

Development of Social Studies and Its Challenges in Ghana: A Case Study of Bolgatanga Technical Institute in the Upper East Region of Ghana

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Abstract: *The purpose of the study was to evaluate the development of Social Studies and its challenges at the Bolgatanga Technical Institute in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting the respondents for the study. In all, 285 students were selected from the Bolgatanga Technical Institute. Quantitative research approach was used in collecting and organizing data. Questionnaire was the main tool used to collect data for the study. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics in which percentages, frequencies and tables were used. The study adopted the theory of attitudinal formation that focused on motivational bases for learning. The findings revealed that favourable development of Social Studies in the Bolgatanga Technical Institute has roots in utilitarian, value-expressive, and knowledge motivational bases while the opposite lies in ego-defensive bases. Research further revealed that students perceived that Social Studies is good to be studied as it broadens their intellect by enabling them acquire a lot of ideas about their society and country as a whole. However, students' attitude towards the subject is negative. It was found that some students do not attend social studies lessons while others attend classes but do not contribute in the lesson. It was also found that others hate their teachers because of how they teach the subject. As a result of students' negative attitude towards the subject their level of participation was low. Based on the findings, it was concluded that the major school factors influencing students' poor performance in Social Studies at the Bolgatanga Technical Institute emanated first, from the students' negative attitude towards the learning of the subject and second, the low level of participation from the students. Based on the findings, it was recommended that School authorities and Social Studies teachers should sensitize students on the significance of Social Studies in the school curriculum. The findings and recommendations of this study will assist teachers and other stakeholders in Social Studies to know the current perceptions of students towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies at the Bolgatanga Technical Institute.*

KEYWORDS: social studies, development, teachers, perceive, negative attitudes

INTRODUCTION

According to Ayaaba (2013) the 20th century traditional history had dominated the Social Studies curriculum in America. However, prior to 1861, what later came to be known as Social Studies was in a rather chaotic condition with a number of isolated subjects appearing in the Social Studies curriculum under the disguise of Social Studies (Evans, 2004). The traditional view of the origins of Social Studies is that in the early 1990's American society was gripped with violence and social disharmony. American youth were becoming increasingly wayward while group violence and child delinquencies were rampant (Blege, 2001). In the face of these problems, stakeholders of education in America advocated the introduction of a subject on the school curriculum to address the problems so as to develop good and responsible youth. In the 1913 preliminary report of the committee on Social Studies, Thomas Jesse Jones, who authored the report wrote that a curriculum based on history should be replaced by a broader form of Social Studies. "Good citizenship", the report declared "should be the aim of Social Studies in the high school". He argued that "facts contribute directly to the appreciation of methods of human betterment have no claim" (Evans, 2004). He therefore dismissed traditional history and advocated the introduction of a curriculum that specialized in attending to the present growth needs and interest of the learner.

After the Second World War, however, the scope of Social Studies was extended to cover liberal education. The focus of the subject shifted from equipping the youth with industrial competencies and skills to man the industries to inculcating in the youth greater understanding of themselves and others so that they could become conscious of their social responsibilities. In 1967, an international conference of African educators, the Educational Development Centre (EDC) and the curriculum Renewal and Educational Development overseas (CREDO) was held at Queen's College, Oxford in the United Kingdom. It was at this meeting that the idea of introducing Social Studies as a school subject in Africa was proposed. The conference was attended by American educationists in the field of Social Studies as well as representatives of some African countries. In the end, the conference recommended that a Social Studies conference be held in Mombassa, Kenya, the following year (1968). The Mombassa conference of 1968 was attended by delegates from eleven independent African states, namely, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Botswana. The EDC and CREDO sent experts to guide and contribute to the discussions. The conference resolved that Social Studies be introduced in Africa as a tool for preparing the new African continent for effective citizenship (Blege, 2001). It was also recommended that an international organization be formed to help the newly independent African states to organize their own Social Studies programmes and to promote the learning of the subject in African Social Studies Programme (ASSP) in 1969 with its permanent Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. The ASSP was renamed the African Social and Environmental Studies Programme (ASESP) in 1990. The ASESP was an international organisation of 17 African

countries. The mission of ASESP was to carry out the four general objectives agreed upon at the Monbassa conference and to give support and direction to the growth of Social Studies in Africa.

The four objectives

- To create an awareness and an understanding of the evolving social and physical environment as a whole, its natural, man-made, cultural and spiritual resources, together with the rational use and conservation of these resources for development.
- To develop a capacity to learn and to acquire skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, calculation, observation, analysis and inference which are essential to the forming of sound judgment.
- To ensure the acquisition of that relevant knowledge which is an essential pre-requisite to personal development as well as to a positive personal contribution to the betterment of humankind.
- Finally, it is of utmost importance to develop a systematic appreciation of the diversity of and of the wider national and international community.

Early attempts at Introducing Social Studies in Ghana dates as far back as the late 1940's when teacher training Colleges such as Wesley College in Kumasi and the Presbyterian Training College at Akropong-Akwapim initiated some programmes (Tamakloe, 1994). However, due to lack of co-ordination of efforts, the idea was shelved.

The reasons for the collapse of the initiative in those situations were not far-fetched.

