

Pedagogical Analysis of Teaching Social Studies: An Empirical Literature Review

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Abstract

The primary objective of this paper is to do a critical literature review on the pedagogical analysis of teaching Social Studies. This paper reviewed aspects relating to the scope of Social Studies, factors affecting the teaching and learning of Social Studies concepts, the concept of teaching, motivation to teaching and learning, teaching methodologies and the pedagogical methods and strategies used in teaching Social Studies. Methodologically, students, teachers, policy makers and stakeholders in education were the focus of this study. The paper made use of secondary sources of information with the help of documents, published papers, archives, reports and books related to the subject under study. The review revealed that Social Studies subject is an integrated field of knowledge that cuts across disciplines. It was also revealed that the scope of Social Studies is unlimited, it also came to light that Social Studies is one of the least-liked subjects by students. Furthermore, the paper revealed that, the Ghana Education Service and other Colleges of higher education have issues with well-trained and competent teachers to handle the Social Studies subject and lastly the review revealed that some major factors that affect the teaching and learning of Social Studies are; the lack of meaning of concepts, lack of training in process skills, avoidance of controversial issues and limited shallow of content by some Social Studies teachers in the field of study. It is therefore recommended that the Government through the Ghana Education Service should recruit most-qualified and competent teachers to teach Social Studies in Senior High Schools and beyond. In addition, teachers who are well versed in teaching controversial issues must be engaged. The researcher also recommends that there is the need for a tripartite collaboration among the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service and other Non-governmental educational organizations to provide the needed teaching and learning materials for the teaching and learning of Social Studies. It is recommended that teachers should also employ different methodologies in teaching the subject. Lastly, the researcher recommends that the various pedagogical methods should be well combined and used to teach in order to help improve the attitude of students towards the learning of Social Studies in Senior High Schools and beyond.

Keywords: Social Studies, Pedagogical, Teaching, Learning, Students, Methods, Ministry Of Education, Ghana Education Service

Introduction

Preparing students for the 21st century cannot be accomplished without a strong and sustaining emphasis on Social Studies [1]. Social Studies provide the skills that are the key to opening doors for a more diverse, competitive workforce and responsible citizenry. Students use critical thinking, self-assessment, reasoning, problem-solving, collaboration, research, and investigation to make connections in new and innovative ways as they progress through Social Studies education. These standards outline the knowledge and skills needed to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world [2].

The advancement of “liberty and justice for all” as envisioned by our country’s founders requires that, citizens have to acquire knowledge, attitudes and values to guard and endorse the principles of constitutional democracy [3]. The success of Ghana’s growth and

stability relies strongly on its educational system. Social Studies is a major part of the school’s curriculum because it explores morals, values and provides students with the ability to understand the values associated with being a good citizen [4].

The marginalization of Social Studies education in schools has been documented repeatedly. For instance, in the United States, Lawson, surveyed hundred tenth grade students and hundred twelfth grade students in order to determine their attitudes towards the various subject areas [5]. In the study, English, mathematics and reading were ranked ahead of Social Studies. A study conducted by Mensah, revealed that students do not show much seriousness in Social Studies because they are of the opinion that the subject is not difficult thus easy to pass [6]. Mensah also revealed that students do not take the learning of Social Studies seriously as they learn subjects like Mathematics and English, because they see Social Studies as an easy subject therefore less commitment to it and high commitment to Maths and English [6]. In the same study, some teachers from some Senior High Schools in the Accra metropolis like Accra Academy were also of the view that because most topics

in Social Studies are easily relatable, therefore students do not really have the urge to seriously learn it [6]. Participants described social studies as boring and far from anything they could relate to in their life. Because some students see the subject as a less difficult one, they do not pay attention when it is being thought. This situation may result in the poor performance of students in Social Studies. According to African Social Studies Programme [ASSP], as cited in stated that: "The teaching of Geography, History and Civics as separate disciplines in primary schools in Africa introduces an artificial division in the social sciences which should be discouraged in the early years of schooling [7,8]. The child should be introduced to the social sciences as an integrated field of study and should be made to appreciate right from the beginning of his education the close relationship between the disciplines which later emerge as distinct fields of learning". The researcher suspect that this apparent drift may be the result of ineffective learning of Social Studies content. Therefore, the quest for this study is to critically look into the various pedagogical methods of teaching Social Studies lessons and how these methods can improve learning.

Significance of the Study

The review is expected to be of relevance to educational policy and decision makers responsible for the development and improvement of the teaching of Social Studies in Senior High schools. This is because the outcome of this review will reveal the various kinds of pedagogical methods and approaches in teaching Social Studies. This will help the Ghana Education Service (GES) to have a greater insight into the scope of Social Studies, factors that affect teaching and learning of Social Studies, the pedagogical methods used in the teaching of Social Studies among others. This paper will also help researchers who want to do related and further studies in this area and lastly it would be of high significance to Social Studies teachers in the second-cycle schools in Ghana and across the world.

