

Social Studies Pedagogy in Ghana

¹Felicia Esinam Pufaa¹, Mohammed Muntaka Abdul Rahman², and Paul Tongkomah Saayir³

¹Department of Social Studies Education, University of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences Education, Ghana

²Ibn Haldun University, Başakşehir, Istanbul, Türkiye

³Department of Business Education, University of Business and Integrated Development Studies, Upper West Region, Wa. Ghana

Abstract

The purpose of Social Studies Education is to help the youth develop ability to make informed and reasoned decisions; facilitate their personal growth and development of their respective communities. Key features that distinguish Social Studies (SS) as a field of study is its intent to promote values and attitudes for civic competence. Relevant pedagogy is critical to the teaching and learning of the subject. As a result, the main purpose of this study is to examine pedagogy for the teaching and learning of Social Studies in Ghanaian Senior High Schools (GSHSs) using related empirical secondary literature. It was found among others that, the inquiry method, discussion method, project method, field trip, lecture method, problem-based approach, role play, simulations, resource persons and team-teaching approaches are pedagogical approaches considered more responsive to the teaching and learning of SS. Conclusions also pointed to the fact that pedagogy plays a significant role in teaching and learning and the successful achievement of the objectives of Social Studies lessons and requires that teachers employ and combine variety of pedagogical methods and strategies in lesson delivery. It was recommended that teachers of Social Studies should employ different methodologies to motivate and arouse learners' interest in the subject because students become more interested in a topic when a variety of teaching methods are used to achieve varied lesson objectives. It is also recommended among others that the Ministry of Education, the Curriculum Research Development Division (CRDD), Social Studies curriculum specialists, regional, district as well as heads of various second cycle institutions should organize workshops for teachers to update their knowledge in varied pedagogies to improve the teaching and learning of the subject.

Keywords: *Social Studies, Pedagogy, Teaching, Curriculum*

Introduction

Social Studies (SS) is a multidisciplinary field of study that is much more difficult to describe than single disciplines such as history, economics, geography, sociology, anthropology, among others. Nevertheless, key features that distinguishes Social Studies (SS) as a field of study comprises its intent to promote civic competence and its integrative nature (National Counsel for Social Studies) (NCSS, 1992; NCSS, 2010a; Kamkam, 2015). The major purpose of SS curricula in Ghana is to improve the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of students to assume public positions as responsible democratic citizens of their countries (NCSS, 1992; 1994; Nelson, 2001; Stanley, 2001; Vinson, 2006; Biesta, 2006; Mukhongo, 2010; Kankam, 2015). SS programs also integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes within and across disciplines (NCSS, 1992; 1994; 2010a).

The purpose of SS education is to help the youth to develop the ability to make informed decisions toward their welfare, growth and development (NCSS, 1992; NCSS, 1994; NCSS, 2010a). SS programs help learners to develop the knowledge base and attitude impacted from academic disciplines which results into specialized views of reality as well as promoting civic competence. It is therefore important for students of SS to understand, appreciate, and apply the knowledge, processes, and attitudes from the diverse academic disciplines (NCSS, 1992; NCSS, 1994; NCSS, 2010b).

Senior High School (SHS) outfits is an environment where learners have reached critical stages of their character, career and intellectual transformation. This makes it critical for students to grasp the basic tenets of responsible citizenship. An in-depth content knowledge complemented with appropriate pedagogy has a high potential of helping learners assimilate and comprehend lessons. This could ultimately facilitate the achievement of the purpose and objectives of SS in Ghana.

To avert the problem of using the wrong and ineffective approaches for teaching SS in Ghanaian SHSs, this study mainly seeks to examine the varied approaches to teaching SS and identify effective methods of teaching the interdisciplinary subject. The questions that remain unanswered of what this study seeks to answer are: what is the history of SS in Ghana? What is the nature and scope of SS? Which pedagogy are used to teach SS? Which of these pedagogies as more applicable to the Teaching of SS in Ghana? The intent of this study is to support SS instructional facilitators to better deliver the subject in Ghanaian Senior High Schools (SHSs) where learners have reached critical social transformative stages of their lives; and therefore, need effective understanding of the subject to achieve its goal of responsible citizenship for effective national transformation and development.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: Literature Review - the history of SS education in Ghana; nature, scope and curriculum of SS education; relevant pedagogy of SS education; methodology; summary, conclusion and recommendation.