1. Lack of competent teachers to teach the subject effectively. Teachers were not trained in the philosophy, methodology, purpose and objectives as well as the techniques of teaching Social Studies at the time only paid lip services to the subject while they concentrated on teaching their traditional subjects of history, geography, government to mention but a few.
2. Conflict with traditional ideas. The idea of subject integration did not find favour with many traditional social scientists. Such people harbored the fear that their traditional subject areas such as History, Geography and Economics would lose their distinct identity and methodologies if they were to be subsumed under the new integrated Social Studies. Social Studies was therefore seen as a threat to the traditional social science subjects.
3. Lack of textbooks on integrated Social Studies was also a contributory factor. Social Studies was introduced without the requisite textbooks and other instructional materials to support the programme. As such, individual teachers taught what they thought were right in the classroom. Following the Mombassa conference, an educational conference was held in Winneba in 1969 during which the subject was adopted and re-introduced into the school curriculum in 1972, but like the early attempt, it did not see the light of the day. Serious efforts at introducing Social Studies into the school system in Ghana came with the implementation of the Educational Reforms in 1987 which made the subject compulsory at both Junior and senior high schools. The University of Cape Coast consequently mounted a Bachelor of Education Degree programme in Social Studies in 1988. In the same year, the erst-while Advanced Teacher Training College (ATTC) at Winneba also started a Diploma programme in Social Studies. These attempts were geared towards training competent Social Studies teachers for the senior high schools and also for the initial teacher

training colleges which would in turn train teachers to teach the subject at the basic level of education.

Social Studies is now not only a core subject in all Junior and senior high schools, but also Technical Institutes as well as Universities in the country. The University of Education, Winneba and the University of Cape Coast are currently running degree programmes in Social Studies, while the former has gone ahead to mount Master of Education (M. Ed), Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.), Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D), and Education Doctorate (Ed. D) programmes in Social Studies.

Statement of the Problem

In the last few years, the Bolgatanga Technical Institute has not been performing up to expectation in Social Studies in the technical examinations. This has become a problem to school authorities, parents, teachers as well as students. Most students show little attention to the learning of the subject as they do to their trade subjects. For instance, there is low attendance and lower participation during Social Studies lessons all because students believe that passing or failing in it will not affect them in any way. This could be attributed to the fact that these students do not know the importance of studying the subject Social Studies and the impact it has on their lives. Also, students in the technical institutes take Social Studies as a teaching subject for granted in the sense that they see the subject as one of the least favourite subjects and think that passing it is extremely easy. It is in the light of the above that this study is embarked upon. The pertinent questions to address, therefore, are what are perceptions of students regarding the importance of Social Studies in the technical school curricula? what are the attitude of students towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies in the technical schools? And finally, what is the level of student's participation in Social Studies lessons in the technical school? The present study therefore sought to identify answers to these pertinent questions in order to assist stakeholders of education to develop appropriate strategies and interventions to improve the learning of the Social Studies at Bolgatanga Technical Institute in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

Purpose of the Study

This study sought to evaluate the impact of students' attitudes towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies and its challenges at Bolgatanga Technical Institute and offer positive suggestions to halt such occurrences.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to direct the study:

1. What are perceptions of students regarding the importance of Social Studies in the school curricula?
2. What is the attitude of students towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies?
3. What is the level of student's participation in Social Studies lessons?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for the study is attitude formation theory. This theory was postulated by (Russel, 1971). According to him, every attitude formed has a number of motivational bases underpinning it. He identified these four motivational bases for attitude formation to be the following; utilitarian, value-expressive, ego-defensive, and knowledge. This theory explains that attitude with a utilitarian base is based on the survival, safety and other social needs of the individual. This means that one's attitude towards the teaching and learning of a subject is bound to be favourable if it improves one's survival needs. The theory also explains value – expressive attitude as based on a person's motive for self-esteem and self – actualization. Individuals seek to develop an identity and a concept of self-esteem in which they have pride. This implies that attitude that coincides with a person's values and ego-ideals will enhance one's feeling of self-esteem.

Ego-defensive attitude is a mechanism of a sort formed by a person to defend one's anxieties. The implication is that students who become dissatisfied with their learning conditions and environment are likely to express negative attitude towards teaching and learning. The fourth aspect of attitude formation is based on knowledge. To acquire knowledge, one needs to cope with the attitudes of those around one or by adopting an attitude which is consistent with one's thinking towards the subject matter under study, in this case, the teaching and learning of Social Studies.

This theory was adopted for the study because the development of Social Studies is grounded on human attitude and motivation. Hence, there is a need to adopt a theory that seeks to explain the motivational bases that guides the development of Social Studies. The theory is thus relevant to the study because it helps Social Studies practitioners to understand which of the motivational bases the development of Social Studies hinges on. The advantage of using this theory is that it offers many bases for understanding into what motivate Social Studies to still strive within the Bolgatanga Technical Institute in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

Historical Development of Social Studies

According to Saxe (1996, p. 16) the term "Social Studies" was first used in 1905 by Thomas Jesse Jones in the United States of America who became the Chairman of the National Education Association on Social Studies. In Ghana, the study of Social Studies was introduced into the school curriculum of some selected Training Colleges as far back as the early 1940's on experimental basis. The Training Colleges included Wesley College, now Wesley College of Education- Kumasi and Presbyterian Training College, now Presbyterian College of Education-Akropong (Tamakloe, 1988). However, these experiments were short-lived due to some problems in its path, which according to Tamakloe (1994) included lack of competent teachers to handle the subject (Social Studies) effectively. This is because teachers were not trained in the philosophy, methodology,

aims and objectives as well as the techniques of teaching Social Studies. In addition to that; there were also inadequate teaching-learning resources and lack of funds at that time.

In the late 1969 and early 1980's, attempts were made to revive Social Studies in the country. In 1976, Social Studies was added to the curriculum of the Experimental Junior Secondary Schools in the then nine regional capitals. Training of teachers came to a halt in the 1980's due to a glut in teachers who specialized in Social Studies after the first three batches of teachers were trained, (Tamakloe, 1994). But with the implementation of the New Educational Reform Programme (NERP) in 1986/87 academic year in Ghana, the term "Social Studies" was officially used for the subject.

