

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA



**ASSESSING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2021 SOCIAL STUDIES
CURRICULUM IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS AT THE NKORANZA SOUTH
MUNICIPALITY**

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partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of
the degree of Master of Philosophy
(Social Studies Education)**

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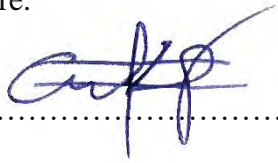


DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Christian Kwarteng Mensah Oppong, hereby declare that, this thesis is my own effort with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works, international journals which have all been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

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Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised by me, in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the school of graduate studies, University of Education, Winneba.

Prof. Isaac Eshun (Supervisor)

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

To my wife, my daughter, my parents, my siblings, all friends, and loved ones.



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My utmost heart desire of completing this study on time has become a reality as a result of the provision and protection of Jehovah. To Him therefore goes my utmost gratitude.

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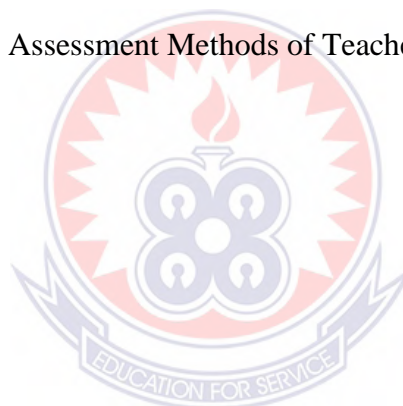


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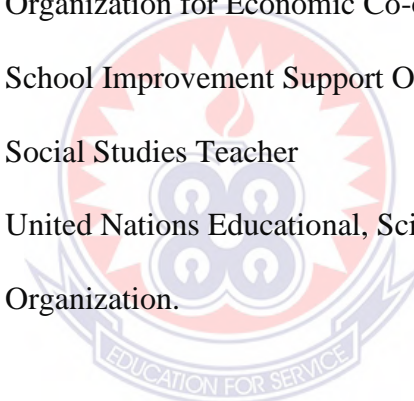
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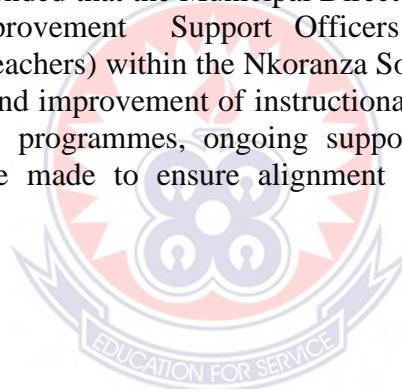
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SBSSC	:	Standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum
ESRP	:	Economic and Social Research Programme.
GES	:	Ghana Education Service
ICT	:	Information and Communication Technology.
JHS	:	Junior High School.
MoE	:	Ministry of Education
NaCCA	:	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.
NCSS	:	National Council for the Social Studies.
OECD	:	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.
SISO	:	School Improvement Support Officer
SST	:	Social Studies Teacher
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore how Junior High School Social Studies teachers implement the new 2021 Standards-Based Social Studies programme in attainment of its expected learning outcomes. This study assessed the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools at the Nkoranza South municipality. The philosophical position adopted was pragmatism, which emphasizes on the practical application of knowledge to achieve desired outcomes. Mixed method research approach was employed, with an explanatory sequential design, that explored the alignment between the curriculum and classroom practices. The study population consisted of 133 Social Studies teachers within the Nkoranza South Municipality. The sample size utilized was the entire population, employing a census and purposive sampling techniques. Data collection instruments included questionnaires, observation, and interview. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data. Key findings from the study indicated that teachers demonstrated a moderate level of implementation of the new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. There were huge challenges particularly with very limited instructional resources, inadequate professional development opportunities, and poor alignment between the curriculum and assessment methods. Based on the findings, it was therefore recommended that the Municipal Director of Education in collaboration with the School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) as well as School Administrators (Headteachers) within the Nkoranza South Municipality should ensure continuous provision and improvement of instructional resources, provision of proper infrastructure, training programmes, ongoing support for instructors, and regular curriculum reviews be made to ensure alignment with assessment methods and instructional needs.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, with the advancement of science and technology, knowledge is spreading, and society is changing. Schools are charged to respond to these and other societal needs. To do so, education (schools) must redirect its focus, develop and implement curricula that will produce the necessary human capital to identify viable solutions for these needs (Aktin, 2020). The recent global trends in cultural, social, political, and economic development have brought forth reforms in educational paradigms. These reforms have been accompanied by changes in the ways school practitioners design the school curriculum since education (formal) is recognized worldwide as the bedrock of national development and the key factor is human resource development (Simanjuntak et al., 2022).

Education is a vital tool for promoting a country's political and socio-economic growth and Ghana is never an exception. In most countries, it promotes human welfare. According to Adobaw-Bansah and Essah-Ntiful (2017), quality and relevant education depends on how the curricula are designed and implemented to achieve the curricula aims. Education and curriculum are inextricably linked because "curriculum" is frequently heard when the subject of "education" is discussed.

Curriculum generally provides instructional suggestions, scripts, lesson plans, and assessment options related to a set of objectives that help teachers successfully implement and maintain the curricular structure in order to meet various objectives (Wiles & Bondi, 2015). The final destination of any curriculum is the classroom where teachers and students translate plans and intentions into activities and actions (Sani,

2015). Implementing the curriculum is therefore the most crucial and sometimes the most difficult phase of the educational change process. Inability to manage the difficulty often results in implementation failure, which has been a characteristic of most innovations and reforms in education (Ampadu, 2019). Implementation failure refers to a situation where an initiated or planned change does not happen in practice (Ampadu, 2019). This could be attributed to a number of factors including dogmatic resistance, lack of clarity about the program in terms of its goals and means of achieving them, and in terms of teacher roles; lack of required resources; teacher unpreparedness; and lack of support from leaders at the central administration, district and school levels (Sani, 2015).

Social Studies education (curriculum) prepares learners to possess the requisite knowledge, skills (21st century skills) and attitudes that shape their character and suit this era of globalization. Assessment is central to every curriculum and its teaching and learning because assessment information is needed to make informed decisions regarding students' learning abilities, their placement in appropriate levels and their achievements. The success of any assessment depends on the effective selection and the use of appropriate procedures, as well as on the proper interpretation of students' performances. Thus, assessment procedures also help in evaluating the suitability and effectiveness of the curriculum, instruction and the teaching methodology (Bordoh, 2015; Greenstein, 2016).

Instructional resources serve as channels through which message, information, ideas and knowledge are disseminated during classroom lessons delivery. They can therefore be manipulated, seen, hear, felt or talked about. They are anything or anybody the learner turns to for help in his learning process (Arphattananon, 2021; Marcus et al.,

2010). The teacher is expected to have knowledge of a wide range of curriculum resource available for curriculum implementation. These resources of learning and instruction according to Aidinopoulou and Sampson, (2017), Dwomoh, (2018) and Graham et al. (2020) can be classified under the following categories: (1) Printed Materials (2) Non-Print Materials (3) Community resources.

Ghana is keen to accelerate the improvement in educational provisions with particular emphasis on quality education for all. This has been the basis for the introduction of the new curriculum in 2019. In September 2019, the government of Ghana introduced a new Standards-Based Curriculum to the educational system at the basic level (Basic 1 – 6) but started at the Junior High Schools in Ghana in 2021. Although the Common Core Programme (CCP) was introduced in 2021 as a framework for Junior High Schools in Ghana, it was designed as part of the broader Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC) reform that began at the basic school level. Ghana has shifted from an Objective-based curriculum to a Standards-Based Curriculum with the aim of improving teaching and learning outcomes. It aimed at addressing the loopholes in the old curriculum which included content overload, limitations of the objective-based curriculum, and the failure of the assessment system to provide enough data on which teaching and learning could be styled. It also seeks to improve the reading, writing, arithmetic and creativity (4Rs) skills across the entire basic school curriculum (Kpedator, 2019) with the Junior High School (JHS) as the focus of this research.

Additionally, approaches to teaching have been revised to a more learner-centered approach with ICT as a tool for pedagogy. The Standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum (SBSSC) for JHS which has been in implementation since the year 2021 aims to ensure that every student develops advanced knowledge, skills in applying that

knowledge, and the requisite attitudes to equip them for life and future careers. This new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum is also intended to promote the acquisition of 21st Century skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and innovation, communication and collaboration, cultural identity and global citizenship, personal development and leadership as well as digital literacy (Addai-Mununkum, 2020).

There have been several studies on assessing curriculum implementation both national and international as well as in diverse fields of study. Examples include Quashigah et al (2014) – evaluation of colleges of education (COE) Social studies curriculum vis-à-vis the Junior High School (JHS) Social studies curriculum in Ghana, Eshun (2020) – Social Studies curriculum through time and space to ascertain the relevance of the Social studies curriculum for national development, Marsh (2007) – implementation of a Social Studies curriculum in an Australian Elementary School to determine the extent to which the faculty members were knowledgeable about teaching the curriculum, Umudi (2012) – importance of content implementation in Junior Secondary School Social Studies, Ebiere and Adediran (2013) – quality assurance of teachers in the assessment of Social studies curriculum of secondary schools in Abeokuta Metropolis.

An empirical gap in the implementation of the new 2021 Standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum in Ghana seems to be the limited research, assessment and evaluation on the effectiveness in achieving its intended goals or objectives. While the curriculum has been implemented for three years now, there appears to be lack of comprehensive research that assess how teachers (key stakeholders) are going about with its implementation, its impact on students' learning outcomes, critical thinking skills and civic engagement. This empirical gap seems to hinder the identification of

strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum's implementation and the development of evidence-based strategies for improvement.

McNeill et al. (2016) asserts that whenever there is curriculum implementation, there is the need to assess that curriculum to ensure its effectiveness. In the design of the curriculum, the goals and objectives, the content, the suggestions for teaching and learning activities are all clearly illustrated in the syllabus (Synder et al., 1992). In a centralized educational system like that of Ghana, curriculum experts centrally plan the curriculum. The designers therefore over the years expected the curriculum implementers to faithfully implement it the way it has been designed (Cobbold, 2017) but the current curriculum seems to involve a collaborative process between the curriculum developers and the teachers implementing the curriculum. It seems to allow for feedback and adjustments to be made based on the needs and experiences of the teachers and students. This study focuses on the implementation of the new 2021 Social Studies curriculum within the framework of the mutual adaptation model.

The Nkoranza South Municipality is one area that seems to have good educational prospects and conducting such an assessment is vital to ensure that the 2021 Standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum meets the local needs and contributes to the overall educational development of the municipality's Junior High School students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The teaching and learning of Social Studies have been very integral to Ghana's educational system for over four decades. It was introduced with the aim of equipping learners with civic knowledge, values, attitudes, and problem-solving skills necessary for national development (Eshun & Mensah, 2013; Cobbold, 2017). Over the years, successive reforms, including the introduction of the 2021 Standards-Based Social

Studies Curriculum, have sought to strengthen the relevance of the Social Studies subject in addressing societal challenges and adequately preparing learners to be responsible citizens (Cobbold, 2019).

Nevertheless, the intended outcomes of these curricula seem not to have been fully realised. Research and classroom observations suggest that many teachers continue to focus primarily on examination preparation, often teaching to the test, at the expense of fostering value formation, critical thinking, and practical life skills (Eshun, 2018). This persistent gap raises concerns about the effectiveness of the curriculum implementation and calls for a thorough investigation or examination of teachers' perceptions, pedagogical approaches, resource availability, and assessment methods within the current Standards-Based framework., with focus at the Nkoranza South Municipality.

The introduction of the Standards-Based curriculum with Social Studies in perspective marks a significant shift from the previous objective-based curriculum to the new Standards-Based curriculum. This new curriculum aims to equip students with 21st century skills, including critical thinking, creativity, digital literacy, and problem solving to better prepare them for future challenges. However, the successful implementation of this curriculum largely depends on the preparedness and effectiveness of Social Studies teachers in basic schools. This new 2021 Standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum being fundamentally different from the old objective-based curriculum has been designed to address the shortcomings of the previous system and align with international standards.

From findings of the various curriculum implementation studies conducted in Ghana and outside Ghana, some conclusions emerged. Firstly, some studies found some level of successes in the implementation efforts, and attributed this to clarity of the

programme to implementers (Addai-Mununkum, 2023; Eshun et al. 2024) and positive attitude of the implementers (Marsh & Willis, 2017; Opoku-Afriyie et al. 2024). Secondly, some studies found out that major problems have been the curriculum not being implemented according to the specifications of its designers, especially, recommended methods or techniques of teaching and required assessment methods were not used by the teachers but they used pedagogical models different from what the designers had either stated explicitly or assumed as well as inadequate background of the teachers implementing the curriculum (Eshun et al., 2024; Çakir, 2015). Thirdly, the hindering factor frequently mentioned was the unavailability or inadequacy of requisite resources (Iraki, 2014; Opoku-Afriyie et al. 2024; Eshun et al. 2024). Finally, other problems that have confronted the implementation of curricula have their roots in inadequate pre-implementation preparations and these affected teachers' perceptions and conceptions of the curricula (Iraki, 2014; Opoku-Afriyie et al. 2024; Eshun et al. 2024).

Many research works evaluate the objective-based Social Studies curriculum at Senior High School or teacher-education level, while the newer standard-based reforms are mostly examined at the lower to upper primary level and in other subjects. Where the new 2021 SBSSC is studied, it appears to be often at the urban sites, predominantly Accra and Kumasi and focuses on generic implementation concerns (training and resources) rather than joined-up picture of teachers' perceptions, pedagogy, resource availability, and assessment methods in one municipal context. (Oppong, 2009; Eshun & Mensah, 2013; Eshun, 2015; Apau, 2021; Mpuangnan & Adusei, 2021, Addai-Mununkum, 2023). There seems to be virtually none in the Bono East Region, precisely Nkoranza South. This leaves a location-specific evidence gap on how Social Studies teachers at Nkoranza South actually implement the new 2021 Social Studies

curriculum, the resources they mobilize, and how they assess learning. Nkoranza South Municipality provides a particularly important and under-studied context for filling that gap.

A number of scholars both national and international have assessed different aspects of Social Studies curriculum implementation process separately over the years mainly using the quantitative approach, and the fidelity model (Iraki, 2014; Çakir, 2015; Quashigah et al 2020; Apau. 2021; Opoku-Afriyie et al. 2024; Eshun et al. 2024). Some of these researchers recommend the use of other approaches to assess the implementation of a curriculum. This research therefore seeks to employ the explanatory sequential mixed-method design to “Assess the Implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools at the Nkoranza South Municipality”.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how Junior High School Social Studies teachers implement the 2021 Standard-Based Social Studies programme in attainment of its expected learning outcomes.

1.4 Research Objectives

The following were the objectives of the study as it sought to:

1. explore Social Studies teachers’ perceptions of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the Nkoranza South Municipality.
2. analyse the teaching techniques employed by Social Studies teachers in implementing the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the Nkoranza South Municipality.

3. assess the availability of instructional resources for the teaching of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the Nkoranza South Municipality.
4. to analyse how the Social Studies teachers in in the Nkoranza South Municipality assess their students under the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do the JHS teachers of the Nkoranza South Municipality perceive the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum?
2. What teaching techniques are adopted by the teachers in implementing the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the Nkoranza South Municipality?
3. To what extent are instructional resources available for teaching the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the Nkoranza South municipality?
4. How do the Social Studies teachers in the Nkoranza South Municipality assess their learners under the 2021 Social Studies curriculum?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study provides information on the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies curriculum, its implications and improvement in the country. The results of the study, it is hoped, would inform policy makers about the trend of issues in the implementation process. It would therefore help redirect policies and ensure proper implementation of the new Social Studies Curriculum. It encourages curriculum planners, to emphasise on proper implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in Ghana Schools. By so doing, students would take major responsibility in their accomplishment of curriculum learning task. This makes the curriculum task easier to accomplish since the students and the teachers will be involved.

