims. For instance, Aggarwal (2006:16) opined that aims and objectives of teaching Social Studies are necessary to point to the broad ideals and to enable us to selecting significant and meaningful content, teaching methods and techniques. They are the "Crux" and "Key" of the entire process of teaching and learning and therefore they will have to be in consonance with the broader aims of education. In view of Magnal and Magnal (2008:43) the general objectives or educational objectives of Social Studies teaching are the derivatives of the aims of teaching Social Studies. To them, for proper realization, aims are broken into some definite functionable and workable units called objectives. According to Shoob and Stout (2008:14) in selecting clear long-term goals and measurable short-term objectives provide both teacher and students with a focus for learning and teaching. They added that effective teachers begin planning by selecting and stating goals and objectives. The Ghana Education

Service (CRDD, 2007) Junior Secondary School Social Studies syllabus indicated that the objectives of Social Studies as reflections of Blooms (1956) taxonomy of education, which stressed on affective, cognitive and psychomotor domains. Ross (2006) noted that it is generally agreed that promotion of civic competence through citizenship education is the main aim of Social Studies education. He argued that a student with civic competence is a "good citizen"-one who possesses the knowledge, skills and values which are needed in order to function effectively and participate socially, politically and economically in society.

2.3 Academic and Professional Qualification of a Social Studies Teacher
The quality of the teacher comprises the qualification and teaching skills of the teacher. The importance of the teacher in any educational system cannot be over emphasized. The key to the success of education is quality of teaching. However a good curriculum may seem, it is the human touch provided by the teacher that will ensure that good and lasting results are produced. (Report of the Review Commission on Pre-tertiary Education in Ghana, 1994). But it is not the mere presence of human being tagged, "teacher" in the classroom that will ensure the desired success of the teaching-learning process. If this is the case then one may be right to agree with Droefenu (1990), when he indicated that it is generally agreed among educational researchers that factors such as academic qualification, professional background and personal characteristics among others enhance teachers output in the classroom. According to Akinloye (2003:7) the "competence in teaching Social Studies depends largely on sound understanding of its philosophy" The implication of this is that poor quality teacher is a serious threat to effective teaching of Social Studies for achievement of its lesson objectives. Darling-Hammond (1997) indicated that the highest quality teachers, are those most capable of helping their students learn, have deep mastery of both their subject matter and pedagogy. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (1997), opined that effective teachers are aware of the content they are teaching, engage students in teaching, and challenge them to greater accomplishment.

2.4 Methods and Strategies of Teaching Social Studies
Because of the unique nature and purpose of Social Studies, the methods that are employed in teaching of Social Studies are not only varied, they are eclectic. On an account of this, the teacher of Social Studies has to be well grounded in the use of variety teaching methods, techniques and strategies, if he or she is to be effective. The kind of method that the teacher may use in teaching Social Studies can easily affect the achievement of lessons' objectives in social studies. According to GES (2001: viii) pupil must be taught to be problem solvers by emphasizing the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of education and avoid rote learning and drill oriented method. This will enable the learner acquires the knowledge, skills and competences to enable him solve problems. The African Social and Environmental Studies Programme (ASESP) (1992) stated that a method of teaching is the overall approach to teaching while strategy is about sequencing of the technique during a class period. Melinger (1981) indicated that a method of teaching is a particular style of instruction, while strategy is the overall plan used by a teacher to guide instruction during a period of time.

2.5 Teaching-Learning Materials and Resources In Social Studies
The planning of instructional programme for the Social Studies calls for the inclusion of many and different resources. According to Tamakloe *et al* (2005:63) teaching-learning resource is any form of material that a teacher uses to facilitate the learning, understanding or acquisition of knowledge, concepts, principles or skills by his students. To them is what the teacher prepares or uses to make learning easier than it would have been without it.

2.6 Class Size In Social Studies
Class size is an educational tool that can be used to describe the average number of students per class in a school. According to Hoffman (1980), class size can be described as the number of students per teacher in class. Kennedy (1989) viewed class size as a tool that can be used to measure the performance of the education system. Research conducted by Kim (2006), indicated that since 1990, a number of state legislatures and local school boards have funded class size reduction policies in the early elementary grades. Glass and Smith (1978) argued that, to achieve a significant increase in academic achievement, however required a dramatic reduction in class size. They added that class size of fifteen (15) or fewer students could be expected to increase achievement scores by approximately half a standard deviation. Stepaniuk (1969) reported that, the rational utilization of classroom space depends upon the class size. This in turn would depend upon the area of the classroom. He argued that there are approved norms of class size of forty (40) pupils per class for grades one to eight and thirty-five (35) pupils per class for the senior classes, while the standard allocation of class space per pupil is 1:25square meters.