Schools of Thought of Social Studies

The history of Social Studies is a story of turf wars among competing camps, each with its own leaders, philosophy, beliefs and pedagogical practices (Evans, 2004, p. 1). This implies that there are different schools of thought about what the term "Social Studies" is or ought to be. According to Quartey (2003) ever since Social Studies started to exist on the continent, Social Studies has been understood differently by some of its stakeholders. As a result, Social Studies for different people mean different things which serve as a hindrance in achieving its educational objectives like understanding, acquisition of skills and desirable attitudes and values which will enable the learners to be more disciplined and solve personal and societal problems. According to Evans (2004, p. 1) the major competing camps of Social Studies struggled different times to either retain control of Social Studies or influence its directions. Each of these camps promote not only an approach to curricular content and method but also a particular conception of citizenship and of what it means to be a "good citizen" (Evans, 2004, p. 2). These views from the authors clearly suggest that many educators in the field of Social Studies sought to define Social Studies depending on their own cultural background and perception of the subject, and that these camps could be grouped as those who believe Social Studies be taught as:

Man as a center of study or man and his environment

Tamakloe (1994, p. 2) views Social Studies as a subject that deals with man in relation to his environment. He adds that Social Studies places premium on individual qualities such patriotism, honesty, diligence, obedience and critical thinking; group ideals like interdependence, co-operation and peaceful existence. In support of this, Tabachnick (1991) notes that Social Studies is that part of the school curriculum which deals with human relationships, and aims to contribute to the development of good citizenship. The views of these practitioners clearly shows that the teaching of Social Studies should aim at exposing learners to the accepted way of life of the society and the realization that human, plants and all the other animals are dependent upon each other and that all attempts must be made to utilize the resources available or around them to meet their needs in a way to make them survive.

Method or approach to the teaching of the Social Sciences

The practitioners of this school of thought are of the view that, Social Studies is a method or approach to the teaching of the Social Science disciplines. In the classroom situation, a method or approach in the instructional setting is the overall plan in lesson delivery of the classroom teacher. This is made up of the procedures adopted to assess how effective the lesson has been delivered, preparations, techniques used and the selection of content in order to achieve the objectives of the lesson. The scholars of this school of thought view Social Studies as an approach to the teaching of the social sciences but not as a discipline on its own.

Integration of the Social Sciences

The educators of this school of thought believe that, to enable the youth to become more reflective individuals, it is necessary for them to acquire the needed knowledge and skills from the social science subjects. Linquist (1995, p.1) defines Social Studies as an integration of knowledge, skills and processes that provides powerful learning in humanities and social Sciences for purposes of helping children to learn to be good problem solvers and wise decision makers. Tamakloe (2008, p. 20) also defines Social Studies as an integrated approach which broadly explores knowledge, skills, values and attitudes drawn from the Social Sciences and contemporary issues of the environment towards decision-making and problem-solving. From these scholars of Social Studies, it has been observed that the conceptual meanings provide evidence of integration. One thing that clearly urges from their definitions is the role of the Social Sciences, which to them provide the basis for Social Studies teaching, that is, the content or subject matter of Social Studies. Their views present similar facts, concepts and ideas about how they see Social Studies to be.

Citizenship education

The educators of this school of thought upheld the view that, Social Studies should prepare the young people for adult citizenship role. According to Hayford (1992) citizenship education implies the acquisition of the necessary knowledge and skills needed for the promotion of democracy. The Social Studies drafted syllabus of Ghana Education Service (2010) for Senior High Schools simply states that Social Studies is "citizenship education". According to Quartey (1984), Social Studies is the study that equips the learner with the tools necessary for solving his personal and societal problems. To Quartey, these tools include "relevant knowledge, skills, desirable attitudes and values which are critical to the achievement of good citizenship". One may therefore conclude that, for all the debates about the definitions or concepts of Social Studies, the challenges for developers of Social Studies curriculum is to design programmes of instruction that will place value on important ideas within which relevant topics can be covered. Thus, the content selection must equip the learner with his or her needs to enable him or her contribute effectively to the development of society.

Students Attitudes towards School Subjects

Attitude has been very different concept to define adequately primarily not just because attitude has been defined by so many scholars, but also because of the word's differing lay uses and connotations (Simonson et al., 2001). One of the earliest definitions of attitude was proposed (Simonson et al., 2001) who defined attitude as a mental and neutral state of reading, organized through experience exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related. Simonson et al. (2001, p. 4) defined attitude as "an evaluative disposition toward some object base upon cognitions, affective reactions, behavioural intention and past behaviours that influence cognitions, affective responses and future intentions and behaviour". Attitudes cannot determine behavior unless they lead to the development of intentions. There is therefore a strong relationship between attitudes, intentions and future behavior. This is because action is determined by intentions, which is influence by attitudes and social norms (Fishbein, 1963). Attitudes are therefore influenced by the beliefs of significant other and the motivation to comply with the belief of others.

In sum, attitude is an individual's psychological response and disposition to people, events and so on. It is an accumulation of experiences and result of learning that guide one's outward behavior. Attitude is a subjective mental status of the action of readiness as well as behavioural tendency and it affects one's readiness towards a specific object.

Students, Participation in the Teaching and Learning of Social Studies

According to Eshun & Mensah (2013), students do not passively receive and process, information. They are active participants in the learning process, constructing meaning in ways shaped by their own prior knowledge and new experiences.

Students with a well-developed ability to manage their own learning are able to choose appropriate learning goals, to use their existing knowledge and skills to direct their learning and to select learning strategies appropriate to the task in hand. While the development of these skills and attitude has not always been an explicit focus of teaching in schools, it is increasingly being explicitly identifies as a major goal of schooling and should, therefore also be regarded as a significant outcome of the learning process. According to Peters (2005), three important problems face teachers in teaching Social Studies. These include lack of student interest, lack of teacher interest or enthusiasm and finally time constraints.