Literature Review

The Scope of Social Studies

The term "scope" had become popular in educational circles after 1945. Developments between the two world wars led to the emergence of new patterns of selecting the content for Social Studies programme. Until quite recently the term "scope of Social Studies" had been shifting sand [9]. Curriculum experts are yet to agree on what the term, scope of Social Studies, is, as it varies from writer to writer.

According to Banks at the lower grade in school the scope of the subject is based on institutions and communities such as the home, family, the school, the neighbourhood and the community [10]. He goes on further, to say, that at the higher level a variety of elective courses such as sociology, psychology and problems of democracy are offered. In another development, Martorella writes that most educators would concede that Social Studies gain some of its identity from the social science, such as history, political science, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology and psychology [11]. In explaining the scope of Social Studies, GES emphasizes that Social Studies takes its source from geography, history, economics and civic education and integrates it in a fashion that creates a subject of its own. Ravitch sums it up by saying, "Social Studies is seen as a broad umbrella that covers a range of subjects, disciplines, and skills" [12,13]. It is significant to note that when subject areas are used to define the scope of Social Studies, perhaps the objective is to promote understanding and values associated with the subject areas.

For Aggarwal the scope of Social Studies should include a study of relationships, functional study of natural sciences and arts and a study of current affairs [14]. In keeping with this thematic nature, Tamakloe writes that "the structure of the content selected for the teaching and learning process in Social Studies must be such that it cuts across disciplines" [15]. To him this can be possible if the content is thematic in nature. He adds; "themes such as the school community, our local community, the national community, our continent and others like citizenship, cooperation, interdependence and nationalism easily lend themselves to organization which relies heavily on the use of concepts, facts, skills and values from various disciplines". It must be emphasized, however, that Social Studies and social science are distinct programmes. To achieve its overall goals Social Studies promotes learning experiences that have both a distinct content focus and process focus. The latter for instance provides opportunities for learners to become actively involved with interpreting and judging knowledge. It could be inferred from the discussion that the scope of Social Studies is unlimited. It is in this light that Leming & Ellington describe the scope of Social Studies as "boundless, eschewing substantive content and lacking focus for effective practice [16]." They added that, "students rank Social Studies courses as one of their least liked subjects and Social Studies textbooks are largely superficial and vapid". Zevin in his "personal prologue" writes that, "part of the reason Social Studies is disliked by so many students are the arguments, knowledge of facts, names, places and all the facts they had to know" [17].

Perhaps the debate about the scope of Social Studies may be partly due to the nature of the subject. According to Tamakloe the boundless nature exhibited by the scope of Social Studies is the apparent result of the multiplicity of concepts, skills, knowledge, and values that can be utilized to explain issues, phenomena and solve any problem which faces society [9]. Commenting on the nature of Social Studies Ross and Marker remarked that: "Social Studies is the most inclusive of all subjects and determining the boundaries of what is taught in Social Studies requires decision about what social knowledge is most important, which skills and behaviours are most valuable, and what values are most significant [18]. As a result, the field curriculum terrain is, has been, and will continue to be subject to debate".

It appears the problem of selection of scope is due partly to subject matter proliferation in Social Studies and also curriculum innovations. In the words of Preston "these innovations, influence not only method of study but seek to shape the Social Studies scope and sequence" [19]. The broad scope of subject matter and the amount of material that could be included in Social Studies is a serious concern for Social Studies education. All agree that selection of what to study is a major issue in planning Social Studies instruction due to its "competing vision and contradictions" [20].

Although Social Studies appears not to have an apparent core content, the challenge for Social Studies curriculum developers is to design an instructional programme that emphasizes depth of important ideas within appropriate breath of topic coverage. Thus, the selection of content must shape the needs of the learner and the nature of the society as they complement each other. A well-rounded Social Studies scope must therefore provide for the development of competencies and dispositions which will enable the learner to be creative, productive and innovative that serves as gateway to quality of life.

Factors That Affects Teaching and Learning of Social Studies Concepts

The literature includes many kinds of factors that affect the teaching and learning of Social Studies concepts. The following are some of the factors:

Competence of teachers

Tamakloe examined the status of Social Studies in Teacher Training Colleges in Ghana (now colleges of Education) and found out that the subject was ranked in the lower third, just above Physical Education popularly called P.E and Home Economics [21]. He noted that the College Principals ascribed the situation to lack of competent teachers. The need for well trained teachers to teach Social Studies has been emphasized by Social Studies educators including Aggarwal who made it abundantly clear that Social Studies more than any other subject requires well trained teachers [22]. A study by Mensah & Frimpong also reiterated that majority of Senior High School teachers representing 93% are of the view that competency of teachers (well-trained teachers) affects the attitude of students towards Social Studies. This confirms the claim made by Aggarwal [22]. Stanton's research with pre-service teachers revealed that two-thirds of them scored below the mid-point on an instrument that assessed teachers' knowledge about concepts in Social Studies education, while Kickbusch's classroom observational study revealed "a paucity of teaching skills with which to support Social Studies education goals" [23,24].