Furthermore, the findings and recommendations of this study will contribute to a better conception of the nature, philosophy, scope and objectives of Social Studies curriculum as a problem-solving discipline. The study establishes the need for Social Studies teachers to improve their knowledge of Social Studies, the techniques to use, the methods, strategies or procedures, skills and assessments needed for good academic performance in Social Studies. Teachers' use of the appropriate techniques and assessments help to train learners to think critically and reflectively in their day-to-day life in their society, improve student-student interaction, self-esteem, group affiliation, accommodation among students since they have to work in groups, tolerating each other's mistakes so that success is achieved. Also, the teachers' use of the right techniques and assessments make students become responsible for their own learning and this will motivate them to learn more for better performance intellectually, socially, physically and emotionally since they have to work with student of different ability, level, behaviour pattern and different background. It is also believed that the teachers would be able to detect some of the problems militating against the achievements of some aims, goals and objectives of Social Studies programmes.

Government, Non-Governmental Organizations, teachers, and all other stakeholders would also find this study very useful. It will help identify areas where resources need to be channelled towards for effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum. Likewise, through this study, it is expected that government and all stakeholders would further realize that Social Studies is not just a mere addition to the existing school curriculum but one that is crucial for the attainment of the much-needed knowledge, skills, attitudes or values in order to attain national development.

This research will serve as a reference material for other researchers and for further study (empirical research information) as well. It is hoped that it would serve as an insight to researchers who might consult it in process of carrying out similar research work in the near future. The findings of the study would contribute to the theory of mutual adaptation approach to curriculum implementation since some of the findings might either agree or contradict the previous findings in the literature. The researcher also expects Social Studies students to benefit from the study when they find it necessary to consult it in the course of their studies.

1.7 Scope/Delimitation of the Study

This study was delimited to the implementation of the 2021 Standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum for Junior High Schools and to the assumptions of the mutual adaptation approach to gain insight into how teachers are (or are not) properly using the new curricular in ensuring the achievement of the goals or objectives of the curriculum. The study used participants who were all professionals and was carried out at the Nkoranza South Municipality in the Bono East Region of Ghana. It was delimited to the 2023/24 academic year.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Standards-Based: Refers to the academic standards in Social Studies that outline what Junior High School learners (Basic 7-9) should know and be able to demonstrate.

Social Studies: It is a subject that equips learners with relevant knowledge, positive attitudes, value and skills to be able to solve personal and social problems that threatens survival of human beings.

- Social Studies Curriculum:** Refers to the designed framework or syllabus used to teach Junior High School learners about concepts in Social Studies.
- Implementation:** Refers to the process in which a planned curriculum is put into action by teachers which involves resource usage and monitoring of instructional activities.
- Assessment:** Refers to the process of evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum.
- Junior High School:** Refers to an educational institution involving learners in Basic 7 – 9.
- Instructional Resources:** They are materials that are used for instructional practice.
- Teaching Methods:** It refers to the teachers' general approach to teaching and learning.
- Teaching Techniques:** Technique of teaching refers to any activity teachers ask their learners to do in the course of lesson delivery.
- Curriculum Alignment:** Refers to the degree to which teaching techniques, instructional resources, and assessment methods are consistent the objectives and standards of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum.
- Pedagogy:** Refers to the instructional practices in delivering the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum.
- Professional Development:** Refers to all the activities planned to enhance the knowledge, competencies, and skills of Social Studies

instructors towards the effective implementation of 2021 Social Studies Curriculum.

Stakeholders: Refers to all persons or groups who are concerned with the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum.

Nkoranza South Municipality: The administrative area or municipality where the research into the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum was conducted.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one is made up of the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Research Objectives, Research Questions, Significance of the Study, Delimitation of the Study, and Limitations of the Study. Chapter two discusses literature relevant to this research. The literature review presented herein evaluated prior work to provide a background of the key concepts researched in this study. Chapter Three presents the Research Methodology. It included the Research Approach, Research Design, Population and Sampling Selection, Instruments for Data Collection, Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations. Chapter four presented the outcome of the study. The findings are presented and discussed with inferences made from related previous studies (the reviewed literature). Chapter five centres on Summary of the Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

To support the purpose of this study, an analysis of the literature from current, peer-reviewed studies and articles was conducted to provide further information on the topic. The related literature substantiates the problem and highlights perspectives for understanding complete implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum and how teachers view and utilize available systems for the curriculum implementation.

2.1 The Theory of Change (ToC)

This theory is attributed to Carol Weiss in 1955. She is known for her contributions to programme evaluation and research in social policy, especially in areas like education and community development. This theory is basically a comprehensive approach used to design, implement, and evaluate programmes by visually mapping out the steps required to achieve a long-term goal. It is based on a detailed understanding of casual relationships, illustrating the “pathways of change” that lead from activities to intermediate outcomes, and finally to the ultimate goal. The Theory of Change is a framework used to outline how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It is particularly popular in social development.

The Theory of Change starts by identifying a long-term goal. It defines the overarching objective, which serves as the end-point of the change process. It then works to map the necessary steps, assumptions, and conditions to reach that goal. It also involves outcomes, thus – intermediate changes that are expected to lead toward the long-term goal. These outcomes are usually measurable milestones that track progress toward the main objective. There are also activities, that is, the specific actions or interventions

undertaken to achieve the outcomes. These include training, awareness campaigns, policy advocacy, etc. The underlying assumptions include the belief that people will respond to educational campaigns, causal pathways or clear identification of desired outcomes, stake holder engagements or consultations, that resources will be available, adaptation of behavioural change by the target population, risk management, monitoring and adaptation, and sustainability. There are indicators used to track each stage. These allow for monitoring of each stage, ensuring that the outcomes are being met.

The theory offers several benefits including clarity in planning. This provides a clear structure to define the steps and conditions needed for change. The theory also improves accountability. This happens by outlining expected outcomes and indicators, ensuring that the programme is accountable to their goals. This theory also considers stakeholder buy-in. It secures the inputs and support of from those involved or those who matter. With the theory of change, there is also enhanced adaptability because its flexible structure allows for adjustments based on real-time learning and changing conditions. This appears to make it lean more towards the concept of mutual adaptation in curriculum implementation.

The Theory of Change is a powerful framework that can guide the valuation of curriculum implementation. The Theory of Change framework involves defining the long-term goals of the curriculum, such as enhancing students' civic knowledge, critical thinking, team work or collaboration, digital literacy among others. This approach allows assessing whether the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum is achieving its intended outcomes. By applying the Theory of Change, the research can examine the specific activities, teaching techniques and resources required for a successful curriculum

implementation, such as teacher training, improvements in student engagement, and material provision. It also provides the structure to assess each step of the curriculum implementation enabling the researcher to pinpoint areas where there may be gaps or challenges. The Theory of Change also emphasizes the need for feedback loops that can help in learners' better comprehension of concepts as well as providing feedback that can help policymakers and educators adjust and enhance the curriculum to better fit the needs of the students and the local context.

2.2 The Mutual Adaptation Approach

The Mutual Adaptation Approach is a conceptual framework that explains the process of implementing educational reforms, such as the Standards-Based Curriculum. Curriculum adaptation, which is named as Mutual Adaptation by Snyder et al. (1992), is the process in which the arrangements in the curriculum are made by the curriculum development experts and the teachers who apply it in their classrooms. In this approach, the useful and unworkable points are decided during the implementation of the official curriculum in the classroom, and it is shaped according to the local context (Öztürk, 2012). Since the experts still define the curriculum knowledge, Adaptation approach does not differ considerably from fidelity approach. However, it becomes more flexible as teachers have more active role in making adjustments in the curriculum to make it suitable for her/his classroom context (Shawer, 2010). Those with Adaptation approach state that the curriculum should be adapted to the school context in cooperation with the curriculum development experts and the teachers. While curriculum development experts cannot realize the unique characteristics of the teaching environment, teachers know and evaluate student characteristics better and provide important data to experts on this subject (Ben-Peretz, 2018). On the other hand, as a result of their research on the curriculum, experts also provide teachers with a planned and systematic material

that they can apply (Bümen et al., 2014). Curriculum adaptation approach allows teachers to shape the curriculum according to the context in which they teach.

This Model recognises that successful implementation requires an ongoing mutual adaptation between the educational system and the individuals involved, particularly teachers. The model emphasizes the importance of iterative feedback and collaborations in shaping the implementation process (Wahi, 2014; Karen, 2015; Leithwood, 2011). Mutual Adaptation involves the modification of a course of study by both the developers and the implementers. It is defined as a process whereby adjustments in a curriculum are made by curriculum developers and those who actually use it in the school or classroom context (Fullan and Pomfret 2007; Snyder et al, 1992). It is a perspective on policy implementation that emphasizes the process of learning by doing and the active participation of relevant actors in achieving the policy goals. According to this theory, implementation is not linear or top-down process, but a dynamic and interactive one, where policy makers, implementers, and beneficiaries mutually adjust to each other and to the changing context (Mclaughlin, 2012).

According to Louis (2020), the Mutual Adaptation model proposes that during implementation of the Standards-Based Curriculum, both the system and individuals involved go through a process of learning and adaptation. This mutual adaptation occurs through a series of stages or cycles. They argue that effective implementation of the new curriculum requires a feedback loop that promotes ongoing communication and learning between the system and individuals. This feedback loop enables stakeholders to make necessary adjustments based on their experiences, challenges, and successes.

Mutual Adaptation ensures that curriculum developers create Standards-Based-aligned curriculum resources which serve as a starting point, provision of teachers' input by

giving feedbacks on curriculum materials based on their classroom experiences, collaborative review of curriculum materials between developers and implementers, local context considerations, professional developments of teachers to effectively implement the curriculum, assessment methods alignments with the curriculum, and continuous improvement of implementers and the curriculum (Karen, 2015; Wahi, 2014; Leithwood, 2011).

It can be deduced from the above explanations that, Mutual Adaptation as an approach for “Assessing the Implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools at the Nkoranza South Municipality”, should ideally, emphasize the dynamic interplay between curriculum developers, teachers and local context in the implementation of the new Social Studies Curriculum. This approach recognizes that successful curriculum implementation is not a one-size-fits all process but requires ongoing collaboration, adjustment, and responsiveness to the unique needs and challenges of our educational setting. To support this theoretical underpinning, Cobbold (2017) highlights the importance of educators being flexible and responsive to learners needs. He believes that education should be a two-way process, with teachers and students actively engaging in the learning experience and adapting the curriculum based on the student’s interests and experiences.

Cobbold (2017) argues that teachers bring their own perspectives and experiences into the classroom, which can influence how they interpret and adapt the curriculum. This idea underscores the notion that teachers play a crucial role in shaping the curriculum as they implement it. In corroboration with the above, Schon’s work on “reflective practice” (1983) in Cobbold (2017), emphasizes that professionals including educators, should engage in a continuous process of reflection and adaptation in response to the

unique challenges and complexities they face. This concept applies to curriculum development and implementation. Mutual Adaptation grants a measure of deserved respect both to the developers and the implementers of a programme. It therefore makes the two groups meet on equal terms. It basically refers to a process where the educational system and the teacher work together to make adjustments and modifications to the curriculum to best suit the needs and context of the local environment (Cobbold, 2017).

The Mutual Adaptation model is the most appropriate for this study because the 2021 Standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum allows for the teacher or gives opportunity for teachers to make their inputs and adaptations based on the local environment. This model recognizes the importance of tailoring the curriculum to the specific cultural, geographical, and historical context of Ghana (NaCCA, 2020). In the context of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum implementation in Ghana's JHSs, Mutual Adaptation recognizes the expertise and knowledge of the teacher. Teachers in Ghana supposedly have a deep understanding of their students and the local environment, and they are best positioned to make adaptations to the curriculum in order to effectively meet the needs of their learners. This model promotes a collaborative approach where the teacher and the curriculum work together to create a more effective and contextually relevant learning experience to equip learners for active citizenship within their localities. Teachers are allowed to incorporate local examples, case studies, and cultural perspectives into the curriculum (NaCCA, 2020). This makes the curriculum more relevant and meaningful to the students or learners, as they would be able to relate their learning to their own experiences and local context. Implementing mutual adaptation in assessing the 2021 Social Studies curriculum helps to address any challenges or gaps that may arise during implementation. Teachers can therefore provide valuable

feedbacks and suggestions for improvements, which can then inform future iterations of the curriculum (Cobbold, 2019).

Mutual Adaptation in curriculum implementation facilitate teachers' ability to adapt their teaching and assessment methods. It is an ongoing process where teachers and curriculum developers work together to refine and improve curriculum materials and instructional methods. Through this collaborative effort, teachers can provide valuable insights and feedback on what works best in their specific context. As teachers engage in Mutual Adaptation, they can make adjustments to teaching techniques, resources utilization, and assessment methods to better align with their students' needs and learning styles. This collaborative process encourages a more dynamic and responsive approach to education. (Karen, 2015; Wahi, 2014; Leithwood, 2011).

Furtherance to the above, the Mutual Adaptation rests on the assumption that the exact nature of implementation cannot and/or should not be pre-specified but rather should evolve as different groups of users decide what is best and most appropriate for their situation (Synder, 1992; Fullan, 2015). The mutual adaptation model makes some assumptions about curriculum knowledge, change and the role of the teacher.

1. The advocates of mutual adaptation assume that curriculum knowledge is thought to reside in the outside expert who develops the curriculum to be adapted by teachers to the situational or local context.
2. It is also assumed that a true believer of adaptation considers both the external source of knowledge and that knowledge which resides in practitioners, as a group or as individuals.
3. With regards to curriculum change, the advocates assume that change is seen as a more unpredictable, less linear process at the end of which is an active

consumer; this process of change needs to be understood to help explain what happens to the curriculum.

4. The role of the teacher is viewed as more central because he needs to help create the curriculum to suit the classroom context. The assumption under the mutual adaptation with fidelity orientation is that the role of the teacher in this regard is to shape the curriculum to meet the demands of the local situation (Synder et al., 1992, Fullan, 2011, Cobbold, 2017).

It is the teacher adapting the curriculum, along with the classroom environment (often cited as the third teacher in the room), that allows the curriculum to be responsive to the students it is serving. An adaptive curriculum allows the student to drive his or her own learning while entrusting the teacher to make decisions (Springgay & Truman, 2018). Some key features of the mutual adaptation model include:

1. a learning environment that offers opportunities for content to be reflective and culturally responsive to the children using the space (e.g., wall displays, books, and play materials that reflect all cultures in the classroom).
2. learning opportunities that foster critical thinking based on what children are interested in.
3. opportunities for deep, meaningful conversations while teachers engage with children about topics that they know children are interested in
4. opportunities to master concepts across curricular content domains (integration of subjects)
5. opportunities for teachers to individualize learning approaches as children need based on what they know about children and where they expect children to go next

6. opportunities to apply content knowledge in practical ways and extend learning beyond a test or worksheet
7. opportunities to collaborate with other students to work on shared tasks (Springgay & Truman, 2018).