History of Social Studies Education in Ghana

According to Dwomoh (2018), it is necessary to study the history of a subject in order to ensure better understanding of the subject matter, the content and to assist curriculum revision. Social Studies education initially started in the United State of America where the Social Studies

movement was formed as a result of the influence of John Dewey (Salia-Bao, 1990). This resulted in the formation of the progressive education called the Pragmatists (Salia-Bao, 1990). They stressed the progressive philosophy which was based on child-centered education, inquiry, and discovery learning.

The Social Studies program as a field of study was introduced into the curriculum of the teacher training colleges in Ghana as far back as the 1940s (Tamakloe, 1991a; Kankam, et. al., 2014). However, teachers' and students' negative perception and attitudes towards the Social Studies programme as well as the unavailability of resource materials among other problems made these earlier initiatives¹ futile in the 1950s (Agyemang-Fokuo, 1994).

Prior to that, many conferences held in various African countries informed the implementation of Social Studies as part of the Ghanaian curriculum. Subsequently, the Social Studies curriculum had undergone series of transitions right from the mid to the end of the 20th century.

By the early 1950s, the single subjects² had taken over the integrated Social Studies³ in the teacher training colleges (Tamakloe, 1991a). The purpose of the resumption of the single subject approach was because social sciences graduates could not cope with the integrated approach. Additionally, the students saw it as an opportunity to improve upon their grades in the single subject such as history, geography and economics. This is because training college students had specialization in the single subject and the integrated subject and this made them find difficulties in grasping the subject easily.

In the 1960s, African leaders and educationists saw the need to make changes in the educational curriculum. The first SS conference was held in the Endicott House of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It was aimed at developing the ability to identify and evaluate critically the economic, social, political and moral problems and situations students could face as citizens. Additionally, the conference aimed to sensitize students on their own culture, social heritage and the problems of developing African states and societies (Carnoy, 1972).

Social Studies was recommended as a subject to be taught in African schools during the Oxford and Mombasa conferences of 1967 and 1968 respectively. Particularly, an introduction of formal teaching and learning of Social Studies at primary schools in the African continent was then proposed. Tamakloe (2008) explained that, concerned educators in 1967 from the United States of America, Britain and eleven (11) African countries met at Queen's College, Oxford, to discuss variety of needs and priorities in curriculum development of the African countries, particularly at primary, secondary, and teacher training levels, critically saw the need for teaching Social Studies in African schools. Particularly, an introduction of formal teaching and learning of Social Studies at primary schools in the African continent was then proposed. Draft recommendations published

¹ The teaching of Social Studies during this period was first piloted at the Presbyterian Training College (Akropong), Wesley College (Kumasi) and Achimota Training College (Accra).

² Such as studying subjects like history, economics and geography separately.

³ Like drawing concepts, ideas, knowledge and views from different subject areas like history and geography to solve problems or explain issues.

after these conferences proposed new curricula for Social Studies for schools in the member countries, starting from the primary schools (Tamekloe, 2008).

In 1969, the Mombasa conference resulted in the formation of the African Social Studies Program (ASSP). The ASSP was a forum where Social Studies experts made collective use of their technical knowhow to develop a functional Social Studies curriculum for their respective countries. Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) begun to develop programs of instruction in environmental studies in Ghana in the same year. Tamekloe (2008), asserts that, between 1969 and 1980, major efforts were made to develop the curriculum for the integrated subject of Social Studies in order to pilot the teaching and learning of the subject, train personnel to take the subject and implement it nationwide.

Some of the initiatives according to Tamekloe (2008) includes:

- i. Scholarship from the British Council and the Education University of Bristol was awarded to some teachers to study courses in teaching Social Studies in England from 1969 to 1970.
- ii. Besides, twenty-two (22) teachers were sent to Wrexham, North Wales for training in Environmental Studies from 1970 to late 1970s. By 1971, these teachers returned with experience, knowledge and positive perception about Social Studies acquired abroad. These trainees later assumed the positions of subject organizers to spearhead the development of the integrated program in the regions and districts in Ghana.
- iii. The Senior High School syllabus and 4-year post-secondary training college syllabus in Social Studies were developed in 1975 by the CRDD.