Lack of meaning of concepts

Social Studies teachers often present isolated facts with no regard to any context that might give meaning to concepts. Newman argues that bona fide discussion is usually suppressed by some teachers with the belief that the purpose of teaching is to transmit fixed knowledge to students [25]. This is unfortunate because memorizing a lot of facts as isolated bits of information does not generate the meaning of concepts. As Seefeldt has pointed out, student teachers who are taught Social Studies by rote are rather like parrots who have been taught to recite without understanding conceptual issues [26].

Lack of training in process skills

It has been found out that teachers do not for the most part, provide training or practice in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making or other process skills [27,28]. This confirms a study by Mensah & Frimpong which revealed that 59.7 percent of teachers lacked the ability to train students in critical thinking which affected students' attitude towards Social Studies [8]. In fact, the view that teachers should devote attention and time to teaching students how to think around concepts is popular among many educators today [29,30]. The latter writers, for instance, stressed that learners who leave school with highly developed thinking skills have powerful intellectual skills they can apply to develop and understand other concepts in new situations.

Avoidance of controversial issues

Either out of fear of complaints (e.g. from parents) or out of personal preference, most Social Studies teachers are unwilling to take up in the classroom the controversies that arise in society that must be addressed in Social Studies lessons [31]. The teaching of controversial issues is an integral part of the teaching and learning of Social Studies concepts and no effective teacher should compromise this on the altar of fear or intimidation in so far as such controversies are not personalized.

Limited shallow textbook content

Most Social Studies texts are restricted in content, superficial in the treatment of concepts, and present facts out of their contexts [31]. In Ghana, most Social Studies textbooks have been written by people with superficial knowledge of the subject, and hence sub-standard, a situation which seriously undermines the effective teaching and learning of Social Studies concepts. The limited subject matter and uninspired treatment in Social Studies textbooks might not matter so much if Social Studies teachers use a rich array of other instructional resources. Research has indicated, on the contrary, that most Social Studies teaching is textbook-bound [31,32].

The Concept of Teaching

Teaching may be explained as an activity of imparting knowledge, skills, competencies and values to learners. It involves creating situations to facilitate learning and motivating learners to have interest in what is being transmitted to them. Teaching is a process of arranging conditions under which the teacher causes the learner to change his or her learning behaviour consciously in the direction of his or her goals [33].

According to Farrant, when a teacher teaches, it is expected that the learner should do something [34]. Here both the teacher and the learner are complementing each other's effort in the teaching and learning process. Teaching then is regarded as a process of bringing about learning. In this regard, teaching becomes an art of inducing students or pupils to behave in ways assumed to 'lead to learning. Melby attempted to explain the concept of learning as the involvement of students in the teaching and learning [35]. That is, through teaching the learner must not only be made to love learning and appreciate its importance but he must also be equipped with the skills of learning on his own so that he will be able to stand on his own when the teacher ceases to be on the scene. To achieve this then, the student must be motivated, inspired and encouraged. As a matter of fact, teaching is not simply a matter of encouraging and developing the mental and physical faculties but it is also encouraging and training the emotional aspect of the student's life. Effective teaching should enable the teacher to develop emotional stability through the creation of friendly atmosphere in the teaching and learning process. This atmosphere encourages frankness and sincerity on the part of the learner. It helps to minimize the feeling of inferiority and makes the learner feel he is of some importance. Thus, a friendly relationship between the teacher and the learner is the foundation of all teaching.

Motivation to Teaching and Learning Processes

The realization of behavioral potentiality seems to be related to the learner's level of motivation. For example, a student who has learned the names of all the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations would be expected to recite them with particular energy under some sort of incentive. The incentive is said to raise the student's level of motivation. Motivation is thought to be essential to learning and the two are intrinsically linked. Any arrangement designed to encourage learning must provide for motivation as well. Any teaching, whether in the home or at school has to make decisions about motivation to rely on. Through his position of responsibility, the teacher has to provide incentives, that is, rewards and sanctions and part of his success will depend upon his skills in applying them to encourage the learning he wishes with the minimum of the by-products he prefers to avoid. Woods stated that whatever students do as part of an activity or experience, it is essential to think, reflect

on its implications and learn from it [36]. Any teaching method can be used well or poorly. It is ineffectual to engage students in activities, the point of which is out of focus to them or which they find tiresome or needlessly time consuming as in the case of a lecture that is above their understanding or a lecture inaudibly given at a pace that precludes reflection. Ineffectual teaching, whether it involves an activity or not has adverse effects on motivating students to learn. Like psychologists, students inevitably realize the efficacy of an activity while learning. They are ready to condemn ineffective teaching and commend effective teaching. They know what they need.