These make sense when we consider that children's learning and interests are not always perfectly linear. To that end, teachers rely on learning standards and curricula that provide guides, materials, strategies, and content to ensure that learners learn what is necessary, but they do so in a developmentally appropriate way with a diverse environment that is set up for exploration.

Additionally, the use of Mutual Adaptation in assessing the Social Studies curriculum implies that curriculum knowledge is primarily created outside the classroom by the experts who design and develop the curriculum innovation or change. A measure of deserved respect should also be granted to the implementers of the programme. The following implications would be realized according to Cobbold (2019):

1. negotiation and flexibility on the part of both the designer and practitioner on which aspects of the curriculum to adapt.
2. it requires teachers to shift from the objective based curriculum which the instructors are familiar with to a modified Standards-Based programme.
3. it involves changes in the knowledge, actions and attitudes of individuals involved.
4. this will demand for the use of new resources.
5. implementation would require a supportive atmosphere in which there is trust and open communication between administrators, teachers, educators, and learners.

6. it will require teachers to be more sophisticated, intelligent, skilful and knowledgeable.

2.2.1 The Relevance of the Mutual Adaptation Theory

Mutual adaptation theory is highly relevant to the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the field of education. This theory focuses on the dynamic relationship between educational policies and the practices of teachers and schools (Coburn & Penuel, 2016).

Mutual adaptation helps to understand that policy implementation is not a one-way process but rather a two-way interaction.

Teachers play a crucial role in the implementation of educational policies. Mutual adaptation theory emphasizes that teachers are not passive recipients of policies; they actively adapt and interpret them based on their professional expertise and contextual factors. In the case of the 2021 curriculum, Teachers adapt the curriculum to suit their students' needs, teaching styles, and classroom resources (Coburn & Penuel, 2016).

Hargreaves & Shirley (2019) in their exploration of "*The Inspiring Future for Educational Change*" argue that when teachers adapt curriculum materials to local contexts, it enhances relevance and engagements, leading to better students' understanding and performance. Local adaptations make learning more reliable and meaningful to students. Gay (2010) in his research on "*Culturally Responsive Teaching*" emphasizes that adapting curriculum to reflect students' cultural backgrounds and local experiences fosters inclusivity and helps bridge cultural gaps in education. He argues that curriculum adaptation by teachers leads to improved students' performance, motivation and achievement.

It is in the same vein that Pinar (2012) states that teachers who adapt curriculum materials to local contexts contribute to the development of culturally rich and responsive curriculum. This approach he believes supports students in understanding their own cultural heritage while promoting that of national perspective. Banks (2010) and Au (2018) all seem to be in agreement that teachers' adaptation of curriculum benefit students from diverse backgrounds, helps develop deeper understanding and perspectives, empower and promote students' social justice in education.

Louis (2020) emphasize that the mutual adaptation model recognizes the need for ongoing adjustments and adaptations during the implementation process. Given the scope and complexities of the Standards-Based (Social Studies), this theory acknowledges that both the educational system and individuals involved must continually adapt to ensure effective implementation. It helps in understanding the need for flexibility and ongoing communication to adapt the curriculum to fit the unique characteristics and needs of different educational settings. Leithwood & Louis (2011) also illustrate the relevance of the mutual adaptation theory by highlighting the importance of collaborative learning communities in implementing educational reforms. The Standards-Based Curriculum requires teachers and administrators to work together, sharing experiences and expertise, and collaboratively solve problems.

Anderson & Priscilla (2016) argue that the mutual adaptation theory is particularly relevant to the Standards-Based Curriculum as it emphasizes the need for ongoing communication, feedback, and learning between the educational system and other stakeholders involved. Feedback loops facilitate the identification of challenges, successes, and the necessary adjustments needed for successful implementation. The mutual adaptation allows for flexibility and variation in how the standards are

interpreted and implemented across different contexts and levels of education (Louis, 2020). This involves continuous feedback and reflection on the effectiveness and impact of the implementation process and its outcomes.

Mutual adaptation theory underscores the importance of professional development for teachers. In the Standards-Based context, it suggests that effective professional development should not be a top-down approach but should instead involve collaborative learning and support systems to help teachers adapt to the new curriculum effectively (Coburn & Penuel, 2016).

The 2021 Social Studies Curriculum for JHSs aims to promote higher-order thinking skills and deeper learning for all students, which require a shift in pedagogical practices and classroom culture. Teachers need to adapt their teaching strategies and resources to meet the diverse needs and interests of their students, while students need to engage in more active and inquiry-based learning activities (Darling-Hammond, 2017; NACCA, 2020). Mutual adaptation permits this flexibility for an effective curriculum implementation. These adaptations require a supportive and responsive learning environment that fosters mutual trust and respect among teachers and students.

2.2.2 Application of the Mutual Adaptation Theory to the Study

The implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools in Ghana has attracted significant attention due to its potential impact on teaching and learning (Addai-Munumkum, 2019). The application of Mutual Adaptation theory in “Assessing the Implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum at the Mkoranza South Municipality” provides a comprehensive approach and lens to explore Social Studies teachers’ perceptions of the curriculum, investigate their teaching techniques, assess their accessibility to instructional resources, and examine their assessment

methods. The 2021 Social Studies Curriculum aims to provide students with the requisite knowledge, skills, and values necessary to become active and responsible citizens in a diverse and interdependent world (NaCCA, 2020). The curriculum has its standards aligned to the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS, 2014) standards and themes which emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of Social Studies and development of critical thinking, inquiry, and civic competence.

With the application of the Mutual Adaptation in the context of this research, it implies that the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum, which was designed with a global perspective, has undergone adaptations to align with the specific needs, culture, and educational context of Junior High Schools in Ghana. Simultaneously, the Junior High Schools in one way or the other also need to adapt the curriculum such as the teaching techniques, resources, and assessment methods to suit specific cultural and educational needs within the local context to effectively implement the curriculum. Applying this theory underscores the importance of a dynamic and adaptive approach towards an effective Social Studies curriculum implementation (Gyimah & Sackey, 2018; Adu-Gyamfi & Kumah, 2018).

Social Studies teachers' perception of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum is an important factor that influences their implementation of the curriculum. According to a study by Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2016), teachers' perception of the Social Studies Curriculum is shaped by their beliefs, knowledge, experiences, and context. The study found out that teachers who perceived the Social Studies Curriculum as aligned with their own goals and values, as well as with the needs and interests of their students, were more likely to adopt and integrate the curriculum in their instruction. Teachers who perceived the Social Studies Curriculum as relevant, rigorous, and engaging for

students also reported higher levels of satisfaction and confidence in teaching the curriculum. However, teachers who perceived the Social Studies Curriculum as incompatible with their beliefs, knowledge, or context, or as irrelevant, superficial, or boring for students, were more likely to resist or ignore the curriculum.

Risinger (2011) notes that Social Studies teachers need to use effective techniques and best practices that promote students' engagement, understanding, and application of Social Studies concepts and skills. Some of these he said include using primary sources, project-based learning, cooperative learning, differentiated instruction, authentic assessments, and technology integration. However, many Social Studies teachers may not be familiar with these practices and may face challenges applying them in their classrooms due to lack of training, support, or confidence. Moreover, some teachers may face resistance from students, parents, or administrators who may have different expectations or preferences for Social Studies instruction.

According to Abdu-Raheem (2015), Social Studies teachers need to use a variety of instructional resources to make the subject more engaging, relevant, and meaningful for students. These include textbooks, maps, charts, graphs, videos, audio recordings, newspapers, magazines, internet sources, field trips, guest speakers, community resources, and so on. However, many schools lack these resources or have limited access due to financial constraints, poor infrastructure, or geographical isolation. This may affect quality and effectiveness of Social Studies instruction and learning outcomes. The Mutual Adaptation theory acknowledges that individuals and institutions adapt their resources to fit the demands of the environment (Adu-Gyamfi & Kumah, 2018). In the context of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum implementation,

teachers may need to modify teaching resources or develop new resources to align with the curriculum goals.

Assessment methods for the new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum are also very crucial for ensuring quality and effectiveness of Social Studies instruction and learning. According to a report by NCSS (2014), assessment methods for the Social Studies Curriculum should align with the inquiry arc and disciplinary practices of Social Studies. The report suggested that assessment methods for the Social Studies Curriculum should: a) measure students' ability to ask questions, gather and evaluate sources, develop claims and evidence, communicate conclusions, and take informed action; b) use multiple sources of evidence such as performance tasks, portfolios, projects, essays, tests, and self-assessments; c) provide timely and constructive feedback to students and teachers; d) support students' reflection and improvement of their work; e) inform instructional decisions and curriculum revisions; and f) foster students' motivation and engagement in Social Studies. However, a study by Fitchett et al. (2016) found that many Social Studies teachers face challenges in implementing effective assessment methods due to lack of time, training, resources, or support. Such teachers relied on traditional or standardized assessments that do not align with the disciplinary practices of Social Studies.

A possible way to address some of these concerns and opportunities is through the use of a Mutual Adaptation theoretical framework for assessing the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. This framework is based on the idea that implementation is a dynamic and interactive process that involves mutual adaptation between the innovation (Standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum) and the context (the schools) (Adu-Gyamfi & Kumah, 2018). According to O'Toole (2016), the Mutual

Adaptation process by which both innovation and its environment are modified as a result of their interaction. In other words, both 2021 Social Studies Curriculum and the schools need to adjust and accommodate each other's needs and demands in order to achieve successful implementation. This framework would enable Social Studies teachers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the new Social Studies Curriculum as well as their own practices, and to develop their instruction and learning outcomes.

Research indicates that some degree of adaptation is inevitable in any successful implementation (Snyder et al., 1992). In this connection, it makes good sense to agree with the many authors (e.g., Hall and Locks, 1981) who think that the extent of adaptation that can be allowed should be clarified: "How much and in what way teachers are free to vary the programme should be determined by someone and communicated early in the in-service process" (Fitchett et al., 2016).

The Mutual Adaptation theory suggests that both teachers and students continuously adapt to each other's behaviours and expectations. In the implementation of the curriculum, this adaptation can influence how teachers deliver the content and how students engage with and understand the material. The interaction can impact the effectiveness of the curriculum implementation (Lipski & Naylor, 2017). In the context of this research, it could be used to analyse how Social Studies teachers and students adapt to the new 2021 standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum by examining how teachers modify their teaching techniques, instructional resources, and assessment methods to suit their students' needs, and conversely, how students adapt to the curriculum's demands.

Mutual Adaptation theory provides a solid lens to examine how Social Studies teachers perceive the new Social Studies Curriculum goals, relevance, and alignment with local

contexts. It would help to analyse how the Social Studies teachers adapt their instructional approaches to ensure effective delivery of the new Social Studies Curriculum. It would help explore the adaptations made by the Social Studies teachers in accessing and utilizing instructional resources, and to examine how they adapt their assessment strategies to align with the curriculum. This theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how the teachers are adapting to the implementation of the curriculum (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). It can be deduced from the above discussions that the mutual adaptation theory can be a valuable framework for understanding how the new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum is implemented in Junior High Schools within the Nkoranza South Municipality, with a focus on the dynamic interactions between teachers, students, and the curriculum itself.

2.3 Concept and Rationale of Standards-Based Curriculum

Standards-Based reforms normally organize teaching, learning, and assessment around well-defined performance standards (that is what students are required to know, understand and be able to do) and benchmarked proficiency levels (Alvunger, 2018). Standard-Based Curriculum prioritizes competency development such as collaboration, communication, digital literacy, critical thinking, and creativity including alignment across standards, instructions, and assessments unlike Objective-based models that emphasize content coverage. The success Standard-Based Curriculum frameworks are usually centered on teachers' capacity to implement learner-centered pedagogy and use evidence from assessment to guide instruction (Porter et., al., 2018).

Social studies in SBC targets civic competence: values, attitudes, problem-solving on socio-economic and environmental issues. Ghana's shift to SBC from 2019 is to address persistent gaps like rote learning, exam orientation, and weak transfer of knowledge to

real-life contexts. The standards emphasize core competencies, subject-specific practices, and assessment benchmarks intended to foster deeper learning. Policy documents emphasize formative assessment, performance tasks, and continuous assessment records to inform instruction, alongside teacher professional development and school-based support systems. Evidence shows teachers appreciate the relevance of Social Studies. Studies further show uneven teacher understanding of SBC philosophy and assessment demands. Self-efficacy tends to be higher for classroom management than for designing competency-based tasks and rubrics. Teachers' prior training and years of experience influence confidence and fidelity. One-off workshops only raise awareness. Effective implementation correlates with ongoing training, peer learning communities, and head-teacher instructional leadership. Availability of resources and ICT access remains variable especially in rural areas. (Addai-Mununkum, 2021; Eshun et al., 2024). This study will address the most persistent implementation bottlenecks identified. Studying these within Nkoranza South adds needed municipal level evidence from predominant rural context.

2.4 Teacher's Perceptions and Conceptions of Curriculum Implementation

Typically, the concept of 'perception' is frequently associated with 'belief', 'view', 'perspective', and 'opinion'. In essence, it denotes an aspect of human experience and perception shaped by one's environment and personal encounters, leading to interpretations that may vary among individuals (Jerald & Shah, 2018). The perception held by educators constitutes a segment of their cognitive framework, which significantly impacts their methodologies and pedagogical practices (Ernest, 2019). Educators globally play a crucial role in advancing educational reforms and the execution of curricula (Shorten and Smith, 2017). The insights, convictions, and

interpretations of educators are crucial for comprehending the nuances of curriculum reforms (Shorten and Smith, 2017).

Research studies (Huang et al, 2012; Thompson, 2016) indicate that educators' understanding of a subject or curriculum significantly influences their perception of the curriculum, which in turn affects the curriculum they implement. For instance, in the realm of Social Studies, there exists a significant contention surrounding various predominant interpretations of the discipline, such as the distinction between a multidisciplinary approach, traditional or discrete subject comprehension, and a problem-solving orientated, trans-disciplinary perspective. The study conducted by Chiodo and Byford (2017) demonstrated that educators' perspectives on Social Studies education exert a distinct impact on the Social Studies curriculum. Similarly, the results from various studies suggest that the choices regarding the content of Social Studies education for our children frequently fluctuate and are contingent upon the teacher's conceptual understanding of the subject (Evans, 2014; Eshun, 2020).

Comprehending the perceptions held by educators regarding their beliefs and concerns can yield valuable insights into the potential success or failure of curriculum implementation. McNeill et al. (2016) and Rakes and Dunn (2015) have both provided evidence supporting this idea by examining the influence of educators' beliefs regarding specific objectives within science curricula. McNeill et al. (2016) discovered that educators' convictions profoundly affect their instructional choices. Given the significant influence of beliefs, it follows that dedicating time to understand the concerns, values, and perceptions of educators could enhance the implementation process by proactively tackling these aspects (Al-Shabatat, 2014; Rakes & Dunn, 2015).

The research conducted by Aboagye and Yawson (2021) reveals that educators recognise the significance of the new curriculum (Standards-Based Curriculum). They believe it will foster collaborative learning, equip students with essential lifelong skills, prepare them for the workforce, enhance inclusive education, advance gender equality, and take into account the cultural and societal context of Ghanaian students. The findings indicated that the existing curriculum is devoid of challenging content for instruction, yet is burdened with excessive workloads, insufficient teaching and learning materials, and extended class durations. Educators expressed the perspective that the government ought to engage teachers in the curriculum planning process, prepare books and learning materials, provide advance training for teachers, and conduct a pilot of the new curriculum prior to its implementation. In summary, the new curriculum ought to engage numerous educators in the planning phase prior to its implementation (Aboagye & Yawson, 2021).