In 1976, Social Studies became a school curriculum following the establishment of the experimental Junior High Schools which called for the training of student-teachers at the training colleges to handle the Social Studies course. However, low enrollment levels in Social Studies made teachers outnumber students which resulted in subsequent abandonment of Social Studies in the training colleges in 1981/82 academic year (Tamakloe, 2008). This was attributed to two reasons:

- i. There was no need for training specialist SS teachers who could not be absorbed into the education system.
- ii. Social Studies was not examined externally for certification, both at the teacher training colleges and Senior High school levels. This made tutors and students alike to develop poor attitudes in studying and developing SS.

The re-introduction of Social Studies as an elective and a core subject in the teacher training colleges and JHS levels as part of the Ghana's educational system respectively was aimed at preparing and training students to teach the subject at the pre-tertiary schools. These could be attributed to the works of 1987 Educational Review Committee reforms during the regime of the Provisional National Defense Council of Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings. Other factors accounting

for the reintroduction of SS and the teaching of the subject at the pre-tertiary schools were due to the following factors:

1. Printing of textbooks in Social Studies for JSS by the Ministry of Education and the CRDD in 1987.
2. Introduction of Bachelor of Education degree in Social Studies at the University of Cape Coast in 1988.
3. Introduction of Diploma in Social Studies at the University of Education, Winneba in 1989.
4. Introduction of Social Studies at the primary school level in 1991. It is upon this that the Ghana Social Studies Series for Primary Schools were published.
5. Resumption of the teaching and learning of Social Studies in the Teacher Training Colleges in 1990.

Nature and Scope of Social Studies Education in Ghana

Social Studies draws meaning from the series of societal transformation and from medieval to contemporary times. The subject is multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, and it takes its sources from geography, history, sociology, psychology, economics, and civic education. It is recognized in the curricula of numerous countries (NCSS, 2010b). Banks (1990), posits that at the lower grade levels, the subject is based on institutions and communities such as the home, family, the school, the neighbourhood and the community. He further asserts that, at the higher levels, a variety of elective courses such as sociology, psychology and problems of democracy are offered.

SS stands out as the most appropriate subject for citizenship education, according to researchers (Biesta, 2006; Mukhongo, 2010). SS takes its source from geography, history, economics and civic education and integrates it in a fashion that creates a subject of its own. SS is seen as a broad umbrella that covers a range of subjects, disciplines, and skills (Ravitch, 2003). Martorella (1994) indicated 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. It worth noting that when subject areas are used to define the scope of SS, perhaps the objective is to promote understanding and values associated with those subject areas.

SS has been seen as a prime discipline adopted to socialize the young and functions as a means of promoting progress towards the major social education goals that have been identified for the study of civic duties and the development of citizen participation skills, acquisition of desirable attitudes and values, civilized behaviour, among others (Sivakumar, 2018).

Social Studies is an area of study that communicates to students, civic responsibilities, formation of positive attitudes and values, building cognitive structures, necessary for and geared towards societal advancement. Its scope involves the "determination of what aspects of the various constituent contents would be most valuable for the realization of the objectives of Social Studies"(Deveci & Çengelci, 2008; Sivakumar, 2018).

Ross and Marker (2005), remarked that Social Studies is the most inclusive of all subjects and determining the boundaries of what is taught in SS requires decision about what social knowledge is most important, which skills and behaviours are most valuable, and what values are most significant. Tamakloe (1991a) concludes that the wide scope of SS is an apparent result of the

multiplicity of concepts, skills, knowledge, and values that could be utilized to explain issues, phenomena and solve problems facing society.

Pedagogy in Social Studies in Ghana

Not only do students perceive SS to be unexciting, but they also fail to see the relevance of SS to their everyday lives (Schug, Todd & Beery, 1982; Shaughnessy & Haladyna, 1985). However, students complain of a boring course if the content is uninteresting, and the teachers also fail to employ interesting and activity oriented instructional methods to make the subject compelling for students. Shaughnessy and Haladyna (1985), therefore, concluded that it is the teacher who is key to what SS will be for the student. Instruction tends to be dominated by the lecture, textbook or worksheets. Siler (1998), explained that teachers tend to use only one teaching style day after day, which denies students the opportunity of a variety of teaching techniques. Ellis, Fouts and Glenn (1992), further indicated that teachers often rely solely on text, lecturing, worksheets and traditional tests as methods of learning. However, students have more interest in a topic when a variety of teaching methods are implemented (Bonwell & Eisen, 1991; Chiodo & Byford, 2006; Byford & Russell, 2006; Mills & Durden, 1992; Slavin, 1994). Tamakloe (1991b), also contends that the teacher must be knowledgeable in the use of a variety of teaching methods and strategies besides the possession of adequate knowledge in several disciplines. Therefore, no single method of teaching SS could adequately satisfy all learning situations, topics and contents (Sivakumar, 2018).