That is time to think about the subject under discussion in whatever way it is provided. They therefore appreciate teachers who teach sufficiently to their understanding to enable them compile their own notes. They are also content with those who duplicate notes in advance and make time available for the class to attempt problems and discuss difficulties. Thus, as a complement they usually say he teaches while you take notes, so you understand everything you put down. Most comments about teachers and teaching methods reflect in some way the sense of achievement or its absence which students experience. One thing students look for is assistance from their teachers in developing their skills of learning. Tutorials and group discussions contribute to a sense of achievement and increase motivation. The information that students receive about the requirement of their courses and the usefulness of feedback on their performance, contribute to motivate them. A student's sense of achievement derives from comparing his performance with other students and success goes to reinforce motivation. Hughes & Hughes were of the view that knowledge on how children learn is the first essential step for success in teaching [37].

They stated three ways of achieving this:

1. The first way is by arranging that students go through practical activities that are intrinsically interesting.
2. To entice students to want to learn and be taught is by giving them problems to solve and presenting them with challenges. Much good teaching begins by propounding a question.
3. Select subject matter that appeals to the learners' natural interest. Children who are well taught are very active and therefore perform well. Teachers who enjoy teaching are always in danger of judging their work by the exhilarating effect that it produces. Teachers ought to feel exhilarated but the effect must spread to the pupils.

Teaching Methodology

The diversity of purposes and approaches as well as the broad multi-disciplinary nature of Social Studies call for a variety of teaching methods (pedagogical methods) and strategies. As Glickman puts it: Effective teaching is not a set of generic practices, but instead it is a set of context-driven decision about teaching [38]. Effective teachers do not use the same set of practices forever whether students are learning or not and then adjust their practices accordingly, instead what effective teachers do is to constantly reflect about their work.

Selection of Teaching Methods (Pedagogy)

Three general criteria influence the selection of teaching methods across the syllabus; these are the learning objectives, learners and practical requirements. Column 4 of the syllabus states the general approaches to teaching Social Studies thus:

Teaching learning activities that will ensure maximum pupil participation in the lessons are presented. Try to avoid rote learning and drill oriented method and rather emphasize participatory teaching and learning and also emphasize the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. Pupil must be taught to be problem solvers [11].

Thus, activity or participatory oriented strategies and methods are identified as important channels of learning. It appears the syllabus has been developed this way because of the defects associated with rote learning which is no longer adequate in coping with the technological world. The learner now requires knowledge, skills and competencies to enable him solve problems. The methodology has been designed to enable the pupil to identify learning as an integral part of his life.

From the foregoing it can be inferred that the syllabus combines all the existing approaches characteristic of Social Studies education. As a result, a variety of appropriate teaching strategies should be employed to engage pupils in reflective and interactive learning. The Social Studies teacher should therefore adopt the right approach prescribed by the syllabus to enable pupils to identify learning as an integral part of life. The approaches that the teacher adopts should be learner-centered to fulfil the requirement of the existing syllabus. It is therefore clear that interactive pupil centered learning approaches are recommended to arouse pupils' interest and to engage them as independent learners.

Methods and Strategies Used in Teaching Social Studies- A discussion on Pedagogy

According to Melinger methods refer to a particular style of instruction, while strategy is the overall plan used by a teacher to guide instruction during a period of time [39]. Africa Social and Environmental Studies Programme [ASESP], points out that method is the overall approach to teaching, while strategy is about sequencing of the technique during a class period [40]. From the quotations one realizes that the degree of pedagogical skill is essential to Social Studies teaching. As Byrne suggested, it is surely plausible that in so far as a teacher's knowledge provides the basis for his or her effectiveness, the most relevant knowledge will be that which concerns the particular topic being taught and the relevant pedagogical strategies for teaching it to the particular types of pupils to whom it will be taught [41].

The suggestion by Byrne clearly indicates that, learning does not necessarily involve knowledge of subject matter but good pedagogical skill which may interact with subject matter to bolster or reduce teacher performance [41,42]. It goes further to explain that the overall positive approach employed by the teacher ensures successful teaching and learning. It can therefore be said that efficient teaching depends to a large extent on teachers' mastery of a repertoire of methods and strategies.

Tamakloe contends that if the organization of Social Studies is to be effective, the teacher must be well-versed in the use of a variety of teaching methods and strategies besides the possession of adequate knowledge in several disciplines [15]. It can therefore be deduced that teachers' overall approach to teaching depends to a larger extent on their good methods of teaching.