As Abudu and Mensah (2016) aptly articulated, permitting educators to engage in the curriculum development process is indeed a judicious choice to guarantee effective implementation. The evidence does not suggest that the teacher's involvement in curriculum design is beyond discussion. Nevertheless, the research conducted to date suggests that educators perceive their involvement in the curriculum design process as minimal. Abudu and Mensah (2016) posited in their study that the presence of school curriculum leaders is essential for enhancing teachers' engagement in the curriculum. This perspective emerged from an analysis of various obstacles hindering teachers' involvement in the curriculum design process. The proposition put forth was that leaders within each educational institution ought to assume responsibility for matters pertaining to curriculum design. The importance of educators involvement in the drafting and implementation of the curriculum is unmistakably highlighted by these

issues, underscoring its critical role in achieving successful educational reform. The design and implementation of curricula ought to be approached with a decentralised framework.

A research endeavour was undertaken by Bay et al. (2016) in Turkey to explore educators' perspectives on the school-based curriculum development (SBCD) approach. It was noted that educators expressed dissatisfaction regarding their minimal involvement in the formulation of the curriculum. The findings indicated that the development of the curriculum ought to be executed within the school, rather than by external authorities. The study proposed several recommendations, notably the appointment of a curriculum expert in each school to guarantee that educators' perspectives are considered in matters of curriculum development.

The recent mathematical approach that regrettably faltered in the United States faced significant criticism for being formulated solely by specialists, with minimal engagement from the educators directly involved in the subject (2021). It is important to acknowledge that since the establishment of the council of mathematics educators to oversee curriculum matters, the transitions have been both seamless and effective (2014). Mereku (2016) pointed out that the modern mathematics introduced in Ghana during the 1987 reform was met with significant expectations; however, it ultimately fell short due to the conceptual design being crafted by psychologists without the inclusion of teachers' perspectives on the subject matter.

Yasemin (2016) examined the consequences of teachers perception and professional development on the innovative implementation of the for teaching English to young learners in Turkish public schools. The findings indicated that the previous training of educators significantly influenced the degree to which they executed the curriculum

initiative. The research thus advocated for the establishment of ongoing teacher training and professional development initiatives, especially during the pivotal initial years of the innovation process, to facilitate the execution of curriculum innovation within Turkish primary education. Similarly, Salem (2018) examined educators' perceptions of the English language curriculum within Libyan public schools, revealing that insufficient training significantly influenced their views on curriculum implementation.

From the above discussions, it is very obvious that teachers' views must be taken into serious account prior to the development and implementation of a curriculum to ensure its success since they are the primary implementers of the curriculum.

2.5 Methods and Techniques of Teaching

Instruction is the method by which an educator guides an individual or a collective of learners towards an enhanced understanding or proficiency (Nilsen and Albertalli, 2012). Teaching is characterised by the active involvement of learners, facilitating their understanding and application of knowledge, concepts, and methodologies. The process encompasses design, content selection, delivery, assessment, and reflection. Teaching requires engaging students in the learning process, thereby facilitating their active participation in the construction of knowledge. An educator must grasp not only the content of their discipline but also the intricacies of student cognition and the methods to engage them as active contributors in the learning process. Consequently, effective pedagogy requires a commitment to methodically comprehending the intricacies of learning. The objective of education is to transform students from mere consumers of external knowledge into proactive architects of their own understanding and that of others (Nilsen and Albertalli, 2012).

The concept of teaching methods refers to the approaches employed to facilitate instruction within the classroom setting (Ndirangu 2017). The teaching method encompasses the diverse approaches employed to orchestrate a learning task, thereby enhancing the educational experience (Kimweri 2016). Ayaaba and Oduma (2013) asserted that the term "method of teaching" encompasses all actions undertaken by a teacher within the classroom during the process of delivering a lesson. Their comprehensive methodology towards a lesson is of paramount importance. It represents the methodical approach employed by educators in their instructional practices. Ayaaba and Oduma (2013) further asserted that the method of teaching constitutes a systematic approach to executing a particular task. It suggests a systematic and rational organisation of procedures. It is characterised by a more systematic approach.

Education is an ongoing endeavour that seeks to facilitate meaningful transformations in students by employing suitable methodologies. To effectuate favourable transformations in students, the pedagogical approaches employed by educators must be optimally aligned with the subject matter at hand. Instructional approaches yield optimal results when they align with the specific needs of learners, as each individual engages with and interprets enquiries in a distinct manner. The alignment of teaching methods with the needs and preferred learning styles of students has a significant effect on their academic performance (Ayeni 2017; Zeeb, 2014; Adunola 2011; Bharadwaj & Pal, 2011; Chang, 2010).

Defining what constitutes effective or ineffective teaching methods is a complex endeavour, as it is shaped by educators' normative evaluations, the specific learning outcomes the methods aim to achieve, the attributes of the students, the resources employed, the physical and social contexts, and a myriad of additional influences

stemming from societal, institutional, pedagogical, and cultural dimensions. Teaching methods ought to prioritise the enhancement of student learning and align with the competency objectives outlined in the curriculum. They should encourage the development of higher-order skills such as examining, analysing, discussing, and exploring, while also offering clear guidelines for their implementation (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016).

In genuine educational environments, it is imperative that approaches are tailored to the unique characteristics, interests, and needs of both students and educators, in addition to the subject matter being addressed and the educational context in which it is delivered (Ogden, 2004).

Teacher-Centred Methods

This approach results in students passively receiving information from the instructor, failing to cultivate a deeper engagement with the subject matter being presented (Boud & Feletti, 2019). This approach underscores the conveyance of subject matter or instructional content to learners. This methodology is commonly known as the Teacher Transmission method or the presentation method. The educator's methodology in conveying lessons involves instructing students on the necessary actions they must undertake (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). The teacher-centred method of instruction is characterised by a communication process that allows minimal, if any, opportunity for the active engagement of learners (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013).

The methodology is characterised by its impracticality, leaning more towards theoretical frameworks and rote memorisation (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). It fails to implement activity-based learning to motivate students to engage with real-world problems through the application of knowledge. Given that the educator governs the

dissemination and exchange of knowledge, the lecturer may strive to optimise the conveyance of information while reducing both time and exertion. Consequently, there is a risk that both the engagement and comprehension of students may diminish. To remedy these deficiencies, Zakaria, Chin & Daud (2016) articulated that instruction should transcend the mere transmission of rules, definitions, and procedures for rote memorisation, instead fostering an environment where students are actively involved as central contributors to the learning process.

Student-Centred Method

This approach encompasses the processes of discovery, inquiry, and problem-solving. Students are encouraged to analyse, scrutinise, and delve into a particular issue or problem. The educator's comprehensive methodology involves immersing students in experiential learning opportunities, including field excursions, collaborative discussions, and projects that require them to independently explore and resolve a given issue. (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). Participatory methods are approaches that facilitate active engagement of learners in the educational process, whether individually or collectively (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013).

The emergence of discovery learning has led numerous scholars to embrace more flexible, student-centered approaches aimed at fostering active engagement in the learning process. Many educators currently implement a student-centered methodology to foster engagement, analytical inquiry, critical reasoning, and a sense of enjoyment in their pupils. The pedagogical approach is considered more efficacious as it does not concentrate the dissemination of knowledge solely from the instructor to the learner (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). This approach fosters a sense of purpose-driven behaviour

in students, thereby rendering the method highly effective in enhancing academic performance (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2015).

Teacher-Student Interactive Method

This pedagogical approach integrates the methodologies characteristic of both teacher-directed and learner-focused frameworks. The information generated by the learners is retained more effectively than identical information conveyed to them by the lecturer (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). The approach promotes an active pursuit of pertinent knowledge by the students, rather than allowing the lecturer to dominate the dissemination of information to the learners. As a result, empirical studies concerning teaching strategies demonstrate that this instructional approach markedly improves students' academic performance (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013).

Ayaaba and Oduma (2013) categorise teaching methods into formal and informal approaches. Formal methods are characterised by their occurrence within the conventional dynamics of classroom interactions, encompassing exchanges between students and the teacher, as well as interactions among the students themselves. Informal methods highlight the importance of students' intrinsic motivation and capacity to independently explore concepts through engagement with various resources, whether within the classroom or beyond.

A teaching technique encompasses any activity that educators require their students to engage in during the delivery of a lesson. Such activities may include dramatisation, discussion, role play, debate, simulation, and brainstorming (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). This is a clearly articulated process employed to achieve a particular activity or objective. Techniques may be understood as actions undertaken to realise a particular method. The strategies utilised by educators in the delivery of lessons are contingent

upon their pedagogical approach (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). In their work, “Skills and Techniques of Teaching Social Studies”, Ayaaba and Oduma (2013) elucidated various methodologies for imparting knowledge in the field of Social Studies. The following include:

Lecture Technique

This method involves a collective of students engaging in focused listening while the instructor elaborates extensively. The teacher's presentation is typically anticipated to proceed without disruption. The responsibility of the learners is to engage with the material presented by the teacher through attentive listening. The students are likewise anticipated to commit to memory the material presented by the instructor. This technique is primarily led by the instructor. The instructor frequently engages in discourse and demonstration for the students (Tamakloe, Atta & Amedahe, 2005). The lecture is perceived as a structured delivery of information by the instructor, intended to facilitate later comprehension and retention during assessments by learners. Kwarteng (2022) posits that the lecture serves as an oral exposition of instructional material. This indicates that, since the teacher bears the exclusive responsibility for imparting the oral presentation to the students, they often find it challenging to transfer their acquired knowledge to various contexts, resorting instead to mere recollection of the information as it was initially conveyed when called upon. It renders the process of instigating behavioural change in students quite challenging.

Discussion Technique

Engagement in dialogue serves as a dynamic pedagogical approach, allowing learners to delve into various issues, perspectives, and concepts (Hackathorn, 2011). Engaging in discussion enables students to explore and articulate their individual viewpoints or

perspectives (Orlich et al, 2010). This approach fosters profound learning, as students are required to attentively listen to and comprehend their peers' contributions before they can effectively respond or build upon those ideas (Hadjioanou in Hackathorn, 2011). Dynneson and Gross (2019) assert that, in various manifestations, discussion emerges as the most favoured technique within the majority of Social Studies classrooms. Amoah (2018) posits that the prevalent method employed in teaching social studies hinges on the premise that discussion fosters democratic engagement within the classroom, while simultaneously guiding learners towards achieving affective outcomes, particularly in the realm of social studies education. In the discourse, participants are encouraged to appreciate diverse perspectives, exhibit tolerance, engage cooperatively during debates, and embrace and integrate cultural differences. Gagne (1969) as referenced by Ayaaba & Oduma (2015), asserts that discussion entails a teacher facilitating the engagement of two or more learners in a collaborative exchange of perspectives to clarify an issue and enhance the learners' comprehension. Boadu (2016) perceives discussion as “a thoughtful consideration of the relationships involved in a topic or problem under study”; and asserts that “it is concerned with the analysis, comparison, evaluation and conclusions of these relationships.” Orlich and colleagues (2018) supported the perspectives of Gagne and Aggarwal, emphasising that discussion entails a reciprocal exchange of ideas, characterised by active learning and engagement from all participants. The technique of discussion necessitates that the educator cultivate a perspective while also embracing and promoting the exchange of diverse ideas (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). Arends (2018) perceives the discourse as comprising three essential components. At the outset, it is crucial for the discourse between students and teachers to exist in harmony; students are expected to interact with academic materials through dialogue and conversation, as well as to practise and

publicly demonstrate their cognitive processes (Arends, 2018 p. 352). Through discourse, individuals achieve diverse modalities of cognitive, emotional, or physical learning, which manifest in a transformation of behaviour. This assertion aligns with Brookfield's (2015) perspective that the purpose of discussion is to facilitate transformation in learners, particularly concerning the attitudes that educators consider valuable (p.189). This is relevant in Social Studies, as many topics require the solicitation of ideas and diverse perspectives.

Given that all dialogues necessitate verbal engagement, proficient listening abilities are of paramount importance. Ayaaba and Oduma (2015) assert that the discussion technique can be categorised into four distinct types: whole class, small group, panel, and debate. In the context of a class discussion, the educator assumes the role of facilitator or leader, presenting a problem or issue, fostering interaction, and guiding the discourse among the participants. The approach entails segmenting the class into smaller discussion units and designating a leader or recorder for each group. A panel discussion necessitates the assembly of four or five carefully chosen students, each tasked with delivering a five-minute discourse on various facets of a selected topic. The technique of debate discussion involves two groups of learners who meticulously prepare position papers representing opposing viewpoints in a debate.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming represents a casual exploration of concepts or challenges, primarily aimed at gathering the insights, emotions, thoughts, or agreement of participants within a group (Parker, 2018). Kwarteng (2022) similarly asserted that brainstorming as a pedagogical technique aims to assist students in cultivating original solutions to challenges. Kwarteng (2022) asserted that “Brainstorming is a straightforward and

efficient skill-building technique to employ when a significant degree of creativity is sought.” Ayaaba and Odumah (2013) assert that the capacity to employ questions or foster dialogue in a brainstorming session, the skill to conjure imaginary scenarios, the talent to maintain student engagement during instruction, the aptitude to inspire learners, and the proficiency to deliver lessons in a structured fashion are all considered technical skills. This method enables learners to articulate all the thoughts that arise in relation to the topic at hand. The aim is to collect a multitude of ideas from learners, after which the most suitable responses are ultimately and collaboratively embraced by the class.

Simulations

Simulation functions as a conceptual framework or re-creation of a tangible object, issue, occurrence, or circumstance. Simulation functions to motivate students, share knowledge, enhance conceptual comprehension, shift viewpoints, assess performance, and promote interdisciplinary collaboration (Kwarteng, 2022). Adu-Yeboah (2015) described simulation as being deeply interconnected with role play (p. 56). He describes simulation as a technique that enables learners to develop skills, competencies, knowledge, or behaviours by participating in scenarios that closely mirror real-life situations. This is designed to engage participants in situations that closely reflect those faced in reality. Simulations refine the intricacies of reality to highlight particular essential principles. A simulation functions as a depiction or re-creation of a real object, issue, or circumstance (Kwarteng, 2022).

According to Clark (2016), simulation integrates role playing and problem solving, involving students in a constructed scenario that mirrors a real-life situation, thereby facilitating their comprehension of the actual context. Adu-Yeboah (2015), in an effort

to dissect Clark's assertion, posited that 'simulation then is a model of physical reality.' It endeavours to distil a multifaceted social reality (p.57). Simulation serves as a superficial representation or mimicry of reality. One might describe it as a simulation of a hypothetical occurrence governed by a specific framework of regulations.

Dramatization/Role play

Kwarteng (2022) characterised dramatisation as "a synthetic art involving the purposive coordination and control of the delicate organs of speech and muscles... with a view to free and intelligent expression of emotions and ideas." This engages students in a theatrical representation or enactment of a particular event or emotion. Role play constitutes a meticulously organised framework that reflects real-life scenarios, wherein the participant engages in actions as directed. According to Altun (2015), role play constitutes a pedagogical approach wherein students engage in designated roles through verbal and physical actions. It can be inferred that role play constitutes a classroom activity wherein students engage in oral enactments of various roles. Ayaaba and Oduma (2013) outline several essential elements for effective role-play: (i) students should perceive themselves not merely as learners but as genuine participants in the scenario; (ii) the educator must establish the simulated environment; (iii) students need to understand the structure of the activity and receive pertinent information; and (iv) the teacher must convey to students their identities, thoughts, and emotions within the context.