In every classroom, it is critical that the teacher evaluates resources and curriculum materials for their comprehensiveness, accuracy and usefulness for representing particular ideas and concepts. Subject matter knowledge would be essential for the selection and evaluation of curriculum materials and resources. This view is supported by Eshun et al (2019) who intimates that teacher characteristics such as certification, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, years of teaching experience and assignment in-field have been investigated to determine their effect on student

outcomes. In addition, Goe (2002) also points out that teacher quality has been defined and measured in many ways. There is nearly universal agreement that teacher quality matters in terms of student achievement, but there has been no clear consensus on which aspect of teacher quality matters most or even what a useful definition of teacher quality might be. One reason for this quality is that teacher quality may need to be defined differently for different purposes. For example, the indicators of quality relevant to making initial hiring decisions may be different from the indicators used in granting tenure, rewarding excellent performance or identifying and supporting struggling teachers. In addition to teacher contributions to student achievement, teacher quality may be evidenced by teachers who possess the following characteristics: qualifications and experience appropriate to grade level and subject; high expectation for students, particularly those at risk for poor outcomes; creation of a classroom environment that encourages all students to participate in worthwhile learning activities. Desire to help students achieve at high levels ability to motivate students to come to school do not show significant gains; excellent skills in mentoring new teachers and acting as stabilizing forces in high turnover schools and willingness to work diligently with students with special needs, whose test scores may not reflect teacher contributions (Goe, 2002). As stated earlier, Schugs et al (1982) found out that students do not feel as if Social Studies is important in preparing them for future careers. This lack of importance in students' lives means that they are going to spend less time and effort in truly understanding and internalizing the concepts of the Social Studies curriculum. Another cause of poor student attitude is the teacher's direct influence on this attitude. Enthusiasm in the subject matter displayed by the teacher can be directly correlated to student interest and attitude (Haladyan, Shaughnessy & Olsen, 1979). Many factors lend themselves to poor teacher attitude. Adedowira & Jaxo (2007) for instance highlighted three headings under which a study on teachers' knowledge of subject matter can be done in support of what is reported by Goe (2002). These are namely: knowledge of content, pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge. It is a statement of fact that nobody can teach what he does not understand. It has been established that there is high correlation between what teachers know and what they teach (Adediwura & Tayo, 2007). Thus, the ability to teach effectively depends on the teachers' knowledge and knowledge occurs in a variety of forms. Teacher effectiveness is impeded if the teacher is unfamiliar with the body of knowledge taught and that, teacher effectiveness is subject-specific.

Eshun (2020) suggests that, a teacher must possess some expertise in the subject to be taught and that to be able to teach effectively, the teacher must be a lifelong expert in the subject as well as be an instructional expert in methodology. According to Baker & Edith (1997) teacher-centered practices dominate teaching and student understanding is widening. They stressed that the gap between teacher and student variables holds the key to students' attitudes towards school subjects because teachers, to a large extent influence what happens in lessons.

Research findings on teacher's attitudes (Adediwura & Tayo, 2007) established the following facts:

- Teachers' characteristics such as personal teaching efficacy modeling and enthusiasm, caring and high expectation promote learners' motivation.
- These same characteristics are also associated with increase in students' achievement (academic performance)
- High levels of learning may occur as well as learners feeling good about themselves and the material they are learning when teachers use instructional time efficiently

Mager (1968) indicated that attitude and perception are the key to success and the reasons are that, attitude towards a class or a teacher are casually related to achievement. Secondly, students who have positive attitudes towards a subject matter are more likely to pursue that subject area and if possible, further their education via technical training, college or graduate school. Third, students convey their attitudes about school to parents, teachers and friends and if their overall attitude towards school is negative, this increases the likelihood that the student will convey a negative attitude about Social Studies to other people. Both Haladyna (1982) & Mager (1968) show that, the teacher's attitude towards Social Studies and the students or Parents commitment to education has a unique and interactive influences on the school curriculum. To promote order and learning in a process of continuous personal development and professional self-discovery alongside an emerging understanding of the teaching and learning process. Haladyna (1982) thus states that fostering a feeling of importance in the subject was paramount. The way to foster this feeling is by showing students the relevance of the curriculum to their own lives. By including more community based and real-world experiences, students would begin to see the importance of what they are doing (Schug et al., 1982) also, by including more diverse experiences and shifting away from traditional methods, teachers could present the Social Studies curriculum with more variety and active approaches (Schug et al., 1982).

In the view of Tiberius & Tipping (1990), active involvement of the learner enhances learning. according to them since learning is an active process, it requires that the learner work with and apply new material to past knowledge and to everyday life since teaching without accompanying engagement is like filling a lamp with water, because something has been poured in, but the result is not illuminating. Akey (2006) therefore points out that engagement in school is important in promoting student success and learning and that a number of factors in the school environment foster high levels of engagement. Akey (2006) defined students' engagement as the level of participation and intrinsic interest that a student shows in school. Engagement in schoolwork involves both behaviours (such as motivation, positive learning values, enthusiasm, interest and pride in success). Thus, engaged students seek out activities, inside and outside the classroom that led to success or learning. They also display curiosity, a desire to know more and positive emotional responses to learning and school.

As the literature reviewed reveals in Baker & Edith (1997), it is perhaps possible that, the importance of Social Studies as an academic discipline has not been properly understood s, parents