According to Aggarwal good methods of teaching Social Studies should aim at the inculcation of love of work, developing the desire to work efficiently to the best of one's ability, providing numerous opportunities of participation by the learner and developing the capacity for clear thinking among others [14]. A study by Mensah & Frimpong revealed that majority of Social Studies teachers in Senior High School representing 97.2 percent are of the strong view that Social Studies teachers should use different methods when teaching the content of the course and that can improve students' attitude towards Social Studies [8]. Banks sums it up when he says skillful teaching in Social Studies is paramount without it effective learning cannot take place [43]. Methods commonly used in Social Studies include the following: lecture, discussion, simulation, role play, fieldwork, team teaching, project work and inquiry.

Lecture Method

Lecture which is the most frequently used method of instruction has dominated formal education over the years. It is the oldest and the most traditional method of teaching. With this method, the teacher is seen as an icon in the class. Learners are made to listen attentively while the teacher deposits in the mind of learners. That is why this method is called by some educationists as the banking method of teaching. According to Merryfield & Muyanda-Mutebi several researches in Africa indicate that Social Studies teachers use the same expository, teacher-centered methods of teaching history, and geography [44]. Agyeman-Fokuo asserts, that the lecture method, which places emphasis on rote learning is the main method of teaching Social Studies in many colleges in Ghana [45].

Vella sees the lecture as the formal presentation of content by the educator for the subsequent learning and recall in examination by students [46]. Lyule adds that, the lecture is the oral presentation of instructional material [47]. Bligh gives a fitting summary of the outcomes associated with the lecture method as: "The balance of evidence favours this conclusion. Use lectures to teach information [48]. From Bligh's assertion it can be deduced that the purpose of lecture is to clarify information to a large group in a short period of time. It is used primarily to cover certain amount of content as it permits the greatest amount of materials to be presented. It is normally characterized by the one-way communication. Ideas or concepts are presented by the teacher while students listen and take down notes. This method is also called the teacher transmission method or the teacher-centred method.

Discussion Method

An important way to involve students actively in what they are supposed to learn is through discussion. This teaching strategy is characterized by the teacher raising a number of pertinent questions on a theme or topic and inviting students to share ideas, express their views or opinions on the topic or theme under discussion. Brookfield describes discussion "as both inclusionary and participatory because it implies that everyone has some useful contribution to make to the educational effort and because it claims to be successful with actively involving learners" [49]. Discussion method take varying forms depending on the objectives, class size and the ability of the students. According to Nacino-Brown, Oke & Brown, there are four types of discussion method of teaching and learning namely, whole-class discussion, small-group discussion, panel discussion and debate discussion.

With the whole discussion, the teacher becomes the leader. He poses a problem or question to an issue then therefore initiates the

interaction among students. The teacher ensures that students take part in the discussion, share ideas, make strong arguments in order for them to achieve their objectives for the day. The teacher comes in when students need further clarification and explanation to an issue or problem and the teacher also does well by summarizing the discussions of the class by letting students know the various gaps in their discussions, clarifying and making the next objectives clear to students for their next lesson.

With the small group discussion, the teacher or the facilitator divides the class into smaller discussion groups and appoints a student leader to lead the session. The teacher occasionally assesses the progress being made by students and ask questions when the need be. The teacher also guides students from time-to-time when they are deviating from the lesson or discussion objectives. After the discussion, the student's leader who was appointed by the teacher makes a report of whatever went on in the group and reports to the class.

The next technique under the discussion method is the panel discussion. With the panel discussion, some students say five or six are selected in the form of a panel. These students are assigned an aspect of topic chosen to present within a limited stipulated period of time. As the panel speaker in the group presents, the others listen attentively and jot down some points or questions. Listeners (students) can either refute, accept or raise questions for submissions made by the panel. The teacher therefore comes in at last to summarize and draw appropriate conclusions.

The last technique in the discussion method is the debate discussion. With this technique, two groups of speakers who are students are assigned a topic or choose a topic to speak for or against a motion. This technique encourages public speaking and the ability to think and criticize meaningfully and objectively. Aside all, this technique encourages meaningful deliberation and arguments of opposing points made.

Arends sees the discussion method as "an approach with three ingredients. First, both student and teacher talk are required; students are expected to enter into dialogue and conversation with academic materials; and students are expected to practice and publicly display their thinking" [50]. To Brookfield, the purpose of discussion "is to engender change in learners what teachers define as desirable attitudes". This is true and most suitable for Social Studies teaching which is full of controversial issues [49]. Amoah's study on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in the Senior Secondary Schools of the central region of Ghana established that discussion is the most popular method used in teaching Social Studies, apparently based on the fact that discussion ensures democracy in the classroom and also leads towards achieving affective ends especially in Social Studies teaching [51].