Students in SS program must study the development of social phenomena and concepts over time; have a sense of place and interrelationships among places across time and space. They must draw from other disciplines appropriate to a more complete understanding of an idea or phenomenon. Social Studies programs reflect the changing nature of knowledge, fostering entirely new and highly integrated approaches to resolving issues of significance to humanity.

Kochlar (1984), posits that Social Studies teachers are expected to be conversant with the theory and practices of different methods of teaching because different lessons or units demand different approaches. 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.

Pedagogical Approaches to Social Studies Education in Ghana

The Secondary Education Commission (SEC) (1964-66), affirms that “Even the best curriculum and the most perfect syllabus remains dead unless quickened into life by the right methods of teaching and the right kind of teachers”. This implies that, the SS teacher, aside acquiring subject knowledge, must possess the competency to adapt and employ varied strategies and methods of teaching to compliment the teaching of the subject. Aggarwal (1982) stated that, good methods of teaching SS 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. A study by Mensah and Frimpong (2020) revealed that students’ attitude towards SS could be improved through the use of different methods in delivering SS content. Mensah (2020), concluded that, the teachers’ overall approach to teaching depends to a larger extent on their good methods of teaching.

The Inquiry Method

Inquiry-based learning is an approach to learning that emphasizes the student's role in the learning process. Ogene (2014) found that the inquiry method as a teaching pedagogy was the most effective. It encompasses critical thinking, inductive thinking, problem-solving, analysis, reflective inquiry or reflective thinking. Hammeness et. al. (2005:125), stressed that the inquiry teaching method consist of six different steps, that is the experience, state of uncertainty, framing of the problem, formulating hypothesis, exploration and evidencing and generalization. Thus, inquiry as a pedagogy for teaching adapts the scientific approach⁴, which allows students to explore, probe, analyze, and find answers and solutions to real-life situations and problems. Teaching as inquiry method is not the discovery of an answer that is lifted from a book, but rather, the development of an answer by the students and teachers themselves, based on the result of their investigation (Britzman, 2003:32). Ikwuazom (2005:3) affirms that, as learners start to use this method at secondary school level, a solid foundation for understanding how to use more sophisticated scientific methods must have been laid. The inquiry pedagogy allows for student's independence, space and room to explore his or her environment for solutions to address problems.

However, Mbang and Agba (2012:50), and Hartzler-Miller (2001: 23) indicated the shortfalls of inquiry pedagogy. They contended that, it stresses mostly on the cognitive aspects of the students and almost ignores the affective or the emotional aspects of learning. Inquiry pedagogy lovers must weigh the benefits of inquire against it costs and adequately strategize to maximize the use of it for the benefit of students.

Lecture Method

The lecture is old-fashioned yet a domineering pedagogy for teaching in almost all levels of the educational sector including SHSs. Lecture is the most frequently used method of instruction, and it has dominated formal education for many years. It is the oldest and the most traditional method of teaching (Mensah, 2020). Agyeman-Fokuo (1994), asserts that, the lecture method places emphasis on rote learning, and it is the main method of teaching SS in many colleges in Ghana. Shaughnessy and Haladyna (1985), concluded that it is the teacher who is key to what SS will be for the student. Instruction however tends to be dominated by the lecture, textbook or worksheets. The lecture pedagogy is teacher-centered which means students are passive listeners in either part or entire instructional process. Students are only able to develop good listening skills, pay attention to detail and have ability to take notes and synopsis from information conveyed by the teacher. Ideas or concepts are presented by the teacher while students listen and take down notes (Mensah, 2020).

The lecture method is efficient particularly in managing vast classes and presenting chunk of materials to large class size in an ample time. According to Mensah (2020), the purpose of lecture is to clarify information to a large group in a short period of time. The lecture pedagogy, however, encourages rote learning, which does not allow for rigorous use of the student's cognitive abilities

⁴ Such as identify problems, formulate hypotheses, gather information about the problem, test the hypotheses, draw conclusion and make meaningful decisions (Ogene, 2014).

in finding solutions to familiar and real-world situations. Students memorize and recall facts analogous to the teachers' material as presented. Vella (1992), sees the lecture as the formal presentation of content by the educator for the subsequent learning and recall in examination by students. The dull nature of the lecture method makes students less responsive to the objectives of instruction. Siler (1998), posits that teachers tend to use only one teaching style particularly the lecture method, day after day, which denies students the opportunity of a variety of teaching techniques (Shaughnessy & Haladyna; 1985; Schug, Todd & Beery, 1982).