and the general public leading to it being either neglected or by students, teachers, considered optional course although it is a core subject. For instance, previous research indicates that students are not positive about Social Studies and find it irrelevant for their future careers (Schug, Todd & Beery, 1982). This assertion can invaluablely affect its teaching and learning since what constitute good teaching and learning is largely influence by the attitude that students will show towards a particular subject as noted earlier, Social Studies teachers are faced with a number of problems unique to the subject area by students who see the subject as a push over subject which diminishes its salience in the school curriculum (Fernandez, Massey & Dornbush, 1975) and more so when the kind of attitudes that people hold about a subject forms one of the most important character is associated with teaching and learning. Norris-Hott (2002) in a study also observed that many students begin studying Social Studies in junior high schools with eager anticipation, but due to prejudices and misconceptions many students soon lose interest at the senior high level. For most of the studies that have been carried out, researchers have illustrated a general lack of interest towards Social Studies. The researcher's view is that in Ghana, perhaps the attitude of junior high school students towards the subject may be different because of its mandatory requirement for one to enter senior high school which is opposite in the case of admission requirements for senior high school student to enter the tertiary institutions and the colleges of education. Notwithstanding, the researcher view, some of the public universities in Ghana like Cape Coast University and University for Development Studies have added Social Studies as part of their admission requirements in place of integrated science and it is hoped that this development would go a long way to change students' perception about the subject. Nurhidayah (2008; p. 2) states that "there are several factors affecting; student's achievement and attitude is one of them" attitude therefore determines the success of teaching and learning process' for instance, students who have positive attitude toward Social Studies and its culture are expected to learn and appreciate it better than students who have negative attitude toward it, because they will have stronger motivation to learn, while students who have negative attitude toward Social Studies will be opposite. In the view of Baker & Edith (1997), students learning out comes in a subject will be adversely affected if the learners have negative attitude towards a subject. They further stressed that the way a subject is taught can also have significant repercussions on students, teachers, parents and the nation as a whole. This is confirmed by Kankam et al (2014) who asserted that, students' attitude on learning, good or bad, affect their outlook toward learning throughout life. Rogers & Ford (1997) further reiterated that the likelihood of a student putting his/her knowledge to use is influenced by his attitude for or against the subject and the attitude with which students leave the classroom may have an effect on the teaching and learning of the subject. It should be noted that, teaching might involve giving instruction to somebody on knowledge, skills and attitudes with the intention that the person will be able to grasp the information or do something or act in a particular way that is compatible with the instruction. The means employed by the teacher to pass information to the learner would determine ultimately, if he/she is teaching, instructing training, indoctrinating and so forth. This tells us that knowledge impartation is never possible without a good technique to execute the impartation. It is only when knowledge is imparted through good technique and one

makes sure that the learner has gained something useful which can make his/her experience relatively permanent that one can say that learning has taken place (Rogers & Ford, 1997) There has been knowledge impartation without a method to do the same, whether the method is adequate or not is another factor (Adeyemi, 2007) and to be able to do this, an impact assessment on students attitudes towards Social Studies and its teaching and learning becomes indispensable, for the future holds many challenges that must be met if the vision of a powerful Social Studies teaching and learning is to be achieved.

Methods to Ensure Effective Social Studies

According to Sivakumar (2018) teaching, as a useful and practical art calls for intuition, creativity, improvisation and expressiveness. Ayaaba & Odumah (2013) opined that "the difference between creative and uninspired teaching is determined by the techniques teachers use in presenting lesson content, skills and values to students". They emphasize that, the responsibility of every Social Studies teacher is to select a particular technique that may provide for the active involvement of students in the teaching and learning processes. The kind of technique that the teacher may use in teaching Social Studies can easily affect the achievement of its objectives in Social Studies. The use of appropriate technique by a Social Studies teacher is therefore very essential to Social Studies teaching for effective achievement of its lesson objectives. This view is supported by Ayaaba & Odumah, (2013) when they indicated that there are a number of techniques in the art of teaching Social Studies and it is very important for a Social Studies teacher to emphasize active participation of learners in whatever technique that may be employed by the teacher when teaching Social Studies.

Jordan & Powell (1995) assert that to be competent is both to have a set of skills to employ them using a flexible responsive set of higher order strategies that bring the desired outcome. Aggarwal (2006; p.91) comments on the need for right technique of teaching in these words, "every teacher and educationist with experience knows that even the best curriculum and the most perfect syllabus remain dead unless quickened into life by the right technique of teaching and right teachers". He adds that for effective teaching to be achieved, a Social Studies teacher should be trained in the following techniques; Assignment, Dalton plan, Discussion, Laboratory, Lecture, Observation, questioning skills, Problem, Project, Review, socialized classroom recitation, Source technique, Story-telling, Supervised study and Text book. Teachers who are successful are those who tend to be using a range of teaching techniques rather than single rigid approach. This view was supported by Glickman (1991; p.6) when he observes that teachers who are very effective do not use the same set of practices forever, whether students are learning or not, but adjust their practices accordingly. Instead, what effective teachers do is constantly reflect their work. Because of the unique nature and purpose of Social Studies, the techniques that may be employed in teaching of Social Studies must be very useful to direct the learner's attention and focus. On an account of this, the teacher of Social Studies has to be well grounded in the use of variety of teaching techniques if he or she is to be effective.

Social Studies teachers need to possess not only Social Studies content knowledge but also the teaching methodology that best facilitates students' learning in Social Studies (Bednarz, Stoltman & Lee, 2004). Though, many teachers may take an introductory Social Studies course to satisfy undergraduate requirement, it is likely this course would not be the most beneficial for instilling the pedagogical methods or content knowledge that is necessary for the Social Studies classroom teacher (Gregg, 2001). The techniques which teachers of Social Studies may employ for effective teaching and learning should assist the learners acquire those skills and knowledge in the classroom which are helpful in adjusting to social situations (Aggarwal, 2006). The implication of this is that, a good technique employed by Social Studies teacher enables the learners to identify problems and adopt appropriate measures to handle such problems and also develop critical thinking abilities. For effective teaching of Social Studies, the adoption of the right technique is paramount for effective teaching. The teaching of Social Studies involves the learners' use of the eyes, the ears, hands muscles and the whole body in the learning process (Tamakloe, 2008). This clearly suggests that the teaching and learning of Social Studies should not only be done in the classroom but should also be planned and undertaken outside the classroom. According to Ghana Education Service (GES) (2010: viii), pupils must be taught to be problem solvers by emphasizing the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of education and avoid rote learning and drill-oriented methods. This will enable the learner to acquire the knowledge, skills and competences to enable him solve problems. According to Tamakloe (1991) if the organization of Social Studies is to be effective, the teacher must be well-versed in the use of variety of teaching methods and techniques, besides the possession of adequate knowledge in several disciplines. Williams (1990) remarks that teachers need to have knowledge of varieties of approaches and should be able to decide what to reject and accept, and the method that is most appropriate for the students. In the view of Banks (1985) who concludes that a skillful teaching of Social Studies is paramount and without it, effective learning cannot take place. He further notes that, techniques that are commonly used in Social Studies include; lecture, discussion, simulation, role play, fieldwork, team teaching, project work and inquiry techniques. This suggests that a teacher who is capable of using a range of teaching techniques such as lecture method, discussion, role playing drama etc. depending on the topic and the age of the learners will be able to achieve lesson objectives in Social Studies and this will also enhance students' performance.