Role-Playing/Drama

One method which can be used in teaching concepts in Social Studies is role playing. This technique motivates students to learn by expressing in their own words the drama of the event. According to Clark role playing is an attempt to make a situation clear or to solve a problem by unrehearsed dramatization [52]. Shaftel & Shaftel describe role playing as a group problem solving method that enables young people to explore human problems in a spontaneous enactment followed by guided discussion [53]. Mellinger on his

part defines role playing as structured activity permitting students to take the part of a person in an imaginary situation and to act the part in a realistic manner as possible [38]. Role play then could be described as a spontaneous acting out of a situation to show the emotional reaction of the people in a real situation. Its use in the classroom is to train students in effective problem solving as students pick social problems for study. The divergence between drama and role play is that while dramatization needs rehearsal, role playing is impulsive. Role-playing basically said to be on-the-spot acting while drama is not. Most of what happens in drama is role playing. According to ASESP, role-playing enables a learner to remember as much as 80% of what has been learnt. This confirms a study by Mensah that role-playing is a vital part of training especially in the police training academies. Mensah further alluded that, in role-playing, trainees assume roles and act out situations connected to the learning concepts.

Simulation/Game

Closely related to role playing is simulation. ASESP defines simulation as “pretending, an imitation” [40]. It further states that “in some cases simulation is role playing an imaginary event that has a set of rules”. Giley defines simulation as a technique which enables learners to obtain skills, competencies, knowledge or behaviours by becoming involved in situations that are similar to those in real situations [54]. Clark states that simulation combines role playing and problem solving and it consists of students performing a contrived situation that duplicates a real situation so that children will understand the real situation [52]. Simulation then is a model of physical reality. It tries to simplify a complex social reality.

The term simulation game is sometimes encountered. The aim of educational games is to lead students to learn through play. The teacher here acts as a referee and at the same time a judge. According to Martorela simulations rely on gaming technique and consequently are sometimes called simulation games [11]. A simulation game is therefore a blend of simulation and game which allows students to assume positions of other people and make decisions for them. It does allow students to be less dependent on the teacher as they actively participate in the lesson rather than as passive observers. For example, boxers use simulation techniques to train themselves to become good boxers. Mensah made it clear that simulation is a way employee to practice skills. Mensah was making a direct reference to the police training academies. He emphasized that, simulations are effective in training emergency preparedness in the police academies.

Team Teaching

Social Studies with its wide array of specialized topics call for collaborative teaching as a pedagogical method. For many Social Studies educators, one way to address the problem of one teacher for one class is through team teaching [55]. Team teaching according to Davis cannot be easily defined. According to him there have been several contrasting definitions [56]. Bess defines team teaching as a process in which all team members are equally involved and responsible for students’ instruction, assessment and the setting and meeting of learning objectives [57]. Goetz defines team teaching as a group of two teachers working together to plan, conduct and evaluate the learning activities for the same group of learners [58].

On the question of contrasting definitions, Davis on his part suggested that team teaching refers most often to the teaching done

in interdisciplinary course by the several team members who have joined together to produce that course [56]. To him team teaching therefore involves a continuum of models and practices which are only distinguishable from one another on the basis of collaboration within the teaching team. In teaching therefore, members are equally involved in all aspect of the management and delivery of the subject [59].

Maroney on her part identifies five models for teaching Social Studies including [60];

1. Traditional Team Teaching: In this case the teachers actively share the instruction of content and skills to all students. A frequent application of this approach is when one teacher presents the new information to the class while the other teacher takes notes or constructs a semantic map on the overhead projector as the students listen and observe. In Traditional Team Teaching both teachers accept equal responsibility for the education of all students and are actively involved throughout the class period.
2. Complimentary, Supportive Team Teaching: This situation occurs when one teacher is responsible for teaching the content to the student while the other teacher takes charge of providing follow up activities on related topics.
3. Parallel Instruction: The class is divided into two groups each teacher responsible for teaching the same material to his or her students.
4. Differentiated Split Class: This type involves dividing the class into smaller groups according to learning needs, one teacher would challenge the learners who grasped the concepts more quickly while one teacher would review or challenge those who need further instruction.
5. Monitoring Teacher: This situation occurs when one teacher assumes the responsibility for instructing the entire class while the other teacher circulates the room and monitors students understanding and behaviour.

From the definitions, these characteristics can be identified. First, two or more teachers share the responsibility of teaching a group of students at the same time. Secondly, the regular class teacher or a coordinator plans the teaching of a topic while other teachers are invited to teach an aspect of the topic which invariably leads to collaboration.

In spite of the potential problem inherent in team teaching due to lack of collaboration and cohesiveness among team members, there are several pedagogical advantages for teachers and students.

In the first place it overcomes the inherent traditional form of teaching characterized by teacher isolation in the classroom as students receive instruction from expert knowledge [58, 61, 62]. Again, as exchange of ideas goes on in the classroom teachers learn new ways or methods of teaching and this helps to foster professional development among teachers. Additionally, team teaching can aid in improving friendship between teachers.