Role playing serves as a versatile tool applicable to students across various grade levels and academic achievements, enabling the exploration of a wide array of situations or topics (Orlich et al, 2010). The educator might additionally incorporate structured theatrical methods within the learning environment. This entails the employment of

structured written theatrical works to highlight specific historical occurrences. The play in written form is performed by a select group of students (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013).

Question and Answer

The technique of posing questions and providing answers is essential to the pedagogical process in Social Studies. This is a traditional approach, often referred to as the “Socratic Method of teaching” (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). It was conceived by the renowned thinker Socrates (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). Kwarteng (2022) posits that the process of questioning and answering in education allows students to contemplate their enquiries and identify their requirements for additional information. Simultaneously, by seeking responses to essential enquiries, the educator acquires valuable understanding regarding the advancement of the class. Inquiry is fundamentally linked to effective pedagogy. Effective questions in the classroom serve as catalysts that facilitate learners' comprehension as they interact with the material presented in Social Studies lessons. Various tiers of inquiry facilitate students in acquiring a deeper comprehension of concepts. There exist enquiries of varying complexity, encompassing both more profound and more fundamental questions (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013).

Higher Level Questions

These demand more sophisticated thinking at the level of application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. There are two types namely divergent where students give responses supported by evidence and evaluative questions where students judge, justify, grade or decide to offer a personal opinion. They all demand thinking and reasoning.

Lower-Level Questions

These enquiries impose a slight cognitive burden on students. They require students to limit their engagement to the realms of knowledge and comprehension. They can be

categorised into two distinct types: cognitive-memory, which pertains to memorised knowledge where students respond with factual information or definitions based on cognition, and convergent questions, which involve the synthesis of one's thoughts or the formulation of a concise answer.

Project Technique

Kilpatrick, as referenced in Adu-Yeboah (2015), characterises project technique as a 'deliberate and purposeful act.' Knoll (1997) asserts that it serves as a mechanism through which students cultivate independence, responsibility, and engage in social and democratic practices. Adu-Yeboah (2015) asserts that the many methodologies in social studies instruction necessitate the project technique. The previous definition explicitly states that a project is a learner-centred endeavour undertaken by students to achieve a certain objective (Adu-Yeboah, 2015). The project technique was consequently devised to transform the conventional classroom, which was marked by incessant passivity, disinterest, and activities that bore minimal or no relevance to learners' real-life problems (Atta & Amedahe, 2015). The initiative, stemming from the professionalisation of a vocation, was integrated into the curriculum to facilitate students' ability to work independently and synthesise theory with practical experience (Adu-Yeboah, 2015). A study is undertaken by an individual or group, potentially incorporating independent observation, to tackle a specific issue, thereby representing a methodological approach (Atta & Amedahe, 2015). This represents the phase in which the student or a collective of learners grasps the importance of the issue at hand to be tackled. The Social Studies instructor might involve students in several project kinds based on the intended objective. Kilpatrick (as cited in Atta and Amedahe, 2015) identifies the following types:

The producer type refers to a project that focusses on the creation of a tangible material thing.

The consumer type: with this project, the aim is to enable the student to have either direct or vicarious experience, such as reading storybooks or conducting library research.

The problem type: the primary objective is to involve students in addressing a challenge that necessitates contemplation and critical analysis.

The drill type: the aim of this project is to assist pupils in achieving a specific level of proficiency in a designated activity.

Considering that Social Studies involves the analysis of the environment, the project methodology could include localised research where students are assigned to explore and write a report about their neighbourhood. The report is likely to include details regarding the geographical location, the professions of the indigenous populace, and the various festivals observed within that region.

As noted by Atta and Amedahe (2015), skilled writers can play a pivotal role in the revision and editing of essays produced by those with lesser abilities, thus fostering a collaborative learning environment. In contrast, through project work, students develop their abilities in analysis and hypothesis formulation, leading to a rational understanding of the issues or challenges that need to be tackled (Adu-Yeboah, 2015).

I acknowledge the project technique for its ability to cultivate unity among students, alongside fostering tolerance and cooperation; it serves as a highly effective pedagogical method, especially in the realm of emotions.

Field Work

Kirilpatrick has delineated field works as fieldstrips, excursions, research trips, and informed walks. Adu-Yeboah (2015) characterised fieldwork as an educational endeavour that transpires beyond the confines of conventional classrooms or laboratories, often meticulously organised to take place within the school environment, its vicinity, or the broader local community. Hayford (2017) characterises field trips as structured excursions to sites beyond the classroom, intended to gather information and enable direct observation of various phenomena. Fieldwork enables the educator to expand lessons beyond the limitations of the classroom, tapping into direct information from the surrounding environment. Kilpatrick, as cited in Adu-Yeboah (2015), posited that excursions transcend mere sightseeing, serving instead as educational journeys, thereby suggesting that the primary aim of fieldwork is to facilitate knowledge acquisition for learners. The individuals, upon moving to the location, gain insights that were previously absent or misconstrued. Fieldwork activities may be delineated into two distinct phases.

The preparatory activities encompass all essential arrangements established prior to the actual fieldwork, which includes the class's departure on the designated day, roll call, and other events conducted on that day, culminating in the students' return to school. The activities following fieldwork represent the concluding phase, involving tasks performed after the expedition, such as the composition of reports and the articulation of appreciation to the officials of the research site.

Kilpatrick, as noted in Adu-Yeboah (2015), remarked that fieldwork operations are generally organised in areas of economic, historical, geographical, and cultural importance. Fieldwork provides learners with methodologies for addressing complex

challenges, cultivates analytical reasoning, and strengthens cooperative abilities through hands-on, experiential learning in authentic contexts. It aids students in discovering and analysing information obtained from literature and various resources. Fieldwork activities promote collaborative engagement among students by embracing diverse viewpoints and encouraging cooperation with individuals from a range of cultural backgrounds. Anderson and Priscilla (2016) observed that field trip activities exert lasting influences on students, frequently connected to memories of specific subjects. To ensure the efficacy of Social Studies instruction, it is imperative that fieldwork activities are given due prominence.

The presentation aims to articulate concepts with clarity and precision, ensuring that the communication is both significant and esteemed. In order to effectively deliver a presentation, it is essential to first ascertain its purpose and delineate its objectives, encompassing the underlying rationale for the presentation as well as the specific skills and information that are to be conveyed (Mousawa & Elyas, 2015).

Another approach is discourse through debate. Freeley and Steinberg (2017) articulate that debate encompasses the examination of diverse viewpoints to arrive at a conclusion, relevant to both an individual engaging in internal contemplation and a person or group endeavouring to persuade others to align with their position. During the debate activity, the instructor allows students to convey their thoughts and articulate their viewpoints as they formulate arguments for or against various propositions.

Cooperative learning represents an instructional approach that employs small groups, placing the onus of both individual and collective achievement on the students (Adu-Yeboah, 2015). Cohen (2015) posited that cooperative learning serves as an instructional approach that amalgamates a variety of social and academic experiences

within classroom activities. They benefit from the collective resources, experiences, skills, knowledge, and mutual oversight inherent in collaborative learning (Cohen, 2015). For this strategy to yield optimal results, it is imperative that students cultivate an appreciation for each other's distinctiveness, foster mutual encouragement throughout the learning journey, and engage in effective communication. Ayaaba and Oduma (2013) outline various attributes of cooperative learning: (i) educators guide students to work together in small groups of three or four; (ii) there is a focus on the task at hand; (iii) cooperation and interaction within the group are crucial; (iv) individual responsibility for learning is mandated; and (v) it encourages the distribution of tasks. Various pedagogical approaches and methodologies that have been either adopted or modified within the 2021 Curriculum for execution in Ghana (NaCCA, 2020) include:

Creative Pedagogies encompass the implementation of innovative and engaging teaching strategies designed to cultivate students' creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills. Examples of innovative teaching methodologies include project-based learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-solving approaches, collaborative learning, and game-based learning.

Professional Learning Communities: This denotes the collaborative and introspective engagement of educators who exchange their experiences, challenges, and solutions with one another. Professional Learning Communities facilitate the enhancement of pedagogical skills among educators, deepen their subject knowledge, and encourage the adoption of exemplary practices from diverse contexts. Illustrations of this include lesson study, action research, mentoring, and coaching.

Differentiation encompasses the modification of curriculum content, processes, products, and environments to accommodate the varied needs and capabilities of learners. Differentiation enables learners to engage with the curriculum in accordance with their individual levels of preparedness, interests, and preferred modes of learning. Examples include flexible grouping, tiered assignments, choice boards, and scaffolding.

The concept of inclusion encompasses the equitable provision of support and opportunities for all learners, irrespective of their diverse backgrounds, identities, or abilities. It fosters an environment where students experience a sense of worth, respect, and belonging within the educational community. Examples encompass education focused on gender sensitivity, special needs, and human rights.

Assessment for learning encompasses the implementation of continuous and formative assessment methodologies aimed at delivering constructive feedback to both students and educators regarding the learning journey and its results. Assessment for learning enables students to reflect on their own progress, discern their strengths and weaknesses, and enhance their learning strategies. Examples encompass self-assessment, peer assessment, rubrics, portfolios, and quizzes (NaCCA, 2020).

The aforementioned methods and techniques emphasise a focus on learner-centred, participatory, and competency-based pedagogical approaches within the classroom setting. This necessitates that educators assume the role of facilitators in the learning process, rather than mere conveyors of information, steering students towards the construction of meaning, the cultivation of critical thinking, and the application of knowledge in practical contexts (Ministry of Education, 2019).

2.6 Instructional Resources (Materials) for Teaching Social Studies

The term instructional materials encompasses all resources available to both educators and learners, employed to enrich the processes of teaching and learning. As a result, these resources can encompass both human and non-human elements, provided they facilitate the gathering and evaluation of information, skills, attitudes, morals, and values (Inyang-Abia, 2014). Instructional resources include various objects, materials, individuals, and locations employed to enrich the teaching and learning experience in Social Studies. The organised configuration and utilisation of resources, infrastructure, equipment, and personnel enable the effective dissemination of content to accomplish defined objectives. Instructional resources include all materials and individuals employed by educators and students prior to, during, and after the session to facilitate the achievement of objectives. Instructional materials serve as instruments that facilitate the exchange of ideas, deepen understanding, and enrich the appreciation of concepts, skills, values, and attitudes (Inyang-Abia, 2014; Jacob, 2019).

Materials derived from Social Studies include all resources available within educational settings that can aid in the enhancement of teaching and learning processes. They include human, financial, and physical resources. The personnel within an educational institution, much like those in any structured organisation regardless of its nature or scale, consist of individuals engaged in a multitude of school-related endeavours, regardless of their rank within the hierarchy.

Modern educators in the field of Social Studies are urged, and indeed required, to employ contemporary instructional tools to enrich the vibrancy, clarity, and inclusiveness of the learning environment for every student. Social Studies lectures are often perceived as monotonous, uninspiring, and deficient in intellectual depth. This

unfavourable and discouraging situation can be addressed through the identification, collection, preparation, and utilisation of instructional materials and resources (Aliyu, 2019; Ololobou, 2010). Therefore, it is imperative for modern Social Studies educators to carefully select and utilise instructional resources that can be effectively applied across all educational levels to improve teaching and learning outcomes.

Instructional resources serve as fundamental elements within the educational process of teaching and learning. This arises from the limitations inherent in traditional language when it comes to facilitating effective instruction. Instructional materials serve as conduits for the transmission of messages, information, concepts, and knowledge. As a result, they may be managed, perceived, listened to, felt, or deliberated upon. They facilitate actions. They include any entity or individual from whom the learner seeks support throughout the educational journey (Ayaaba and Oduma, 2013).

Ughamadu (2017) posits that the presence of curricular resources is crucial for both the teaching and learning processes, as well as for the effective implementation of the curriculum. The educator is expected to have a comprehensive understanding of a wide range of curriculum resources to facilitate effective curriculum implementation. Moreover, it is imperative for educators to comprehend the roles of these materials within the teaching and learning framework, the attributes of effective curricular resources, and other relevant subjects related to curriculum materials.

Aliyu (2019) defines instructional materials as resources employed as tools for the distribution and attainment of knowledge within an organised educational system. As noted by Aliyu (2019) and Ughamadu (2017), the classification of these educational resources and instructional aids can be delineated as follows:

Published Materials: These represent the established tools of knowledge acquisition and teaching methodologies within the realm of informal education. Such materials frequently include those that are crafted by professionals, encompassing textbooks, revision notes, educational journals, magazines, charts, manuals, and various other periodicals. As a result, advancements in technology have redefined a broader range of substances as printed materials. Subsequent resources encompass photocopies, offset reproductions, ease sheets, and photographic prints. All now assume a pivotal position within the sphere of education and training.

Materials Beyond Print: The designation of non-print is somewhat deceptive, given that instructional materials usually classified in this manner frequently encompass printed elements. In the realm of educational technology, these non-print resources are conventionally categorised as software and hardware. This category of instructional resources can be further categorised into sub-groups: (a) Visual materials, (b) Audio materials and audio-visual materials, and (c) Educational media equipment. Each of these can further be delineated into more precise classifications. Irrespective of the origin of the software, whether it is produced for commercial purposes or created by users in a local context, it is imperative to exercise caution in its application. The efficacy of learning and instructional methods can be precisely evaluated only after a comprehensive assessment procedure has been conducted.

The traditional inclination towards printed educational materials has led numerous educators to overlook the substantial impact that community resources, when utilised effectively, can have on the processes of learning and instruction. The resources can be classified into two distinct categories: Educational excursions or journeys to sites that offer additional learning experiences, including marketplaces, religious institutions,

historical landmarks, amusement parks, and comparable locations. Every individual possesses a unique role within the realms of education and training. Resource persons are generally individuals who possess a high level of expertise and professionalism in their specific areas of specialisation. They could be legal experts, healthcare practitioners, spiritual guides, or business innovators who have the potential to enlighten students on specific educational experiences. Until recently, numerous educational sectors remained oblivious to the significant impact that resource persons have on the field of education.

Textbooks provide structure and clarity within the educational framework (Johansson, 2006; Triyoga, 2010) and are esteemed in the classroom as essential and effective tools intended to support educators in their routine responsibilities (Johansson, 2006; Padururu, n.d.). Padururu (n.d.) observes that textbooks offer students a sense of consistency and reassurance. Textbooks provide a sense of confidence and consistency for inexperienced educators (Triyoga, 2010).

The absence of TLRs has provoked considerable apprehension within the educational community. Lyons (2012) asserts that learning is a complex undertaking that involves the interplay of student motivation, physical infrastructure, instructional resources, teaching expertise, and curriculum demands. The existence of TLRs markedly enhances the effectiveness of educational institutions, serving as essential assets that foster students' scholarly achievements. The fundamental resources necessary for the processes of teaching and learning include material assets, human capital comprising educators and support staff, as well as physical infrastructures like laboratories, libraries, and classrooms.

The phrase instructional materials refers to the comprehensive array of resources accessible to educators and students alike, utilised to enhance the processes of teaching and learning. Consequently, these resources may be classified as either human or non-human, as long as they aid in the acquisition and assessment of information, skills, attitudes, morals, and values (Inyang-Abia, 2014).

Instructional resources encompass various elements, materials, individuals, and venues utilised to enhance the teaching and learning experience in Social Studies. The systematic distribution and employment of resources, infrastructure, equipment, and personnel facilitate the transmission of materials to achieve specified goals. Instructional resources encompass all materials and individuals utilised by educators and learners prior to, during, and following the session to enhance the attainment of objectives. Instructional materials serve as tools that enhance the exchange, comprehension, and valuation of concepts, skills, values, and attitudes (Inyang-Abia, 2014; Jacob, 2019).