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative method was used in this study to determine the development of Social Studies in the Bolga Technical Institute. According to Bryman (2012, p.20) quantitative research approach is the research that places emphasis on numbers and figures in the collection and analysis of data. According to Creswell (2009; p.4) and Bryman (2012, p.408), it may perhaps guarantee respondent anonymity. For the purpose of this study a research design that was deemed more appropriate for the study was descriptive survey which is used to describe the characteristics of a population

whereby the researcher directly examines the samples of that population. Adzahlie-Mensah, Agordah, & Gyamfua-Abrefa (2017).

Population and sampling

The size of the sample for this study was 285 participants and 12 teachers from the technical institute. For the purpose of the study, a combination of simple random sampling and purposive sampling were used to sample respondents. To select the 285 second- and third-year respondents of Bolgatanga technical institute, a list of the second and third years were obtained in the following manner; pieces of paper were numbered so that each would correspond to a name on the list. The papers were put in a basket and mixed well. A paper was removed at a time. The number on the paper was traced to the corresponding name and recorded. This process continued till the 285 students were selected.

Research Instruments

Questionnaire was the instruments used for the survey. The items had components which tested for knowledge, attitudes and practice. In order to generate better understanding, closed and open ended and scaling items (Likert scale) were used for the study since they are suitable to measure opinions, attitudes or knowledge (Kwabia, 2006). Besides, they are attractive, easy to use, score and code for analysis on a computer. Although open-ended questions are difficult to interpret because of the different kinds of responses that are often received, it was useful combining both for mats in a single questionnaire to allow for more individualized responses (Kwabia, 2006). That is, justification for including open-ended questions was to allow the respondents to include more information, including feelings, attitudes and understanding of the subject and this allowed the researcher to access the respondent's true feelings on an issue better. Questionnaires were administered to two hundred and eighty- five (285) students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data of Respondents

The statistics of respondents in respect of gender is presented in table 1. The gender of respondents who were involved in the study was first ascertained. The result is presented in table 2.

Table 1: Gender of students

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	244	85.6
Female	41	14.4
Total	285	100

Results from the table 1 shows that 244 (85.6%) majority of the respondents were males while 41 (14.4%) were females. This indicated that majority of the respondents' view in this study were from males, this finding also indicate that technical courses are mostly male dominated, the

respondents' age range was also examined under the demographic data; this is presented in table 2. The respondents were asked to indicate the age range in which they belong.

Table 2: Age distribution of students

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
13-16 Years	77	27.0
17-20 Years	171	60
Above 20 Years	37	13
Total	285	100

Results from Table 2 revealed that the modal age range of respondents was 17 and 20 and this constituted 60%, while 77 (27%) of the respondents were within the age range of 13 and 16. A few as 13% were above 20 years. More than half of the student population was 16 years. It was therefore, assumed that the respondents would give quite a good assessment of their perceptions and attitude towards Social Studies as a subject in their institute.

Discussion of findings that emanated from the research questions that guided the study.

Research question 1: What are the perceptions of students regarding the importance of Social Studies in the school curricula?

Data were collected by a means of a 4-point liker-scale format. The frequency, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used for the analysis. Table 4 illustrates the information concerning the findings.

Table 3: Perceptions regarding importance of Social Studies

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (%)
Learning Social Studies in the technical school is a waste of time.	0(0)	17(6)	167(58.6)	101(35.4)	285(100%)
Social Studies should be studied by all- students in the technical school.	23(8.1)	251(88.1)	11(3.8)	0(0)	285(100%)
Social Studies should be regarded as a, tool for shaping values, skills, and attitudes in the technical school?	123(43.2)	136(47.7)	17(6)	9(3.1)	285(100%)
The concepts in Social Studies are too difficult to understand.	12(4.2)	9(3.1)	139(48.7)	125(43.9)	285(100%)

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Social Studies help to shape the behavior of students in the technical school.	190(66.7)	90(31.6)	5(1.8)	0(0)	285(100%)
Social Studies prepare students to fit well, in the society.	145(50.9)	135(47.4)	2(0.7)	3(11)	285(100%)
Social Studies help students to solve, societal problems.	59(20.7)	197(69.1)	24(8.4)	5(1.8)	285(100%)
Introduction of Social Studies in the school is good.	201(70.5)	79(27.7)	3(456)	2(4.2)	285(100%)
Social Studies broadens the intellect of students	187(65.6)	78(27.4)	9(3.1)	11(3.9)	285(100%)

Responses from table 4 showed that a strong majority 280 (98.2%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the introduction of Social Studies in the school is good while only 5 (2.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. This indicates that students believe Social Studies as a subject that must be studied. It paves way for people to acquire knowledge skills and values important for the development of their society and the nation at large.

Another important reason for the choice of Social Studies as a subject was based on the fact that “Social Studies help to shape the behavior of students in the technical school”. A strong majority 280 (98.2%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed while 5 (2.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. This indicates that Social Studies as subject enables students to acquire moral lessons or principles that will prepare them for life.

With regards to the statement “Social Studies prepare students to fit well, in the society”, a higher number 280 (98.2%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the statement while few 5 (1.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. This shows that Social Studies as subject helps students to know what the society expect from them in order to live peacefully in the society. In this way Social Studies provides students with the society’s norms and values they are expected to know. It also encourages them to have vision for the future.