On the other hand, students are exposed to a variety of teaching styles and approaches which increase the potential for the team to meet the various learning styles of students [58, 63]. Students also benefit through the opportunity to receive instruction from experts in specific areas of a discipline’s knowledge base which exposes them to alternate issues [61]. This is supported by Jacob, Honey, & Jordan

when they pointed out that, “the greater the number of members teaching as part of a team, the higher the probability that a student will encounter a teacher who matches their learning style” [64].

The Project Method

The varied approaches to teaching Social Studies also call for the project method. The project which had its origin in the professionalization of an occupation was introduced in the curriculum so that students could learn at school to work independently and combine theory with practice. It is considered a means by which students develop independence and responsibility and practice social and democratic modes of behaviours [65].

In Social Studies teaching, the project method may involve a local study whereby learners may be assigned to investigate and write a report about their local community. The report could be approached collaboratively; areas to look for in their community may include the location, occupation and festivals. Each group writes a report and shares their ideas.

The project method has a varied advantage. It helps to deal with students who have different abilities. One of the advantages of project work is that due to the combination of group and individual activities the more skilled students can help the lesser skilled ones and in so doing both benefit. The student who is a good writer can help to revise and edit a weaker writer’s essay; the learning process is therefore integrated [66]. On the other hand, in project work, students develop skills of analyzing and formulating hypothesis; through this, students come to a logical understanding of the problem or issue to be solved. Project goals are established by the students based on their own background and passion or desire for the subject under study. In some occasions the student can be under the influence of a teacher or a supervisor to develop the passion to do project and even the area of interest to study can also be guided. These students are in the end motivated by the teacher or supervisor to work through the various steps in writing the project in order to achieve goals successfully.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork may be explained as the teaching and learning which takes place outside the classroom or laboratories, usually planned and organized to take place within the school, the environs of the school, the local community or outside the local community. According to Hayford fieldtrips are planned excursions to sites beyond the classroom for the purpose of obtaining information and provides an opportunity for first hand observation of phenomena [67]. It is for this reason that Tamakloe recognizes that the nature of the learning experience should therefore enable the student to collect information in his immediate and wider environment [15]. Both Hayford and Tamakloe see fieldwork as an important tool for Social Studies teaching and learning. Their remarks remind teachers to move away from situations where students and teachers are completely fixed in the four walls of the classroom. Varying terms have been used to describe fieldwork. Kilpatrick uses the term fieldtrips, excursions, study trips and educated walks [68]. Even though Kilpatrick uses the term excursions it does not mean fieldtrip is supposed to be sightseeing but “educated walks” which means the purpose of fieldwork is educational knowledge to be gained by learners.

Fieldwork activities can be organized under three stages these include pre-fieldwork activities, fieldwork activities and post fieldwork

activities. Duration of fieldwork depends on the objectives and the amount of work to be studied. Phenomenon studies can be of economic, historical, geographical or cultural importance. Fieldwork is advantageous because it provides the student the technique of problem solving and critical thinking, group work procedure, the locating and interpretation of information from books and other sources. Field trips are undertaken for educational purposes and basically organized by the school. Fieldtrips if done well can be of geographical/environmental, historical, cultural/social, economic, political and religious significance. This helps to broaden the knowledge of students on the various educational aspects as listed. As Anderson & Piscitella observed fieldtrip activities have long lasting consequences for students, typically involving memories of specific social context as well as specific content [69]. If Social Studies teaching is to be successful fieldwork activities become prominent. A study by emphasized and confirmed that site visitations (fieldtrips) is one of the mostly used pedagogical methods used at the police training schools in teaching police trainees.

Inquiry Method

The nature and objectives of Social Studies in Ghanaian Senior High Schools emphasize students’ familiarity with their physical and social environment. This therefore calls for inquiry method, described as a teaching learning situation which emphasizes students’ active participation in the learning process [70].

Inquiry methods are advantageous because as students solve problems themselves they are able to retain and remember. Through inquiry students become familiar with needs and problems in their environment [71]. It is therefore a highly recommended method for handling Social Studies lessons as it develops pupils’ ability to inquire, investigate and discover.

Resource Persons

The most important resource of a community is its people. Within the community there are individuals who possess special skills which can be tapped for the benefit of students. A resource person can be described as someone other than the regular class or subject teacher who is well versed or knowledgeable in an area of learning or experience who may be called upon to facilitate learning. The resource person is therefore supposed to have a richer experience in his area of specialty than the teacher.