Resources for Social Studies encompass all materials found within educational institutions that facilitate the processes of teaching and learning. These encompass human, financial, and physical resources. The personnel within an educational institution, akin to any structured organisation irrespective of its nature and magnitude, comprise individuals involved in a variety of school-related endeavours, irrespective of their position in the hierarchy.

Contemporary educators in the field of Social Studies are encouraged, and mandated, to utilise modern instructional resources to enhance engagement, clarity, and inclusivity within the classroom for every student. Lectures in Social Studies frequently appear tedious, lacking in engagement, and insufficiently rigorous. This adverse and

disheartening circumstance can be remedied through the identification, aggregation, preparation, and application of educational materials and resources (Aliyu, 2019; Ololobou, 2010). Consequently, it is essential for contemporary Social Studies educators to thoughtfully choose and employ instructional tools that can be adeptly utilised across all educational tiers to enhance teaching and learning results.

Instructional resources serve as essential components of the educational process. This arises from the inadequacy of conventional language in facilitating effective instruction. Instructional materials function as vehicles for the conveyance of messages, information, concepts, and knowledge. Consequently, they are subject to manipulation, observation, perception, sensory engagement, or thoughtful consideration. They enable actions. Their scope encompasses any enterprise or individual from whom the learner seeks assistance throughout the educational journey (Ayaaba and Oduma, 2013).

Ughamadu (2017) posits that the presence of curricular resources is essential for the efficacy of teaching, learning, and the execution of the curriculum. The educator is anticipated to possess a comprehensive understanding of diverse curriculum resources to ensure effective implementation. Furthermore, it is essential for educators to understand the functions of these materials within the teaching and learning framework, the characteristics of effective curricular resources, and other pertinent topics associated with curriculum materials.

Aliyu (2019) articulates that instructional materials serve as resources utilised as instruments for the dissemination and acquisition of knowledge within a structured educational framework. According to the works of Aliyu (2019) and Ughamadu (2017), the categorisation of these educational resources and instructional aids can be delineated as follows:

Physical materials serve as the fundamental instruments for learning and instruction within the realm of informal education. They often encompass materials that are produced with a high degree of professionalism, including textbooks, revision notes, educational publications, magazines, charts, manuals, and various other periodicals. Consequently, advanced technology has reclassified a greater number of substances as printed materials. The following materials consist of photocopies, offset reproductions, ease sheets, and photographic prints. All now occupy a crucial position in the domain of education and training.

The term non-printed materials can be misleading, as instructional resources typically categorised in this way often incorporate printed components. In the realm of educational technology, these non-print components are typically referred to as software and hardware. This classification of instructional resources can be delineated into sub-groups: (a) Visual materials, (b) Audio materials and audio-visual materials, and (c) Educational media equipment. Each of these can be further delineated into more specific classifications. Irrespective of the origin of the software, be it commercially produced or user-generated, it is imperative to exercise caution in its application. The effectiveness of learning and instruction can be accurately assessed only following a thorough evaluation process.

Community resources: The conventional preference for printed educational materials has resulted in a significant number of educators remaining oblivious to the considerable advantages that community resources can offer to learning and instruction when employed effectively. These resources may be categorised into two distinct classifications: Academic outings or trips to locations that provide supplementary educational experiences, encompassing marketplaces, places of worship, historical

sites, amusement parks, and similar establishments. Each person holds a distinct position within the realms of education and training. Resource individuals are typically experts and authorities within their particular domains of knowledge. They could be legal professionals, healthcare experts, spiritual mentors, or business innovators who have the potential to illuminate students on particular educational journeys. Until recently, many educational sectors remained unaware of the substantial contributions made by resource persons to the field of education.

Textbooks offer a framework and consistency in the educational landscape (Johansson, 2006; Triyoga, 2010) and are regarded as essential and efficient tools for educators in their daily practices (Johansson, 2006; Padururu, n.d.). Padururu (n.d.) notes that textbooks provide students with a sense of consistency and assurance. Textbooks offer a sense of security and uniformity to novice educators (Triyoga, 2010).

The absence of TLRs has instigated significant concern among educators. Lyons (2012) posits that the process of learning is intricate, encompassing the interaction of student motivation, physical infrastructure, instructional resources, teacher expertise, and the requirements of the curriculum. The incorporation of TLRs significantly elevates the efficacy of educational institutions, serving as vital assets that promote students' scholarly success. The essential components required for effective teaching and learning encompass material resources, human resources that include educators and support personnel, as well as physical facilities like laboratories, libraries, and classrooms.

2.6.1 The Extent to Which Instructional Resources Affect Student Performance

Adeogun (2011) elucidated a noteworthy positive correlation between instructional resources and academic performance in his research. Adeogun asserts that educational

institutions endowed with a more extensive range of instructional resources exhibit enhanced performance in comparison to their counterparts with limited resources available. This discovery aligns with the study carried out by Aliyu (2019), which suggested that private educational institutions excelled beyond their public counterparts owing to the accessibility and adequacy of instructional and educational materials. Adeogun (2011) noted a considerable shortfall in the accessibility of instructional resources in public schools, emphasising the marked lack of both teaching and learning materials in these establishments. He further noted that the effectiveness of teaching and learning is fundamentally undermined in the classroom environment when crucial instructional resources are absent.

Aliyu (2017) asserted that the nature of instructional processes experienced by a learner serves as a crucial factor in determining the quality of education. It is suggested that the utilisation of high-quality instructional materials enhances the overall learning experience for students. Ughamadu (2017) posits that student performance is shaped by the calibre and abundance of resources accessible for teaching and learning. This indicates that educational institutions that possess adequate teaching and learning resources—such as textbooks, charts, images, and physical objects for students to observe, hear, and interact with—are more inclined to attain positive results in examinations than those that are deficient in such resources.

A study carried out by Chonjo (2004) concerning the physical facilities and teaching-learning materials in primary schools in Tanzania supports the previously mentioned viewpoints. Chonjo engaged in dialogues with educators and learners to explore the influence of instructional materials on the effectiveness of the learning process. Through his analysis, he recognised that performance could be attributed to the

availability of adequate teaching and learning resources, along with the equipment present in an educational environment. He posited that the delivery of quality education is profoundly contingent upon the presence of sufficient and superior facilities. Chonjo's study offered a distinctive insight in Tanzania, establishing a direct correlation between the quality of physical facilities and the academic performance of students in primary schools.

2.6.2 Challenges that Teachers Face in Accessing Instructional Materials

A significant challenge faced by educators in obtaining instructional materials lies in the absence of clearly articulated policies and effective monitoring mechanisms. These are essential to ensure that adequate financial resources are allocated to educational institutions for the procurement of instructional materials and that such funds are utilised appropriately for their designated objectives. Aliyu (2019) asserts that the government's approach to the effective allocation of educational resources has been lacking, characterised by inadequate planning, monitoring, oversight, and evaluation, with rural schools playing a crucial role in the execution of these policies.

A prominent challenge faced by educators, especially in rural or community educational institutions, is the constrained financial support from the government, which hampers their ability to acquire essential instructional resources. The government extends its assistance to a significant number of educational institutions, with a particular emphasis on those situated in rural regions. In light of economic deprivation, the support extended by local governments and communities to schools, especially in rural regions, is markedly insufficient. The funds are allocated in the manner of capitation grants. The capitation grant seeks to enhance the quality of education by guaranteeing the availability of sufficient teaching and learning resources

within schools. The capitation payment is designed to support the acquisition of textbooks and various teaching and learning resources, in addition to covering expenses related to repairs, administrative supplies, and examination fees (Ughamadu, 2017).

Aliyu (2019) notes that a significant challenge arises from the absence of community and parental support, which is largely attributed to financial constraints. The existence of poverty serves as a significant barrier that may hinder community members from providing financial support to educators and educational institutions, thereby limiting access to essential instructional resources. Aliyu (2019) notes that the involvement of parents and the community differs across rural and urban settings, as well as among various economic frameworks. Affluent parents and communities, especially in metropolitan regions, possess the capacity to furnish educators and educational institutions with essential resources that enhance both instruction and learning outcomes.

Inadequate compensation represents yet another challenge faced by educators (Aliyu, 2019). Educators, akin to the majority of public servants in Sub-Saharan Africa, receive inadequate remuneration. The absence of enrolment in supplementary educational programs, such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), hinders their ability to procure personal teaching resources or to gain new insights, skills, and knowledge. Consequently, the scholarly and cognitive abilities of both educators and learners are expected to be profoundly influenced during classroom interactions. Educators who do not possess the requisite skills and creativity may find it challenging to enhance their instructional materials.

Information and communication technology is now widely acknowledged as a significant catalyst in the dissemination of knowledge (Aina, 2013). A significant

number of educators who received training in the early 1990s and thereafter exhibit a deficiency in their understanding of information and communication technology. In environments where proficient educators are present, it is inevitable that additional challenges emerge, including installation, maintenance, operation, network management, and the necessity for local experts to address repairs or upkeep of the equipment and associated facilities. The majority of rural educational institutions are deficient in resources, resulting in the continued prevalence of the traditional chalk and duster method in instructional practices (Ughamadu, 2017).

2.6.3 Strategies to Minimize the Challenges of Attaining and Using Quality Instructional Resources

Global research, especially within the African context, suggests that one effective approach involves the innovative adaptation of instructional materials. Eshiet (2016) posits that improvisation involves the identification, selection, and application of relevant instructional materials within the educational framework when conventional resources are inadequate or insufficient for the successful attainment of specified educational aims and objectives.

Studies by Abodelraheem and Al-Rabane (2005) and Ibe-Bassey (2012) demonstrate that the creation of improvised media using low-tech materials and a focus on resource-centered learning can broaden the limited knowledge base of any academic field and improve the quality of instruction. It may also promote initiatives that enhance the integration of technology within the pedagogical and learning frameworks of essential science education. Their findings correspond with those of Dodge (2017), who observed that the implementation of technologies like simulation devices enhances the availability of individual learning tools, environmental resources, and services.

The application of ICT can also alleviate specific barriers to accessing educational resources (Dodge, 2017). Aliyu (2019) asserts that the utilisation and swift proliferation of electronic communications can influence the quality and efficacy of basic education globally. The accessibility of material on the Internet for teachers and students on nearly any subject has the capacity to revolutionise instructional content and teaching methodologies. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) possesses the capacity to enhance accessibility and elevate the relevance and quality of education in underdeveloped nations. The potentials of Information and Communication Technology are as follows: Information and Communication Technologies significantly boost the acquisition and assimilation of knowledge, providing emerging nations with unparalleled chances to improve their educational systems (Aliyu, 2019; Ughamadu, 2017).

2.7 Assessment Methods

Assessment is fundamental to the educational process, offering critical insights required for making informed decisions regarding students' learning abilities, suitable level placements, and their overall accomplishments (Eshun, 2013). A diverse array of specialised texts, encompassing books, journals, seminal articles, conference papers, and recently defended theses and dissertations, has been rigorously scrutinised to formulate a comprehensive definition of the concept of assessment. The references and diverse daily classroom practices illustrate a wide range of functions, forms, tools, and techniques available to educators in their capacity as assessors, along with a variety of terms, phrases, concepts, and descriptions related to assessment. Comprehensive assessments have demonstrated that learning has indeed occurred (Popham, 2018).

Within the domain of education, assessment is defined as a methodical strategy utilised by educators and students during the instructional journey, where instructors provide critical feedback to improve both pedagogy and learning, ultimately facilitating students' attainment of predetermined educational goals (Popham, 2018). Popham (2018) asserts that assessment is a purposeful endeavour in which educators draw upon evidence of learners' conditions to enhance their teaching methodologies, while learners leverage this evidence to adjust their existing learning strategies. The purpose of assessment is to enrich the educational journey and to connect the existing instructional context of students with their aspirational learning objectives (Heritage, 2012).

Two distinct categories of assessment can be identified: formative and summative. Heritage (2012) asserts that summative assessment is generally employed to furnish learners with a numerical score, often accompanied by scant feedback. As a result, summative assessment is often used to gauge learning outcomes and is rarely applied as a means to facilitate the learning process itself. Educators possess the ability to convert summative assessments into more formative experiences by enabling learners to extract insights from their examination outcomes. This would involve offering students insightful critiques on their examinations and harnessing the educational value embedded in assessments. Wininger (2015) presented a comprehensive synthesis of assessment methodologies that integrates both summative and formative assessment approaches. The amalgamation of summative assessment with formative assessment is referred to as summative-formative assessment. Wininger (2015) posits that summative-formative assessment facilitates a review of the examination with the examinees, thereby enabling them to obtain feedback regarding their comprehension. Formative-summative assessment presents itself in two primary forms: the execution

of a mock examination prior to the final assessment or the administration of the final exam before a retake is conducted.

Formative assessment provides feedback that enriches the learning experience, while summative assessment measures the degree of learning attained. Formative assessment refers to a sequence of ongoing, interactive evaluations designed to measure students' progress and understanding, thus pinpointing their needs and modifying teaching strategies as necessary (Wininger, 2015). Heritage (2012) elucidates that formative assessment is generally defined by tasks that allow students to receive feedback on their performance over the course of their studies. In the realm of education, educators utilise assessments as a diagnostic tool at the conclusion of lessons or units. Moreover, instructors can utilise assessments as a means of pedagogy, identifying student misconceptions and rectifying learning gaps through insightful feedback (Dixson & Worrell, 2016). Unfortunately, numerous educators view formative assessments solely as tools for measuring students' learning, failing to recognise their significant pedagogical importance. The connection between assessment and pedagogy is likely to be complex, a subject that will be examined more thoroughly in this study (Remmi & Hashim, 2021).

This concept is defined as including all actions performed by educators or their students that deliver information aimed at facilitating adjustments to the learning and teaching processes in which they participate (Fox et al., 2016). Formative assessments aim to gather immediate feedback on students' learning, facilitating the recognition of their strengths and areas for improvement. Wiliam (2011) asserts that classroom practices attain a formative quality when evidence concerning students' achievements is collected, analysed, and utilised by teachers, students, or peers to guide future

educational choices, which are likely to be more effective or substantiated than those made in the absence of such evidence. This definition demonstrates that formative assessment requires the active participation of both students and educators, functioning as a crucial component in the improvement of students' performance. The assessment for educational objectives, rooted in its purpose, entails gauging the progress of students (McCallum & Milner, 2021). As a result, attention is directed towards the gathering of data concerning learners' accomplishments to ascertain their advancement in skills, needs, and competencies, alongside their vulnerabilities and strengths, both before, during, and after educational courses, with the aim of improving students' learning and success (Douglas & Wren, 2008).

Mahshanian et al. (2019) highlighted the significance of summative assessment in conjunction with teacher-based (formative) assessments concerning learners' performances. He concluded that combining summative and formative assessments could produce better results for students than using either assessment type alone. The choice of assessment techniques utilised in the educational environment profoundly impacts students' learning achievements and overall academic performance. For example, summative assessments fulfil the purpose of evaluating performance, enabling comparisons among students, and maintaining adherence to established standards (Shute & Kim, 2014). In contrast, formative assessments, commonly known as assessment for learning, enhance students' educational experiences and promote the development of self-regulated learning strategies. Formative assessment is commonly acknowledged as an effective method for improving the learning experience (Shute & Kim, 2014). Formative assessment is situated within a specific context and aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of learners. This

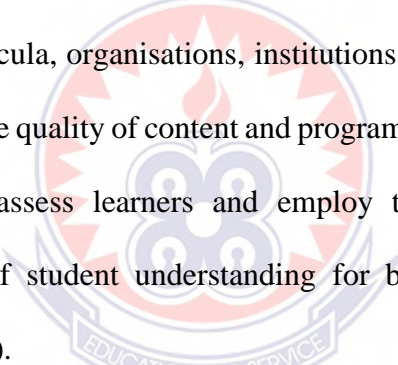
represents a crucial element of the educational journey, manifesting repeatedly during a course rather than exclusively at its end (Strijbos and Sluijsmans, 2010).