Concerning the statement “Social Studies broadens the intellect of students”, majority 265 (93%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the statement while 20 (7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, this shows that Social Studies as subject enables students to acquire a lot of ideas about themselves, the society and the world at large. Knowledge, they say is power hence with the acquisition of much knowledge by studying Social Studies this contributes to promoting individual fulfillment, social progress and national prosperity.

Concerning the fact that “Social Studies should be regarded as a, tool for shaping values, skills, and attitudes in the technical school”, the results indicated that most 259 (83.9%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed while 26 (16.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. This attests to the fact that Social Studies as a subject deal with behavior modification to suit societies expectation as well basic skills and values necessary in each individual’s life. With regards to the statement “Social Studies promotes self-understanding”, a higher number 259 (90.9%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the statement while 26 (9.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. This reveals that Social Studies as a subject enable one to understand himself/herself and the environment in which he/she lives.

The findings imply that students believe Social Studies is good and as a subject it should be studied. Tamakloe (1994) looks at Social Studies as a subject that deals with man and his relationship to his environment. This goes to explain the fact that teaching of Social Studies should aim at exposing learners to the way of life of the society and the realization that humans, plants and all the other animals are dependent upon each other.

This confirms Stearns (1998) assertion that Social Studies helps provide identity about how families, groups, institutions and a whole country were formed. This will help people identify their heritage in order to build upon it. Fynn & Addo-Fening (1991) noted that Social Studies encourages the youth to take part in the political, cultural and technological achievement of their ancestors. In this way, they will be able to resist the temptation to imitate foreigners and adopt their values. Concerning the statement “Social Studies should be studied by all students in the Senior High School.” Majority 274 (96.2%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the statement while nine (3.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. This shows that Social Studies as subject enables students to acquire a lot of ideas about themselves, the society and the world at large. Again, the findings suggest that the study of Social Studies broadens the intellect of Students, this concurs with Inspectorate (1988) position that Social Studies plays a major part in allowing young people to develop knowledge, understanding and skills which help them to make sense of contemporary society and understanding their place, by broadening students mind and exposing them to new information, Inspectorate (1988) noted that pupils’ perspectives and values will change and develop as part of the process of becoming informed and responsible citizens. As Kochhar (2005) noted, Social Studies Cultivate valuable intellectual attitudes to students by enabling them to understand that human affairs can never be simple and that there are no heroes and villains, no ‘bad’, no simple cause and effect in human behaviour.

Research question 2: What are the attitudes of students towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies?

Research question two tried to assess students’ attitude towards the Social Studies programme. Hence, the question was posed thus: what are the attitudes of students towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies in the technical school? To find out, students were made to complete

section b of the student questionnaire. The data were collected by a means of a 4-point likert-scale format. Respondents were asked to respond to the statement that best describes their preference. The results are presented in table 5.

Table 5: Attitude of students towards Social Studies

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (%)
I see the study of Social Studies as waste of time so I don't attend classes.	78(27.4)	11(3.9)	187(65.6)	9(3.1)	285(100%)
I come regular and punctual in all Social Studies class	60(21.1)	78(27.4)	15(5.3)	132(46.3)	285(100%)
I prompt the class prefect to call the Social Studies teachers if we have a lesson	12(4.2)	27(9.5)	198(69.5)	48(16.8)	285(100%)
I don't attend Social Studies classes because I hate the teachers.	124(43.5)	68(23.9)	78(27.3)	15(5.3)	285(100%)
Social Studies makes students feel bored	167(58.5)	98(34.5)	18(6.3)	2 (0.7)	285(100%)
I encourage others to be serious with Social Studies	46(16.1)	97(34.0)	92(32.3)	50(17.5)	285(100%)
I am always motivated to learn Social Studies.	54(18.9)	47(16.5)	124(43.5)	60(21.1)	285(100%)
I enjoy Social Studies lesson	89(31.2)	66(23.2)	18(6.3)	112(39.3)	285(100%)

Most of the students also indicated they were not motivated to learn Social Studies. Concerning the statement "I am always motivated to learn Social Studies" minority of the students 101(35.4%) agreed or strongly agreed while 184 (64.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to this statement. This finding shows that the teacher or the school affect students' interest in a particular subject. This also clearly implies teacher motivation has direct impact on students' attitude to studying a particular subject.

The finding supports Maslows' (2004) assertion that the teacher is an important factor that influences students' academic motivation. Students naturally enjoy living in a warm and secured environment and so long as the school environment remains conducive, students will be motivated to lean. Factors within the school environment that may influence children's and adolescents' motivation and academic achievement include sense of safety, belonging, and support from teachers in the school and classroom.

Similarly, the realization of behavioural potentiality seems to be related to the learner's level of motivation. 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. 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.

Concerning the statement "I come regular and punctual to all Social Studies class" 147 (51.6%) agreed or strongly agreed while 146 (48.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to this statement. There seem to be an almost equal number of the students agreeing and disagreeing. This result shows some students are regular and punctual to class while others are not. Similarly, 142(49.8%) agreed or strongly agreed to the statement "I encourage others to be serious with Social Studies" while 143(50.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to this statement.

Generally, the responses suggest that students' attitude towards the studying of Social Studies is not the best: Observations from table 8 indicated that a strong majority 265 (93.1%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Social Studies makes them bored while 20 (7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. This reveals that most of the students did not like the subject.

The finding supports other research that indicated that students often perceived Social Studies as a boring subject (Schug, Todd, and Berry 1984; Shaughnessy and Haladyna 1985). The researcher believes the finding, which comes from a sample in which 98.2% percent of the participants, adds to the literature by connecting the negative perception to the low status that Social Studies has among technical students in technical schools.