Walker (2006), underscores the fact that the lecture method may not on its own achieve the optimum student participation and learning unless with the assistance of technological resources that are visual oriented which helps students digest and absorb information. It is important to note that instructors may expound upon the visual stimulus, but, with direct instruction, students play little role in the analysis or interpretation of the resources (Swan & Locascio, 2008).

Field Trips

Fieldwork may be explained as the teaching and learning that 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. Hayford adds that, fieldtrips are planned excursions to sites beyond the classroom for the purpose of obtaining information and providing an opportunity for firsthand observation of phenomena (Hayford, 1992). It is for this reason that, Tamakloe (1991a), recognizes that the nature of the learning experience should therefore enable the student to collect information in his immediate and wider environment. Fieldtrips thus, demand optimum observation and gathering of first-hand information relevant to the teaching and learning process. This agrees with the assertion of (Kochhar, 1984), that a trip to a monument, fort, temple, institutions, among others, provides the most first-hand experiences. It is in the light of this that Kilpatrick (1965), adopts the term fieldtrips, excursions, study trips and educated walks.

Though field trips make a lasting impression on the students, they involve a lot of effort, energy, and time on the part of the teacher and the learners (Sivakumar, 2018). It could be deduced then that, fieldtrips, if well planned and well executed, could be of significance to students and society in various aspects of education relative to geographical/environmental, historical, cultural/social, economic, political, and religious outlooks. Fieldtrip activities, according to Anderson and Piscitella (2002), have long lasting consequences for students, typically involving memories of specific social context and content. Mensah (2020), concludes that, if SS teaching is to be successful fieldwork activities become prominent.

Problem-Solving Approach

Problem-based learning is a student-centered pedagogy in which students learn about a subject through experience. Studies have shown that students find learning difficult with the problemsolving approach (Robardet, 2001). Barneveld (2009), found that problem-based learning is effective in developing skills and improving students' attitudes toward learning. In this approach, the problem-solving phase is vital. The problem-solving method demands the use of scientific approach in the teaching and learning processes (Sivakumar, 2018). This method is

recommended for teaching SS because SS is a multidisciplinary subject and has the intent of training students to solve both personal and collective problems to achieve its goals of responsible citizenship.

Project Based Approach

Project-based learning is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period to find answers to complex questions. In project-based learning, pupils feel concerned and involved in the task (Bensalem, 2010). In the project-based approach, the teacher has an accompanying role. Project-based approach is a practice of active pedagogy that brings learning through the realization of a concrete production (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2010). Projects are generally based on real-world problems, which give students a sense of responsibility (Huber, 2020). Knoll (1997), stated that, the project method is considered a means by which students develop independence and responsibility and practice social and democratic modes of behaviors. In project work, students develop skills in analyzing and formulating hypotheses; 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 (Mensah, 2020).

In social studies teaching, the project method may involve a local study where learners may be assigned to investigate and write a report about their local community (Mensah, 2020). In some instances, students receive little or no assistance from the teacher on the project. According to Mensah (2020), conversely, the student can be under the influence of a teacher or a supervisor to develop the passion to do a project, and even the area of interest to study can 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. Peterson (1999), summarizes that, the learning process is therefore integrated and that students particularly brighter students assist average and below average students on assigned works.

Simulation Method

Simulations are instructional scenarios where the learner is placed in a "world" defined by the teacher. Simulation means "pretending, an imitation." In simulations, a situation is created in which activities are presented as if they were real-life (Sivakumar, 2018). In 2006, researchers concluded that using simulations heightened student interest and increased understanding (Russell & Byford, 2006). Simulation comes from the Latin word "Similis," which means, to act like, to resemble. A simulation game, according to Angelides and Paul (1998), is often defined as a strategy of using an artificially initiated setting that copies chosen traits or characteristics of real states and situations and allows the participants to observe the outcomes of their decisions and take action accordingly.