It often includes a range of assessment attributes, such as (a) the purpose – characterised as assessment for learning; (b) the frequency – which can be either intermittent or regular; (c) the format – featuring constructed responses and real-world contexts; and (d) the feedback – encompassing both general and specific insights, along with suggestions for enhancement (Shute & Kim, 2014). Conversely, summative assessment, while beneficial for appraising learners and upholding standards, is often regarded as a major event, occurring rarely, characterised by its objective nature, and offering feedback that predominantly pertains to the completed assessment, if feedback is given at all (Shute & Kim, 2014). Research demonstrates that formative assessment significantly contributes to student outcomes, such as enhanced academic performance, self-regulated learning, and increased self-efficacy (Shute & Kim, 2014). The identification of formative feedback as the paramount factor in the learning process is noteworthy. Therefore, it is imperative for educators to engage in thoughtful consideration of the structure of each assessment method and the foundational purposes that guide them (Brown, 2014).

The ideas of evaluation, measurement, and testing are deeply interconnected with the concept of assessment. These methods are sometimes utilised interchangeably for the purpose of gathering data regarding student learning. Shute and Kim (2014) express that "Assessment, testing, and evaluation are terms used to describe the outcomes of the educational process" (p. 45). Shute and Kim (2014) elaborate, "Assessment is the term currently used to describe all aspects of evaluation and testing" (p. 45). Brown (2014) defined assessment as "any act of interpreting information regarding student

performance, gathered through a diverse array of means or practices.” As articulated by Sadler (2016), assessment involves the evaluation of students' overall performance and the development of conclusions regarding their educational learning and outcomes. This encompasses the level of achievement in diverse endeavours, including assessments, projects, documentation, and evaluations. The effectiveness of any assessment relies on the careful choice and implementation of appropriate methods, as well as the precise analysis of students' performances. As a result, assessment procedures function to appraise the suitability and effectiveness of the curriculum, instructional methods, and teaching strategies.

Evaluation involves the process of developing judgements about abstract concepts, such as programs, curricula, organisations, institutions, and individuals. This entails a critical assessment of the quality of content and programs offered to a group of students. Educators commonly assess learners and employ this evaluative information to ascertain the quality of student understanding for both summative and formative purposes (Brown, 2014).

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central design with a flame-like shape at the top, a stylized figure or symbol in the middle, and a banner at the bottom with the text "EDUCATION FOR SERVICE". The emblem is surrounded by a decorative border.

A concept often associated with assessment is measurement. The procedure entails the allocation of a quantified value, generally numerical, to the characteristics or dimensions linked to students' performance, thus evaluating ability or aptitude in a way that preserves the integrity of the student's quality of performance (Shute & Kim, 2014; Brown, 2014). Gallagher (2018) clearly states that “measurement is the process of quantifying the degree to which someone or something possesses a characteristic, quality, or feature” (p.3) One can evaluate this by counting the number of correct answers a student gives relative to the total, or by determining a percentage, or by assigning a numerical score to the student. It is essential to acknowledge that not every

method of assessment requires the quantification of students or the assignment of numerical values to their performance.

Assessments are methodically structured procedures occurring at designated intervals within an educational context, wherein students employ their comprehensive skill set to attain peak performance, cognisant that their responses are open to scrutiny and appraisal. The process of testing, or examination, entails the implementation of a test crafted to draw out and measure distinct behaviours or concepts, thus facilitating inferences about specific traits of an individual, usually carried out under standardised conditions (Shute & Kim, 2014; Brown, 2014; Gallagher, 2018). For example, evaluations are utilised to measure the depth of a learner's understanding in a specific course or discipline through organised and systematic methods aimed at assessing a student's command of designated material. Generally, these methodologies require the employment of traditional tools designed to elicit particular behaviours, knowledge, or skills from the individual undergoing evaluation. Brown (2014) defines the test as “a type of assessment that typically consists of a set of questions administered during a fixed period of time under reasonably comparable conditions for all students” (p.5). Occasionally, the results of student assessments are expressed through a numerical scale that encapsulates the essence of learning through a quantitative score or mark. Higher grades reflect a deeper comprehension or mastery of the material, whereas lower grades suggest a deficiency or shortcoming in relation to the subject matter.

NaCCA (2020) delineates assessment as a methodical process of collecting and analysing information pertaining to learners, which is then employed to guide decisions intended to improve their educational experience. Assessment may manifest in diverse formats, such as formative, summative, diagnostic, or evaluative, depending on the

specific objectives it aims to achieve. It is crucial to the educational journey, deepens student understanding, and hones teaching strategies. The 2021 Curriculum asserts that assessment comprises three unique dimensions: assessment for learning, assessment of learning, and assessment as learning, each of which will be detailed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Assessment for Academic Progression: Assessment for Learning (AfL) encompasses the methodical collection and examination of evidence employed by both students and instructors to evaluate the present condition of the learner's educational path, pinpoint the desired outcomes, and ascertain the most efficacious approaches to realise those aims. AfL exemplifies a remarkably effective methodology for improving educational results and raising standards (Black and William, 1998). Assessment for Learning includes all efforts undertaken by educators and their students that produce information used as feedback to enhance the teaching and learning experiences in which they engage. This methodology can be actualised through strategies such as articulating expectations to learners, utilising probing enquiries, and delivering insightful critiques.

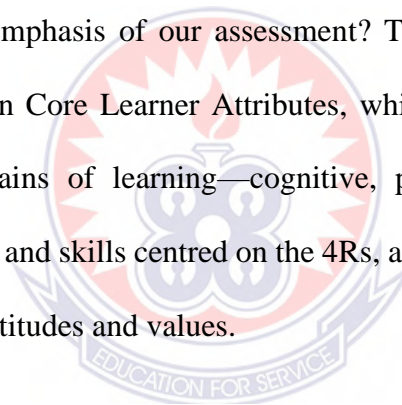
AfL, therefore, provides timely feedback to ensure that every learner is supported throughout the educational journey, utilising a variety of strategies and enquiries to evaluate the authentic learning that has taken place. The process is continuous, taking place at each stage of instruction to evaluate a learner's progress and to offer feedback or modify teaching strategies to align with the performance standards of a lesson.

Assessment as a Method of Gaining Understanding: Evaluation as The process of learning fosters and amplifies individuals' sense of ownership and efficacy in relation to their educational journey through the implementation of reflective practices. This approach to self-evaluation cultivates the growth of learners' skills, allowing them to

achieve a deeper understanding of their educational experiences and the content they engage with.

The Assessment of Learning (AoL) provides an in-depth analysis of the benchmarks achieved by educators and the outcomes of students at the conclusion of their educational experience. This information establishes a basis for accountability and guides educational decisions, encompassing grading, selection and placement, promotion, and certification. Through AoL, stakeholders such as parents and guardians are informed about the extent to which learners have met the expected learning outcomes by the end of their grade or program.

What is the primary emphasis of our assessment? The assessment within the CCP highlights the Common Core Learner Attributes, which embody essential outcomes across the three domains of learning—cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. It emphasises knowledge and skills centred on the 4Rs, alongside core competencies that particularly focus on attitudes and values.



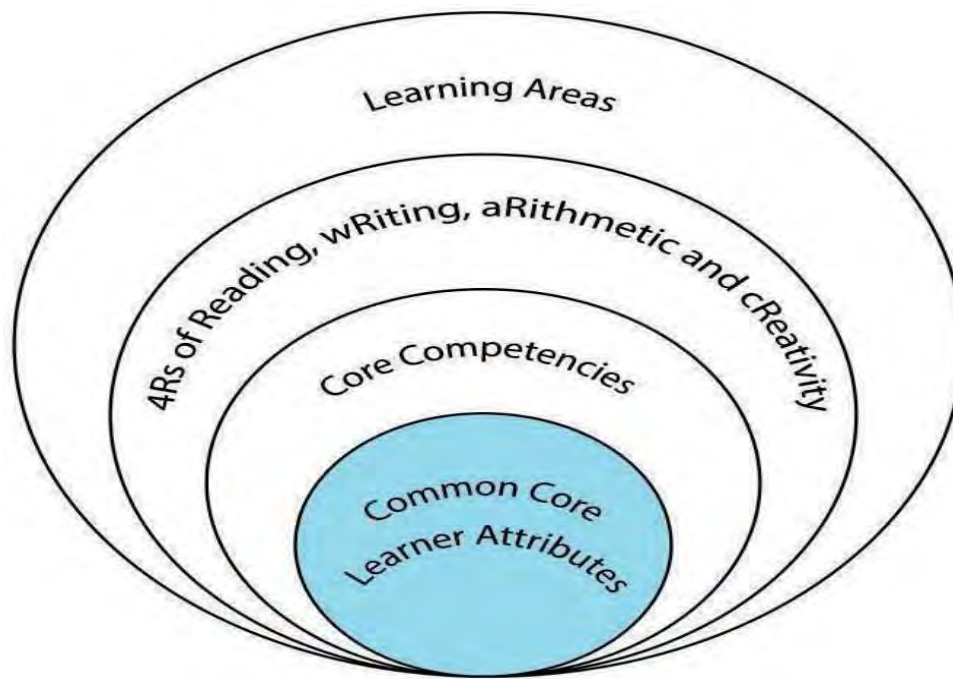


Figure 1: Essential Assessment Features

What strategies can we utilise to assess our progress? The School Based Assessment (SBA) includes a range of assessment forms and methods, such as AfL, AaL, and AoL. These assessments can be carried out by any participant within the school environment, whether a learner, teacher, or head teacher, to assess the learner's development over a specified period. The methodologies of data acquisition and precise documentation are essential to the implementation of SBA.

The justification for evaluation, as a measure of educational results, resides in its expected ability to improve both instruction and comprehension, consequently promoting holistic advancements within educational institutions. Nevertheless, it appears that instructional testing has persistently favoured the more rudimentary levels of cognitive involvement. The quality of an evaluation relies on the person's ability to integrate a wide array of intellectual skills acquired from the curriculum's material. Gallagher (2018) asserts that the primary aim of assessment is to cultivate education and improve student performance, rather than simply to measure it. Educational

institutions frequently underscore the necessity of equipping students for fundamental, multiple-choice assessments that inadequately assess our genuine priorities or provide meaningful insights into effective pedagogical practices. There is a tendency to abandon our true ambitions in favour of emphasising accuracy and efficiency in operations.

Boud and Falchikov (2018) advocate for a shift in educational assessment practices, moving away from traditional methods that prioritise specifics, standards, and immediate outcomes, towards more sustainable approaches. Such methods can enable students to participate more dynamically in their own educational journeys and to assess themselves in manners that transcend the mere completion of the course. Moreover, considerable critique has emerged concerning the deficiencies inherent in the current assessment methodologies utilised by classroom educators and external examinations. This requires a thorough assessment within the educational framework, incorporating strategies to evaluate student achievement or performance through activities that correspond with classroom goals, curricula, and teaching methodologies, or that mirror practical skills applicable in the real world.

The discussion regarding alternative methodologies in assessment has surfaced as a noteworthy subject of contemplation. Shute and Kim (2014) incorporate a comprehensive range of assessment types, encompassing both formative and summative evaluations. Their framework includes various authentic assessment methods such as performance-based assessments, portfolios, self-assessments, peer assessments, interview-based assessments, play-based assessments, cooperative group assessments, along with dialogue, journal entries, and scaffolded essays. To support this, an outcome-based approach requires us to assess in authentic ways what is

considered most important concerning knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. Consequently, if we prioritise critical thinking, problem-solving, positive attitudes and values, analytical skills, and civic competence, it stands to reason that students should be guided to exhibit mastery of these competencies through significant activities that correspond with societal demands and expectations. Authentic endeavours frequently provide individuals with enhanced freedom to demonstrate their competencies, exemplified through business proposals, projects, portfolios, artwork, and videos, along with a myriad of other tangible outputs.

The evaluation of Social Studies in Ghana is primarily defined by traditional testing approaches, spanning from the classroom level to the national arena. The primary objective of assessment in Social Studies is to foster the ability of young individuals to participate in informed and rational decision-making for the common good, as engaged members of a culturally diverse, democratic society in a globally interconnected environment. Consequently, the imperative to adopt genuine assessment practices within our varied educational environments is profoundly shaped by the viewpoints held by educators regarding authentic assessment. Brown (2014) underscores the importance of authenticity, arguing that true assessments require sophisticated cognitive abilities, allowing students to tackle issues relevant to real-world contexts.

2.8 The 2021 Social Studies Curriculum for Junior High Schools

A well-structured Social Studies program aims to integrate knowledge, experiences, and the thoughtful use of resources to foster national unity and citizenship education (Bekoe & Eshun, 2013). As outlined by NaCCA (2020), the 2021 Social Studies curriculum for Junior High Schools in Ghana prioritises the development of reflective, engaged, and competent citizens, empowering them to make informed decisions that

serve both their individual interests and the welfare of the wider community. The aim is to nurture individuals in Ghana who embody ethical principles, demonstrating accountability and proficiency in maintaining healthy lifestyles, all while safeguarding their environment for the benefit of future generations. This subject will enable learners to engage in the investigation and protection of the environment; develop a sense of belonging within their familial and communal contexts; acknowledge their unique identities; deepen their comprehension of stereotypes associated with gender, abilities, ethnicity, and religion, and explore methods to challenge these perceptions; demonstrate responsible citizenship; cultivate attitudes that support healthy and peaceful coexistence while embracing diversity; advocate for sustainable resource use; foster a sense of patriotism and national pride; and prepare themselves as individuals equipped for global competitiveness.

The Social Studies discipline will facilitate the development of an understanding of oneself, the surrounding world, and the environment.

Facilitates the Advancement of Analytical Thinking Skills: Social Studies fosters the development of higher-order cognitive abilities and competencies such as comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation, synthesis, and creativity among students.

Facilitates the deepening of students' comprehension of social dynamics. A diverse array of subjects encompassed within the Social Studies curriculum tailored for distinct age demographics. Facilitates the Development of Informed and Responsible Citizens

This new curriculum is different from the old objective-based curriculum. It focuses on broad, cumulative learning goals that students are expected to reach by the end of a learning period whilst the old one centered around specific, measurable objective that

guides daily lessons. The new curriculum emphasizes competencies and mastery overtime, aiming for students to achieve proficiency in each standard before progressing but the objective based encouraged the achievement of specific tasks, skill, piece of knowledge students or learning goals within individual lessons that students need to acquire. The new 2021 Social Studies curriculum uses formative and summative assessments that are aligned with standards that's mastery but the old objective-based assessment is typically evaluating whether skills or knowledge is achieved usually in isolation. The new curriculum allows for more flexible learner-centered instruction as teachers can use several varied methods, strategies, techniques but the old one seemed more structured, with instruction closely following predefined objectives. The new curriculum often promotes learner-centered approach, as it requires teachers to tailor instruction to help all students whereas the old objective based was typically teacher-centered. With emphasis on ensuring on achieving each objective through direct instruction. Finally, the new curriculum recognizes individual learning paces but the old one was often linear, with set objectives to be achieved. The SBC emphasizes competencies, mastery, and flexibility, while the objective-based emphasized meeting specifics, measurable objectives and often in a more structured and teacher-directed environment.