In teaching Social Studies, a resource person may be picked from the immediate locality or outside. Among those who may be invited include doctors, nurses, village heads and police officers. These people can be invited as guest speakers [39]. The need for a resource person becomes necessary as the teacher may not have the first-hand knowledge in an area he or she is teaching. The presence of resource persons makes lesson more exciting as it breaks down teacher’s familiarity with learners’.

Discussions

Firstly, the review found out from Tamakloe that “the structure of the content selected for the teaching and learning process in Social Studies must be such that it cuts across disciplines” [15]. To him this can be possible if the content is thematic in nature. This is true and justifiable in the sense that Social Studies is seen as an integrated subject which draws much of its content from the social sciences such as geography, history, economics, political science, anthropology, sociology, government among others. With the integration nature of

the subject, it serves as a good device in terms students becoming diversified in a lot of issues that affects the country and broaden their scope in terms of their social, environmental and economic well-being.

Secondly, it could be inferred from the discussion that the scope of Social Studies is unlimited. It is in this light that Leming & Ellington describe the scope of Social Studies as “boundless, eschewing substantive content and lacking focus for effective practice” [16]. This confirms that the concepts, principles, generalizations are organised and taught as an integrated knowledge. The integration nature of the subject helps individuals to solve their personal problems as well as problems of the society they live in.

Thirdly, the literature revealed that “students rank Social Studies courses as one of their least liked subjects and Social Studies textbooks are largely superficial and vapid”. A study conducted by Mensah & Frimpong revealed that majority of the respondents claimed that teachers lack the ability to use different methods in teaching Social Studies, there are inadequate teaching and learning materials, the inability of Social Studies teachers to employ resource persons among others [8]. The literature supported that if some of these problems or challenges as outlined by Mensah & Frimpong are taken into necessary consideration and solved, then Social Studies would become of the much-liked subjects in the country [8].

Fourthly, the need for well trained teachers to teach Social Studies has been emphasized by Social Studies educators. The literature revealed that well-trained teachers are needed in the field of Social Studies to make the subject more practical and interesting to students. From the literature review, it was very clear that Mensah & Frimpong stated that well-trained teachers are a major factor that affects the attitude of students towards the learning of Social Studies. It means that well-trained teachers if adopted and used is a necessary condition but not a sufficient condition [8].

Furthermore, it was revealed from the literature that the factors that affects teaching and learning of social studies concepts are the competence of teachers, lack of meaning of concepts, lack of training in process skills, avoidance of controversial issues and limited shallow textbook content. This confirms what Mensah & Frimpong claimed in their research work. It was further revealed that one thing students looked for is assistance from their teachers in developing their skills of learning [8]. Tutorials and group discussions contribute to a sense of achievement and increase motivation.

Lastly, the literature brought to light that, the various pedagogical practices employed by most or all teachers in teaching Social Studies are; the lecture method, the discussion method, role-playing, simulation, team teaching, the project method, fieldwork, inquiry and resource persons. When these methods of teaching Social Studies are combined well and effectively it would help lesson objectives in Social Studies be achieved without any difficulty.

Conclusions

From the literature review and the discussions, the researcher concluded that factors that affect students’ attitude towards Social Studies include; teachers not showing interest in teaching controversial issues, teachers’ inability to give needed assistance to students, teachers’ inability to use different teaching methods in

Social Studies classes, inadequate teaching and learning materials and inability of Social Studies teachers to employ resource persons in times of difficulty [72-141]. It is also concluded that Social Studies is an integrated field of study which helps to broaden the scope of students. It can be concluded that students rank Social Studies subject as their least-liked subject as a major result of lack of well-trained and competent teachers in the area of studies. Lastly Social Studies combine various pedagogical methods and strategies to help lesson objectives to be achieved successfully.

Recommendations

From the key reviews made and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made by the researcher;

1. Students’ attitude towards Social Studies can be improved by providing competent teachers for the subject, teachers being interested in teaching controversial issues, teachers employing different teaching methodologies, teachers being readily available to give students the needed assistance in Social Studies, adequate provision of teaching and learning materials and teachers engaging the services of resource persons in areas of difficulty.
2. The Ghana Education Service should recruit professional teachers to teach Social Studies in Senior High schools. This will help in giving them knowledge to become excellent students’ in Social Studies. Colleges of Education should also recruit competent teachers who have in-depth knowledge in the subject and can make it more practical for the subject to be liked by students.
3. Teachers of Social Studies should make the class lively to solve the problem of period boredomness on the part of the learners in the teaching and learning process.
4. There is the need for a tripartite collaboration among the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service and other Non-governmental educational organizations to provide the needed teaching and learning materials for the teaching and learning of Social Studies as cited in Mensah & Frimpong (2020) [9].
5. Teachers of Social Studies should employ different methodologies in in teaching the subject.
6. Lastly, the researcher recommends that the various pedagogical methods listed in this paper should be well-combined and use to improve the attitude of students towards the learning of Social Studies.

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