3.1 Research Design

Research design for the study was descriptive survey design (Non-parametric research design) which deals with the relationship among non-manipulated variables. Descriptive design involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way Shunttleworth (2008). Based on these advantages of descriptive survey, the researcher therefore finds it expedient to choose the design because of the purpose of the study. This could lead to the drawing of conclusions that may be useful or meaningful to the study.

3.2 Population and Sample Size

The target population for the study was all the Social Studies teachers and students in the Kumasi Metropolis. The study covers both private and public Senior High Schools in the Kumasi Metropolis. Out of the thirty-four (34) Senior High Schools, twelve (12) of them were selected for the study. The reason for selecting only the twelve schools is based on the fact that all the schools reflect the general characteristics of all the Senior High Schools in the Kumasi Metropolis. Also the choice for the third and final year students for the study is based on the fact that students in these classes have at least gone through about two-thirds **(2/3)** of the Social Studies syllabus. In addition, they could provide the necessary responses that relate to the study.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure

According to Kumekpor (2000) and Kwabia (2006) the worth of any educational research findings depends on the extent to which the sample reflects or represents the target population. The simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the schools, teachers and students which constitute the sampling for the study. The target population for the teachers teaching Social Studies in the Senior High Schools was twenty-four (24) and the target population for student in the final and third year offering Social Studies at the Senior High Schools was one hundred and twenty (120). This implies that the total population for teachers' and students' is one hundred and forty-four (144). In order to have the sample size for each of the schools the simple random sampling method or technique was adopted to select the students. Specifically, the lottery method was employed where **'YES'** and **'NO'** were written on pieces of papers equaling the number of students and put in an open container and mixed up for fairness. Each student was then blindfolded and asked to pick a paper from the container. This was done until every student has been given a chance to make his or her picking. After that all those with **'YES'** were selected for the study.

3.4 Research Instruments for Data Collection

A set of questionnaire and an observational guide were the main research instruments used to gather data for the study. There were two separate sets of questionnaire that were designed and used to elicit vital information from both teachers and students after it had been scrutinized and accepted by the supervisor.   There were twenty-four (24) items in the teachers' questionnaire with seven different sections. The questionnaire consisted of both open and close ended questionnaire.

3.5 Lesson Observation Guide

Lesson observation guide was also employed as another technique for data collection. According to Adler and Adler (1998:80) "Observation" consists of gathering impressions of the surrounding world through all relevant human faculties such as hearing, seeing, smelling and touching. This technique of observing enabled the researcher obtain valuable quantitative knowledge about the respondents. It helped the researcher to compare responses that were obtained through the use of questionnaire about what teachers believed to be doing for achievement of lesson objectives in Social Studies and what they actually do in real terms. According to Teddlie and Tashakkorri (2003), observation method helps to provide stronger inferences and opportunity for presenting divergent views from the respondents. In all a set of eight (8) detailed items of Social Studies lesson observation guide was prepared.

3.6 Data Analysis

The main statistical tool that was used to analyze data that were gathered statistically was Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Serial and code numbers were assigned to each of the items on the questionnaire for easy identification before scoring them. The responses to the various items were coded and transferred to a broad sheet taken note of their serial numbers and the data for the observational guide were analyzed thematically.

4.1 Nature and Purpose of Social Studies

This area examines the nature and purpose of Social Studies in the Senior High School. As a result of this an attempt was made to find out from the teachers about the definition, goals and objectives of Social Studies.
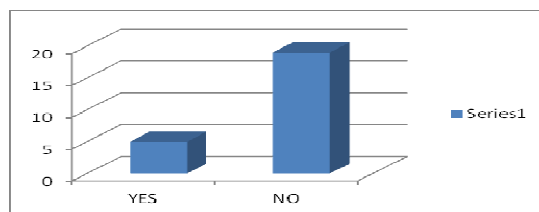
Figure 4.1: Universal Definition of Social Studies
Field Survey (2017)