Fink states that, simulation combines role playing and problem solving and consists of students performing a contrived situation that duplicates a real situation so that children will understand the real situation (Fink, 2013). Thus, in simulation games, real situations are presented for students to assume acting roles with the aim of achieving optimum student comprehension and understanding. Anikweze (1992), described the use of the simulation game as a teaching strategy that challenges

learners, adds interest, boosts activity, and adds uniqueness and innovation to the lesson. Topics that look too difficult or abstract such as morality, democracy, patriotism, followership, leadership, conflict prejudice, among others can be understood if demonstrated through simulation activities (Sivakumar, 2018).

According to Sivakumar (2018), teachers using the simulation method must be aware that it takes a great deal of time and students tend to be very noisy, disorderly and sometimes prove very difficult to control. Thus, if not carefully staged and handled, the simulation method could trigger undesirable behaviors on the part of students. Students should, therefore, be prepared and enlightened on how to conduct themselves during simulation activities. Hursen and Asiksoy (2015), examined the effects of the simulation game method on students' academic outcomes in physics. The study discovered that simulation methods improved students' academic success. Similarly, other studies found that simulation methods significantly enhance students' performance (Soomro, 2016; Gruss, 2016; Ogheneakoke et. al., 2019, & Iwuanyanwu, 2016).

Mensah (2020), emphasized that, simulation allows students to be less dependent on the teacher as they actively participate in the lesson rather than as passive observers. The simulation method ensures that students participate adequately, almost throughout the entire teaching and learning process. Instructional processes with simulation methods are more pragmatic.

Discussion Method

The discussion method is a collaborative exchange of ideas between the teacher and students or among students for the purpose of furthering their thinking and learning. The discussion method is one of the methods that fosters and encourages optimal student participation in the instructional process under the guidance of the teacher. Many studies found the discussion method to be a valuable method for teaching social studies (Harwood & Hahn, 1990; Russell & Byford, 2007). The discussion is more exploratory in nature. Students raise ideas and questions, and their peers respond to those thoughts-expanding upon them, agreeing or disagreeing with them. It is a good way for students to delve into questions that form the basis of inquiry (Beck & Eno, 2012). According to research, two popular methods used to develop historical literacy are discussion and debate. They are used to aid students in critical thinking by allowing them to test their reasoning (Barton & Levstik, 2003; Berson & Berson, 2009; Grim et al, 2004). Both can take place in face-to-face settings or online through discussion boards, collaborative multimedia interactions, and social networking (Friedman et. al., 2009; Wilson Wright, 2010).

The discussion method takes varying forms depending on the objectives, class size, and abilities of the students. According to Ogah (2023), there are four types of discussion methods for teaching and learning. In the whole-class discussion, the teacher spearheads the teacher presents and/or raises topical issues, ideas, and issues, as well as questions worth deliberating. Therefore, the teacher initiates the whole discussion process. Hence, engaging students through discussions probably will yield diverse opinions, which will finally culminate into a finalized and agreed fact based on the submission of learners. Thus, learners' submissions are put in a more refined context by the teacher. Mensah (2020), however, affirms that, the teacher ensures students take part in the discussion, share ideas, and make strong arguments in order for them to achieve their objectives for the day.

With the panel discussion, some students, for instance, 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 panelist in the group presents, the others listen attentively and jot down some points or questions. Listeners (students) can either refute, accept, or raise questions about submissions made by the panel. Debate is another form of discussion. With this technique, two groups of speakers who are students are assigned a topic to speak for or against a motion.

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 (Brookfield, 1991). Amoah’s (1998), study on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in the Senior Secondary Schools in 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.

Resource Persons

The usefulness of the resource persons cannot be underestimated due to the fact that, they are reliable figures that can be engaged to shed light and insight into some abstract concepts enunciated in the curriculum. This agrees with Mensah’s (2020) assertion that, the need for a resource person becomes necessary as the teacher may not have first-hand knowledge in an area he or she is teaching. Traditional rulers, community historians, medical and security officers, heads of business, and representatives of cooperative entities, among others, According to Melinger (1981), in teaching social studies, a resource person may be picked from the immediate locality or outside. Among those who may be invited are doctors, nurses, village heads, and police officers.

Team Teaching

For several SS educators, one way to address the problem of one teacher for one class is through team teaching (Booth et. al., 2003). Therefore, to a great advantage, having two (2) masters (teachers) and or professionals with expertise and knowledge from alternate fields will cater for the diverse learning styles of students. Goetz (2000), 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. The classroom is a heterogeneous environment encompassing learners of diverse backgrounds with individual differences and, more importantly, different levels of comprehension. Employing the team-teaching methodology is and could be a surest and the most definite alternative approach to address the individual learning needs of students and appreciate the diversity in their learning styles.