The result from table 5 shows that majority, 192(67.4%) of the students agreed or strongly agreed to the statement "I don't attend Social Studies classes because hate the teachers" while 93 (32.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to this statement. This shows the approach and manner in which the teacher teaches Social Studies affects students' attitude.

Ineffectual teaching, whether it involves an activity or not has adverse effect 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 compose 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.

Research question 3: what is the level of student's participation in, Social Studies lessons?

Research question three sought to find out from students their level of participation in Social Studies lessons. Hence, the question was posed: what is the level of student's participation in, Social Studies lessons in the technical schools? The data were collected by means of a 4-point likert- scale format. The respondents were asked to respond to statements that best described their opinion. The findings are presented in table 6.

Table 6: Student's Level of Participation in Studying Social Studies

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (%)
I am involved actively in class discussions	26(9.1)	49(17.2)	78(27.4)	132(46.3)	285(100%)
I am always dull in class	130(45.6)	119(41.8)	31(10.9)	5(3.8)	285(100%)
I always do my class assignments and exercises	15(5.3)	68(23.8)	78(27.4)	124(43.5)	285(100%)
I try to research new ideas and present in class	54(18.9)	67(23.5)	75(26.3)	89(31.2)	285(100%)
I pay attention to the teacher	167(58.5)	98(34.5)	18(6.3)	2(0.7)	285(100%)
I find lessons are very boring in my view	89(31.2)	19(6.7)	55(19.3)	4(14.4)	285(100%)
I have much interest in studying Social Studies	182(63.9)	47(16.5)	35(12.3)	21(7.4)	285(100%)

Concerning the statement "I am involved actively in class discussions", a higher number 210 (73.7%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed although 75 (26.3%) agreed or strongly disagreed respectively. This indicates that majority expressed that Social Studies was not an interactive class which students presented different ideas. Try to avoid rote learning and drill-oriented method and rather emphasizes participatory teaching and learning and also emphasize the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

Asempo (2007) support discussion in an interactive Social Studies class. The issue of students' active participation in class discussions was further buttressed by the statement on whether students were dull in Social Studies lessons, concerning the statement "I am always dull in class", most 249 (87.4%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the statement although 36 (14.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. This attests to the fact that student's participation was not the best. This could be as a problem on the part of the teacher or the students themselves. Similarly, only 83 (29.1%) agreed or strongly agreed they always did their class assignments and exercises while as many as 202 (70.9%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to this statement.

With regards to the statement “I try to research new ideas and present in class” 121 (42.4%) agreed or strongly agreed they always tried to research new ideas and present in class while as many as 164 (57.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to this statement. This is indicative that students lacked the qualities as researchers; to Linguist (1995) students of Social Studies students must be concerned with researching to help solve most of the society’s problems. Linguist (1995) adds that Social Studies is an integration of knowledge, skill and processes and goes on to say that “the subject provides powerful learning in the humanities and social science for the purposes of helping children learn to be good problem solvers and wise decision makers” (p. 1).

Results from table 6 indicated that majority 265 (93.0%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed they paid attention to the teacher when they had Social Studies while 20 (7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. This shows that students attached much seriousness when they had Social Studies. This in turn affects their absorption rate understanding concepts and ideas presented by the teacher. The level of interest students has in a subject affect the attention they had for the subject. It is observed from the table that that as many as 229 (80.4%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed they have much interest in studying Social Studies while 20 (7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement. One would like to think that the tepid or low interest level that many students had previously for studying Social Studies course is necessarily indicative of what their interest level will be when they are about to complete one. Unfortunately, such optimism appears ill-founded.

In a study conducted by Sallo (2004) to assess student’s participation in Social Studies, he found student’s level of participation was low since they ranked the subject low as compared to others. When competing against the other content areas in the traditional elementary curriculum for the participants’ selection as their most preferred content area, Social Studies did not fare well. Social Studies ranked either last or next-to-last and were consistently surpassed by language arts, reading, and mathematics, in this order. These findings are similar to those of Houser (Sallo, 2004) who found Social Studies to have a secondary status among technical students. Contradicting the earlier conclusion that technical students have a low regard for Social Studies, majority expressed they were much involved in studying Social Studies.

CONCLUSIONS

A general conclusion drawn from this research based on the findings is that students' of Bolgatanga technical institute have a positive perception about Social Studies but have negative attitude and low participation in studying of Social Studies. The research findings show that the students' attitude toward the learning of Social Studies in the school under study was positive. This is manifested in the students' positive response to Social Studies lessons and the extra effort they put in learning the subject. This behaviour of the students is anticipated to improve their performance in the subject. The same could not be said of the teachers' attitude towards the handling of the

subject. The study revealed that the teachers' attitude towards the subject was negative. They put up negative behaviour such as irregular class attendance, inadequate lesson preparation and failure to mark students' class exercises. Such behaviour obviously impacts adversely on the teaching-learning process. Consequently, this would affect students' performance in the subject negatively.

Recommendations

In the light of the above research findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. Social Studies teachers should be given periodic in-service training to sensitize them on the pedagogical practices that would bring revival in the teaching and learning of Social Studies as a subject in Ghanaian schools.
2. With regard to the students' negative attitude towards teaching in the schools, it is recommended that the school heads undertake effective supervision of the teaching-learning process in their schools. This would instill discipline in both teachers and students so that effective teaching and learning can take place to improve results in the schools in the district.
3. School authorities and Social Studies teachers should sensitize students on the significance of Social Studies in the school curriculum.
4. Unqualified teachers teaching Social Studies in some technical schools in Ghana should be encouraged to improve their teaching. School authorities should therefore monitor and ensure that only those who are qualified should teach Social Studies.
5. Social Studies teachers should make their lessons interesting by taking students on field trips or excursions to historical sites to enable them acquire first-hand knowledge and experience and to make them interact with historical resources outside the school. It is incumbent on teacher educators in the colleges of education and the universities to help trainees develop a positive mindset and favourable attitude towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies since their transfer into the classroom has implications for learners.

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