Figure 4.1 indicates that out of the 24 respondents only 5 (20.8%) assert to the fact that there is one universal definition for Social Studies while majority of the respondents 19 (79.2%) believe there is no one universal definition of Social Studies. The findings suggest that there are different definitions for Social Studies and that there is no one universal definition for the term Social Studies. This confirms Aggarwal's (1982) view that the term "Social Studies" has been defined differently by different Commissions, Committees and Writers.
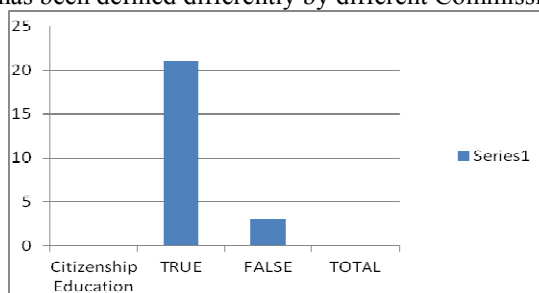

Figure 4.2: Ultimate Goal of Social Studies
Field Survey (2017)

Regarding the ultimate goal of Social Studies, Figure 4.5 indicated that majority of the respondents 21 (87.5%) admitted that citizenship education is the ultimate goal of Social Studies. This confirms the findings of Banks (1990) and Hamot (2002) that citizenship education is the primary and central purpose of Social Studies. The implications of this is that perhaps teachers are aware of the ultimate goal of Social Studies as citizenship education for effective achievement of its objectives but the issue lies on what constitutes citizenship education which has brought about the different definitions of the subject.

Table 4.1: Instructional Objectives

Objectives	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Cognitive domain	14	58.3
Affective domain	4	16.7
Psychomotor domain	6	25.0
TOTAL	**24**	**100.0**

Field Survey (2017)

The data in Table 4.1 show instructional objectives teachers address most in their teaching. The analysis of the data revealed that majority of the respondents 14 (58.8%) base their teaching on the achievement of the cognitive domain to the neglect of the affective and psychomotor domains which address the designed values, knowledge and skills which recorded 4 (16.7%) and 6 (25.0%) respectively. This is inconsistent with earlier statement made by Barth (1983) that, teachers should help students gain knowledge, process information, develop skills, and to examine values if Social Studies is to be taught as citizenship education. The achievement of all the three domains namely; Cognitive (knowledge based), Affective (attitudes and values based) and Psychomotor (skill based) is therefore very essential and all Social Studies teachers have to address their teaching towards all the domains.

Table 4.2: Different Definitions for Social Studies

Definitions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Man and His Environment	8	33.3
Methods of Teaching Social Sciences	2	8.4
Citizenship Education	5	20.8
Integration of Social Sciences	9	37.5
TOTAL	**24**	**100.0**

Field Survey (2017)

The data in Table 4.2 revealed that out of the 24 teachers 9 (37.5%) claimed that Social Studies is an Integration of the Social Sciences. This confirms the views of Martorella (1995) that Social Studies gains some

of its identity from Social Sciences, 8 (33.3%) indicated that Social Studies is seen as Man and his Environment. This supports Tamakloe's (1994) earlier assertion that Social Studies is a subject that deals with man and his environment, 2 (8.4%) of the respondents claimed that Social Studies is a Method of teaching the Social Sciences. This is in consonance with Wesley (1950) who contended that Social Studies is a method and purpose of teaching Social Sciences. The remaining 5 (20.8%) of the respondents also maintained that Social Studies is Citizenship Education. This confirms the GES (2007) Social Studies syllabus that Social Studies is Citizenship Education. The findings suggest that teachers have different views concerning the definition of Social Studies. This confirms the views of Famwang (2000) that because of the dynamic nature of Social Studies agreement on a universal definition would be difficult. This implies that teachers' perception concerning the definition of the subject may have influence on its teaching for achievement of lesson objectives.

Academic Qualifications

To ascertain what happens in the teaching and learning of Social Studies for effective achievement of lesson objectives, academic qualification of teachers were analyzed. The reason behind this is that teacher's academic background helps students learn and have deep mastery of their subject (Darling-Hammond, 1997).
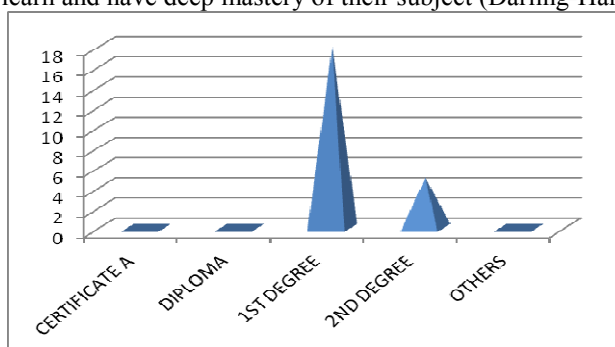

Figure 4.3: Highest Academic Qualifications
Field Survey (2017)

Figure 4.3 reveals that out of the 24 respondents a greater proportion of the respondents 19 (79.2%) are 1st degree holders and 5 (20.8%) are 2nd degree holders teaching Social Studies in the Senior High School. This implies that teachers are competent and expected to teach Social Studies effectively for achievement of lesson objectives. This supports observations made by Darling-Hammond (1997) that the highest quality teachers are those capable of helping their students to learn.