Maroney (1995) identifies five (5) models for teaching SS. This includes traditional team teaching, complimentary, supportive team teaching, parallel instruction, and differentiated split class. Inferring from the above, team teaching is a shared responsibility involving two or more teachers with the aim of achieving worthwhile learning. As a teaching pedagogy, a potential lack collaboration and cooperation between team members could be a disadvantage. However, it overcomes the inherent traditional form of teaching characterized by teacher isolation in the classroom as students receive instruction from expert knowledge (Goetz, 2000, Buckley, 2000, Letterman & Dugan 2004).

Students, on the one hand, are exposed to a variety of teaching styles and approaches, which increases the potential for the team to meet the various learning styles of students (Goetz, 2000; Helm, Alvis & Willis, 2005). This is supported by Jacob, Honey and Jordan (2002), who 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.

The Nature and Scope of Social Studies Education in Ghanaian SHSs

It was found that, the scope of Social Studies (SS) is extensive and diversified consisting of knowledge from varied disciplines. SS curriculum draws on the following disciplines: Geography, Sociology, Government, Economics, and History. The thematic areas are organized under six strands: Environmental Issues, Family Life, Sense of Purpose, Law and Order, Socio-economic Development, Nationhood. Social Studies is considered a prime discipline adopted to socialize our young and functions as a means of promoting progress towards the major social education goals that have been identified for emphasis-civic duties or the development of citizen participation skills, the acquisition of desirable attitudes and values, and a disciplined life (Sivakumar, 2018; Ravitch, (2003). Researchers conclude that Social Studies stands out as the most appropriate subject for citizenship education (Biesta, 2006; Mukhongo, 2010).

This finding is consistent with the works of Biesta (2006) and Mukhongo (2010), which states that, gauging from the multidisciplinary content and child-centered pedagogical approaches, researchers conclude that Social Studies stands out as the most appropriate subject for citizenship education. The learner should be an independent and autonomous organism with the capacity and liberty to selflessly make shared and informed decisions for personal and communal interest and growth. In line with that, the NaCCA of the Ministry of Education, Social Studies curriculum for B7-B10, posited that, Social Studies aims at producing reflective, concerned and competent citizens, who will make informed decisions for individual and public good.

The Social Studies curriculum encompasses issues militating against societal advancement, with the intent to assess them through critical analysis to arrive at sound, workable, and effective solutions. The aim of inclusion of Social Studies in the educational system of Ghana is to identify and create awareness among existing generations and generations yet to be born about societal evils. Social Studies stands out as the most appropriate subject for citizenship education because of its multidisciplinary content and child-centered pedagogical approaches. This agrees with the NaCCA on the Social Studies Common Core Curriculum, which opined that learners are provided with the opportunity to apply concepts, theories, and generalizations from a variety of relevant disciplines to analyze, investigate, and come out with appropriate solutions to personal and societal problems.

Methods of Teaching Social Studies in Ghanaian SHSs

Findings also show that, a number of teaching methodologies, including lecture, discussion, project, problem-solving, simulation, role play, field trips, resource persons, and team-teaching pedagogies, are available for use by the teacher.

These teaching methods may not on its own achieve the optimum levels of student participation and learning unless with the assistance of technological resources. Videos, such as documentaries

and feature films related to Social Studies subjects, are a popular way to increase factual knowledge and garner student interest (Walker, 2006). With direct instruction, students play little role in the analysis or interpretation of the resources (Swan & Locascio, 2008).

Social Studies Pedagogy in Ghanaian SHSs

It was also found that, social studies teachers should be responsive to the fact that, teaching methodologies do not exist in isolation of each other but rather, a combination of two or more of these methods is appropriate and effective for that matter. No single methods of teaching Social Studies can adequately fill all learning situations. The combination of other methods would definitely help in achieving the desired instructional objectives (Sivakumar, 2018).

The question of how to convey content material and achieve the objectives of lessons depends on how well the teacher plans lessons. The role of effective pedagogy in the successful training of teachers is very significant and thus cannot be overlooked. Student teacher familiarity with the various effective and more student-centered pedagogies, scores more than halfway towards the achievement of the lesson objectives (optimum student learning).