Table 4.3: Professional Training

Professional Training	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Economics	5	20.8
History	2	8.3
Geography	4	16.8
Government	3	12.5
Social Studies	8	33.3
Others	2	8.3
TOTAL	**24**	**100.0**

Field Survey (2017)

The data in Table 4.3 on teacher professionalism revealed that only 8 (33.3%) respondents are Social Studies professionals and a total of 16 (66.7%) respondents are non-professionals in Social Studies. This is in consonance with the views of Seamstrong *et al* (2002) that not all teachers are assigned to teach in the areas for which they have been trained. It can be concluded that such teachers may not be able to adopt the different methods and strategies in teaching Social Studies for effective achievement of its lessons objectives. This supports Darling-Hammond's (2000) view that teachers who have assigned to teach in areas which they have not been trained may have negative effect on students' achievement.

Teaching Learning Methods and Strategies Employed by Teachers

The nature of Social Studies calls for a variety of teaching methods and strategies. If the organization of Social Studies is to be effective, the teacher must be well versed in the use of variety of teaching methods and strategies (Tamakloe, 1991). Having this in mind teachers were asked to rate the use and effectiveness of the various teaching-learning methods and strategies in Social Studies.

Table 4.4: Rating of Effective Use of Teaching Methods Employed by Teachers

Methods	Regularly N (%)	Occasionally N (%)	Rarely N (%)	Never N (%)	TOTAL N (%)
Discussion	19 (79.2%)	2 (8.3%)	_	3 (12.5%)	24 (100%)
Lecture	5 (20.8%)	13 (54.2%)	2 (8.3%)	4 (16.7%)	24 (100%)
Role play	4 (16.7%)	15 (62.5%)	2 (8.3%)	3 (12.5%)	24 (100%)
Simulation	_	6 (25.0%)	3 (12.5%)	15 (62.5%)	24 (100%)
Fieldtrip	_	4 (16.7%)	6 (25.0%)	14 (58.3%)	24 (100%)

Field Survey (2017)

The data in Table 4.4 indicate that majority of the teachers regularly use discussion method in their teaching. The discussion method rated first with 19 (79.2%) respondents as the most effective and popular used method employed by teachers. This confirms Amoah's (1998) survey conducted that the discussion method is the most popular teaching method used by teachers in Ghana. The analysis on the lecture method reveals that majority of the respondents 13 (54.2%) occasionally used lecture method in their teaching. This supports the findings of Agyeman-Forkuo (1994) that lecture is the main method used in the teaching of Social Studies in Ghana. Data in Table 4.5 on role play indicate that 15 (62.5%) respondents occasionally used role play in teaching Social Studies. The result of the findings suggests that teachers will be able to train students effectively to solve problems (Martorella, 2001). With simulation, the data reveal that 15 (62.5%) respondents indicated they had never used simulation or game as a method in their teaching of Social Studies. It can be concluded that if this is the situation then learners may not be able to obtain the necessary skills and behaviors because they may lack involvement in real life events. This confirms Giley's (1991) view that without simulation learners may not be receptive to new ideas and attitudinal change. The data on analysis on fieldtrip show that greater number of the respondents 14 (58.3%) had never used fieldtrip in teaching Social Studies. This is inconsistent with observations made by Anderson and Piscitel (2002) that fieldtrip is an important tool for Social Studies teaching and learning. If this is the case then the students will find it difficult to develop good social relations like care, respect and tolerance for others which is the main focus of fieldtrip method in Social Studies. The overall findings of the results suggests that Social Studies teachers had not had enough exposure on all the various methods and principles use in teaching Social Studies for effective achievement of lessons objectives. This corroborates the views of Ajala (2000) that teacher education seems to be weak and inadequate in the aspect of principles and practice of teaching. It must be noted that every method has its own effectiveness and when to use it. Teachers' reliance on only few methods such as discussion and lecture as shown in Table 4.5 in most of their teachings may not help students to develop the needed skills, knowledge and values in order to solve personal and societal problems. This confirms earlier observations by Merryfield and Mutebi (1991) that Social Studies teaching in Africa is dominated by discussion and lecture method.

Table 4.5: Uses of Approved Social Studies Teaching Syllabus

Approved Syllabus	Respondents	Percentages (%)
Yes	23	95.8
No	1	4.2
TOTAL	**24**	**100.0**

Field Survey (2017)

The data in Table 4.5 indicate that out of the 24 respondents' majority of the respondents 23 (95.8%) make use of the approved GES Social Studies teaching syllabus in their teaching. This implies that teachers will be able to give the appropriate information to the learners. This findings supports the views of Elberly *et al* (2001) that the syllabus is the first communication tool that teachers receive as well as been the most formal mechanism for sharing information with the students regarding any course.

Table 4.6: Class Size

Number of Students	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than 20	_	_
20-35	2	8.3
36-50	5	21.0
Above 50	17	70.7
TOTAL	**24**	**100.0**

Field Survey (2017)

The data gathered in Table 4.6 revealed that there is no Social Studies class that had less than 20 students. Majority of the respondents 17 (70.7%) had class sizes above 50. The findings from the analysis imply that Social Studies classes are very large, probably because it is a core subject and if this is the situation then teachers may find it difficult to control their students, give class exercises and mark and monitor the progress of individual student for effective achievement of lessons objectives. This confirms observations made by Krafts

(1994) that ideal class size above 40 have negative effects on students' achievements.

Suggestions Offered by Teachers to Improve Social Studies Education

To find out how possible the teaching and learning can be improved from Social Studies teachers a number of suggestions were raised by the teachers and among the serious once to the teachers were reduction in large class sizes, regular in-service training courses and provision of teaching learning materials.

Table 4.7: Teachers' Suggestions To Improve Social Studies Education

Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Reduce Large Class Sizes	6	25.0
Regular in-Service Training	13	54.2
Adequate Materials For Teaching	5	20.8
TOTAL	**24**	**100.0**

Field Survey (2017)

The data in Table 4.7 revealed the distribution of suggestions offered by teachers to improve teaching and learning of Social Studies. The findings of the results indicate that majority of the respondents 13 (54.2%) are of the view that in-service training courses are very important for them to enable them improve their way of teaching for effective achievement of lessons objectives. This is in support of the views of Wenglinsky (2002) that professional training developments have great influence on students' achievement.

5.1 Conclusions

From the discussions made so far, the following conclusions were made based on the findings of the study:

Among the teachers in the field, majority of them were 1st degree holders but lacked professional qualification or training in Social Studies. The effectiveness of the teacher largely depends on his knowledge of the subject matter (Stanley, 1991). Teaching-learning resources or materials for Social Studies are inadequate in the Senior High School. Lack of suitable teaching materials and accommodation reduces the effectiveness of good teaching (Farrant, 1980). Majority of the respondents did not have pedagogical skills in teaching Social Studies in the Senior High Schools in the Kumasi Metropolis, this accounted for teachers' use of methods and strategies which resulted in largely teacher centered instructions. If the organization of social Studies is to be effective, the teacher must be well versed in the use of variety of teaching methods and strategies (Tamakloe, 1991).

5.2 Recommendations

Having discussed the various issues of the research findings, the following recommendations are made: There is the need for the Ghana Education Service (GES) together with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to give much priority to the professional training of Social Studies teachers. This will help to eliminate or minimize the ignorance being exhibited by teachers teaching Social Studies. The research findings revealed that majority of the teachers taught Social Studies in the Senior High School without employing the appropriate teaching learning materials. It is therefore recommended that teachers should be provided and used the appropriate teaching learning materials to make the teaching and learning of Social Studies more concrete and interesting. As it emerged from the literature that not all certified teachers are assigned to teach in the areas for which they have been trained, as a large numbers of teachers are teaching Social Studies without proper professional training in Social Studies. It is therefore suggested that Ghana Education Service (GES) should assign teachers with professional training in Social Studies to teach the subject. This will help instructors to select the appropriate methods and content for effective teaching of Social Studies. The research findings of the results indicated that Social Studies teachers in the Senior High School face a challenge of maintaining Social Studies teachers in the classroom. The study suggests that Social Studies teachers should be given enough motivation to encourage them remain in the classroom.

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