Clearly, students are motivated and their interest aroused when teachers are well vexed in the skill of utilizing variety of teaching pedagogies at his or her disposal. Students have more interest in a topic when a variety of teaching methods are implemented (Bonwell & Eisen, 1991; Chiodo & Byford, 2006; Russell & Byford, 2006; Mills & Durden, 1992; Slavin, 1994).

Summary, conclusion and recommendations

Summary

Social Studies is a multi-disciplinary subject and draws on the following disciplines: Geography, Sociology, Government, Economics, and History. The thematic areas are organized under six strands: Environmental Issues, Family Life, Sense of Purpose, Law and Order, Socio-economic Development and Nationhood.

The amalgamation of teaching methods by the Social Studies teacher is a healthy practice towards the successful achievement of lesson objectives. According to Kochlar (1984), there is no royal road to successful learning and adds that, different lessons or units demand different approaches of teaching. Different teachers must expose children to varied experiences to create and maintain their interest and avoid monotony.

Social Studies became part of the school curricula after several conferences held in the United States of America, Britain and Africa. Historically, Social Studies has undergone series of transitional periods. The stabilization and implementation of Social Studies in Ghana's educational system was born out of the implementation of the report of the 1987 Dzobo educational review committee.

Further, the inquiry, discussion, project, field trip, lecture, problem-based approach, role play, simulations, resource persons and team-teaching approaches are pedagogical approaches considered that are responsive to the teaching and learning of Social Studies.

The lecture method is the most widely used teaching pedagogy dominating the teaching of Social Studies in our Senior High Schools. The lecture method can be complemented and made efficacious with the aid of technological resources and reinforced with other methods like the discussion, role play, field trips, inquiry, among others to achieve lesson objectives.

Conclusions

Leaners stand to benefit from the cultural, historical, religious, political, economic, geographical, and sociological aspects embedded in the SS curriculum. The wide scope of the subject requires that teacher's knowledge from all disciplines, specifically of the Social Sciences and Humanities. It is concluded that Social Studies is an integrated field of study comprising of various disciplines.

Social Studies teacher must possess pedagogical knowledge and be dexterous in the use of the pedagogy in SS. This is because effective pedagogy plays a significant role in the training and preparation of student-teachers.

The inquiry, discussion, project, field trip, lecture, problem-based approach, role play and simulations, resource persons as well as team teaching approaches are a number of pedagogical approaches and or strategies considered responsive in the facilitation of Social Studies. The effectiveness of the lecture method achieved and or boosted with the aid of technological resources and reinforced with other methods like the discussion, technological resources to mention but a few. Swan and Locascio (2008) stressed that instructors may expound upon the visual stimulus, but, with direct instruction, students play little role in the analysis or interpretation of the resources.

It can be concluded that, for the successful achievement of the objectives of Social Studies lessons, there is the very need for social teachers to employ and combine variety of pedagogical methods and strategies in lesson delivery.

Recommendations

The competency of student-teachers of the subject can be improved should Social Studies educators and curriculum planners incorporate innovative problem and activity-based instructional strategies like simulation, project, field trips, discussion, and problem solving, team teaching and resource person's approaches in institutions preparing teachers.

Social Studies teachers should employ different methodologies to motivate and arouse learners' interest in the subject. This is because students have more interest in a topic when a variety of effective teaching methods are used.

Additionally, diverse pedagogical methods should be carefully combined and used by Social Studies teachers. This will improve the attitude and interest of students towards the learning of social studies.

Social Studies teaching method should focus on thought-provoking and investigation-oriented approach. Besides, different pedagogy should be integrative and dynamic to enhance a transformative discipline that will chart a course for national development. There should be a

deliberate effort to strengthening the pedagogical approaches for Social Studies teaching.

Moreover, the Social Studies curriculum and course books can be revised in terms of the attainments, content, teaching and learning process, measurement and assessment dimensions in the context of global citizenship and arranged in a more consistent way.

It is recommended that, the Ministry of Education, the Curriculum Research Development Division (CRDD), Social Studies curriculum specialists/experts, regional, district as well as heads of various second cycle institutions should organize periodic technological training and workshops. Moreover, the integration of technology/ICT, content and pedagogy in the teaching and learning of Social Studies.

Finally, Social Studies teachers of Colleges of Education should help students to know the multiple realities of SS in the real world since teachers influence what is taught in most cases.

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