2.8.1 The Content and Instruction of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum

In analysing the content of Social Studies, one must not neglect the extensive range of the subject matter. The parameters fundamentally influence the substance. The extent of the scope fundamentally determines the extent of the content; on the other hand, a constrained scope will yield similarly constrained content. Therefore, in any effort to understand the fundamental nature of the topic, the first step must be to clearly define the boundaries. Upon the conclusion of this process, pertinent subject matter, ideas,

concepts, and generalisations may be derived from various domains that align with the established parameters (Gallagher, 2018).

The domain of Social Studies encompasses a multitude of Social Sciences, while remaining unbound by the limitations of any singular discipline within that spectrum. Social Studies seeks to embrace a wide array of subjects by synthesising components from established fields including History, Geography, Economics, Sociology, and Civics, among others. The comprehensive nature of the studies ought to be perceived as an integrated whole, designed to familiarise students with their social environment (Gallagher, 2018; Bekoe and Eshun, 2013).

The core of Social Studies at the Junior High School level centres on equipping students with a unified framework of knowledge, skills, and attitudes aimed at fostering a broader comprehension of Ghana and its place within the global landscape. The newly formulated Social Studies curriculum for Junior High School, as delineated by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA, 2020), is thoughtfully designed, leveraging the core principles of established Social Science fields and is methodically structured into six thematic domains. The Social Studies curriculum comprises a diverse array of disciplines, such as Geography, Sociology, Government, Economics, and History. The thematic domains are organised into six distinct strands:

- (i) Strand 1: Ecological Concerns. The topics to be explored within this strand encompass Environmental issues, mapping skills, an understanding of our natural world, and the interplay between our human and natural resources.
- (ii) Strand 2: Family Life. This strand has Adolescent Reproductive Health, Family, Socialization and population to be taught.

- (iii) Strand 3: Sense of Purpose. Self-Identity, the Individual and the Community, Our Culture and National Identity and National Development are the concepts to be taught under this strand.
- (iv) Strand 4: Law and Order. This strand has Citizenship and human rights, Conflict prevention and Management, the 1992 constitution, Peace and security in our nation, Promoting Democracy and Political stability and Democracy and Nation building.
- (v) Strand 5: Socio-economic Development. Human resource development, Financial and Investment issues, Tourism, Science and Technology, Entrepreneurial skills and sustainable Development.
- (vi) Strand 6: Nationhood. Independent Ghana, the Republics, Military rule and Ghana and its neighbours (NaCCA, 2020).

It is evident that, as countries desire for development as well as higher achievements, the place of citizenship education which serves as a springboard for all learners to develop their capabilities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society is paramount and cannot be underestimated. Education for citizenship has become a prime concern and the focus of primary, secondary and the early education curriculum across the globe. It is seen as the fulcrum on which the development of relevant knowledge, skills, values and understanding required to become informed, active and responsible citizens revolves. This, therefore, goes to say that learners need a unique and peculiar type of education which will enable them to participate effectively in life. Social studies education is one of the educational programmes that can help develop positive attitudes in citizens and thereby contribute to the socio-economic development of the nation (Bekoe & Eshun 2013).

Successful teachers are able to transform their knowledge of Social Studies concepts into a form of knowledge that can be understood by integrating knowledge of learners, representations, instructional strategies, assessments, and curricular resources to create meaningful learning opportunities that make connections between lesson content and students' experiences (Bekoe & Eshun 2016). However, according to Eshun et al. (2013, p. 210), "there is a vast gap between intended objectives and actual classroom practices in the teaching and learning of Social Studies in Ghana. This requires Social Studies teachers to be aware of the profile dimensions of the subject to enable them formulate behavioural instructional objectives in the teaching and learning process in order to promote acceptable attitudes, values and skills of students". Teachers are expected to relate issues taught in the classroom to real life situations in the country and guide students to find practical and reasonable solutions to them. The teaching of the subject will lose its intrinsic value if it does not address the contemporary persistent issues of human survival in the nation which is the main focus of the subject. It is argued that several factors account for the failure of classroom practices to achieve educational goals and objectives. However, one factor which is central to this phenomenon is the teacher, that is to say, teacher effectiveness. It is also a well-known fact that teachers' knowledge will influence how teaching and assessment are carried out in the Social Studies classroom.

In the teaching and learning of Social Studies as a subject, Schmidt as cited in Bekoe et al (2013) suggested three aspects of instruction - content, learning and outcomes – that need to be reconnected with the fundamental humanity of this discipline. According to Schmidt (p. 4-5), Eshun (2013, p. 17) asserts "teaching Social studies is stressed to be done in student-centred techniques and strategies". Eshun, further stress that brainstorming, role playing, simulation, discussion and debate were the major

techniques stressed by the Junior High School Social Studies syllabus in Ghana. This makes it prudent for the Social Studies teacher to be familiar with the major objectives in the subject area in order to formulate objectives in all the domains of learning following the different classifications by Bloom's 1956, Krathwohl's 1956 and that of Taba's 1962 (p. 185). This indicates that the techniques of teaching and assessment need to be taken seriously to reflect social studies objective of building positive attitudes in learners.

The question that inevitably arises here is, how should a Social Studies classroom that prepares active citizens look like? Brophy and Alleman (p. 3), as cited in Eshun (2013, p. 178), give us good insights because they argue that the goal of Social Studies education is "providing students with the knowledge, skills and values that they will need to understand modern life and participate effectively as pro-social group and responsible citizens". Thus, the tenet of learning is the development of skills and values necessary for citizenship. In achieving this, research conducted by Bekoe et al. (2013), suggested that children should take integral part in teaching and learning activities and without their involvement in classroom activities implies learning has not taken place. Teachers must not only be abreast with teaching skills in the affective, but must also be knowledgeable in how to assess attitudinal learning.

2.8.2 The 21st–Century Skills

The concept of "21st century skills" is not new. Skills like critical thinking, collaboration, and problem solving have been taught in classrooms for years now. Yet, as the demands of our changing economy rise, many countries are now including 21st century skills in strategic plans to better prepare students for tertiary education, career, and life in general. What are these 21st century skills, why do they matter, and how are

they implemented in 21st century learning strategies into curriculum, assessment, and instruction?

Larson and Miller (2017) defined-21st century skills as a set of competencies that reiterate “what students can do with acquired knowledge and how they apply what they learn in real-world contexts through good communication and sound collaboration skills, adeptness in technology, innovative and creative thinking, and an ability to unravel problems”. Similarly, Silva (2019) stressed that the essence of 21st century skills is on “what students can do with knowledge, rather than what units of knowledge they have”. The role of Social Studies in 21st century society is crucial as it is a platform to understand better the issues and concerns that are locally grounded and globally connected.

Students are being equipped with 21st century skills such as life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, information, media, and technology skills to brace the challenges of the landscapes in education (Rogayan et al., 2021). Through Social Studies, learners acquire civic competence and understanding of the world they live in to become productive and responsible citizens. It also allows the students to be more conscious and aware of the community issues and problems and engages them to take the right action towards a better and more inclusive society.

In the three years from (Basic 7 through Basic 9) of Junior High School Education, learners are expected to take a Standards-Based curriculum that emphasizes a set of high, inter- nationally- benchmarked career and tertiary education readiness standards. Learners need to acquire these for post-secondary education, the workplace or both. The CCSSC for the JHS in Ghana is anchored towards developing 21st century-skilled, functionally literate and holistically-developed Ghanaian learners. It also focuses on

developing the learner's curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving skills and competencies for personal development and leadership. Besides, it seeks to enhance communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, digital literacy, cultural identity and global citizenship. The inclusion of Social Studies in the 2021 Standards-Based Curriculum of the Pre-Tertiary Education Curriculum is, therefore, intended to enable learners acquire relevant tools to become effective, active and patriotic citizens (NaCCA, 2020).

According to NaCCA (2020), the Social Studies subject taught at the JHS education level on the need to train citizens who are reflective, concerned, active and participatory to be able to fit into the ever-changing world and contribute their quota to the society. Social Studies will provide avenues for learners to interact with people and interrogate issues to construct new knowledge and ideas, describe, analyse and evaluate issues that are critical to the survival of the human race. In essence, the curriculum is designed to generate activities that will make learning more relevant by using their previous knowledge, experiences and environments to acquire competencies including the following:

- (i) critical thinking and problem-solving skills to be able to compare and contrast, analyze, evaluate and apply geographical knowledge with little or no supervision;
- (ii) creative thinking skills to be able to reconstruct important information confidently;
- (iii) digital literacy skills to be able to use IT tools and resources efficiently for investigations and project works;
- (iv) effective communication skills to be able to share information at various levels of interaction;

- (v) values to live as global citizens capable of learning about other peoples and cultures of the world (NaCCA, 2020).

Enhancing the 21st-century skills of learners will significantly help them become future-ready and competent national workforce for the Ghanaian economy as well as globally-competent in the global economy. The development of the 21st-century skills of the students in this knowledge-based society is crucial. As the educational landscape faces compounded transformations students must acquire the relevant skills to thrive in the global economy. Educational institutions have pivotal roles to play in equipping the learners to become future-ready and globally competent human workforce who significantly contributes to the country's socio-economic development. With the new industrial era, students' 21st-century skills and competencies must be further strengthened to survive today's compounded uncertainties and challenges successfully (Rogayan et al., 2021).

The Partnership for 21st-Century Skills (2009), a group that encourages the integration of 21st-century skills in education, crafted a framework for 21st-century learning. Such framework depicts the capabilities, understanding, and proficiency learners need to enter the global labour force successfully. They further establish that schools must build on that base with additional skills including Learning Skills, Life Skills, and Literacy Skills.

- (i) Learning Skills: Also known as the "four Cs" of 21st century learning, these include critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.
- (ii) Life Skills: Flexibility, initiative, social skills, productivity, leadership
- (iii) Literacy Skills: Information literacy, media literacy, technology literacy.

In line with the above, the 21st-Century needs people who are active, responsive to change, and able to think critically, work to minimize the challenges of the global era to improve humans' quality to survive and adapt to the global era. Social Studies education in a global vision prepares students to become global citizens who have a sense of responsibility and can become agents of change in filtering the negative impacts of globalization (Mutiani, 2019; Mutiani & Faisal, 2019). Several scholarly literatures pointed out the following as key important aspects of the 21st-century skills for learners:

- (i) Higher-education and business leaders cite soft skills as being the most important driver of success in higher-level courses and in the workplace.
- (ii) In today's world, our schools are preparing students for jobs that might not yet exist. Career readiness means equipping students with a nuanced set of skills that can prepare them for the unknown.
- (iii) Social media has changed human interaction and created new challenges in navigating social situations.
- (iv) The age of the Internet has dramatically increased access to knowledge. Students need to learn how to process and analyze large amounts of information.

Content knowledge from core subjects can only go so far; students need to be taught how to apply facts and ideas towards complex problems (Bellanca, 2018; Larson & Miller, 2019; Mutiani & Faisal, 2019; Sadera et al, 2020).

The 21st-Century presents a world without borders with increasingly rapid technological developments and impacts all aspects of human life. Facing the impact of these developments, students need to be equipped with 21st-century skills to ensure they can compete against the global world. 21st-century skills can be developed through

social studies Education at the school level. Through Social Studies education, it is hoped that students will have 21st-century skills useful for facing challenges in the future.

2.9 Meaning of Curriculum and Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum generally has to do with the answers to such commonplace questions as what can and should be taught to whom, when, and how? (Cobbold, 2017). As Cobbold (2017) puts it, curriculum is “all planning for the classroom”. This implies that curriculum is to provide a template or design which enables learning to take place. It defines the learning that is expected to take place during a course or programme of study in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It should specify the main teaching, learning and assessment methods and provide an indication of the learning resources required to support the effective delivery of the course. A curriculum is more than a syllabus. According to Cobbold (2017), a syllabus describes the content of a programme and can be seen as one part of a curriculum. Most curricula are not developed from scratch and all operate within organisational and societal constraints. Since there have been a new Social Studies curriculum in place for JHS in Ghana which emphasizes on 21st-century skills, it makes sense to assess its implementation.

The conceptions teachers have about curriculum are part of teachers’ implicit beliefs about education. In general, studies of teachers’ understanding of the subjects they teach have shown those conceptions affect the way they teach and assess (Prosser et al 2015; Bekoe & Eshun, 2013; Quashigah et al., 2014). These implicit orientations to curriculum shape the topics teachers emphasize and the meaning teachers give to curriculum documents. For example, in Social Studies, different major conceptions of the subject (i.e., multidisciplinary, traditional or discrete subjects understanding versus

problem-solving oriented and trans-disciplinary understanding) are claimed to be major disagreement. Cheung and Wong (2012) have argued that teachers' conceptions of curriculum affect the content of curriculum implementation.

According to Cobbold (2017), there are several ways that curriculum can be understood: one approach interprets curriculum primarily in terms of political power (e.g., curriculum as a fact, as practice, or as social conflict), while a second analyses is the nature of what is taught (e.g., curriculum as race, gender, aesthetic, or institutionalized). This implies that curricula usually define the learning that is expected to take place during a course or programme of study in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Since Social Studies teachers use the curriculum in their teaching, it makes sense to assess its implementation.

According to Clandinin & Connelly (2022), formal curriculum refers to: what is laid down as the syllabus or that which is to be learnt by students. It is the officially selected body of knowledge which government, through the Ministry of Education or anybody offering education, wants students to learn. Defining what should be in the curriculum plans for the classroom requires answering the questions: who should determine what is taught and what material should be taught? It would appear that there are a limited number of options available to curriculum developers in answering these questions. Who determines the curriculum can only be one or more of the following: (a) students' needs or wants, (b) teachers' knowledge and expertise, or (c) government's policies in response to society's problems or issues. A reason for looking at Social Studies curriculum is that Clandinin & Connelly, (2022) assert that most teachers are not just delivery mechanisms or conduits for curriculum; rather they are creators or makers and implementers of curriculum.

Other researchers (Eisner & Vallance, 1974 cited in Cobbold 2017; Cheung & Wong, 2012) use the term orientation. Five major orientations to curriculum have been described:

- (i) curriculum is about the development of processes or skills, especially in the cognitive domain rather than just in life or social domains.
- (ii) curriculum is about exploiting approaches to maximize outputs.
- (iii) curriculum is about reforming or revolutionizing society in order to bring about greater justice and benefits for all.
- (iv) curriculum is about maximizing the humanity of individuals by helping them develop
- (v) curriculum is about identifying and passing on valued academic knowledge and intellectual developments.

The curriculum does not only stand for choosing content and applying some methods but also includes planned and unplanned activities involving student participation. A planned, tried and revised curriculum ensures the interaction of students and teachers in an educational environment, with physical facilities and resources of the school, targeted goals can be achieved (Olamo, et al., 2019) and contribution to the development of society can be provided (Badugela, 2012). The curriculum is a whole as a model, a document, including the organization of the educational environment, decisions taken by teachers regarding the learning process, or the opinions of society, families and external authorities (McLachlan, et al., 2018). How knowledge is perceived in a society, which types of knowledge are most preferred, which roles a teacher should have and where the student should stand among these elements (Olamo, et al., 2019) are all reflected in the curriculum.

Moreover, curriculum defines roles of student, teacher, school administration and family with philosophy on which it is based (McLachlan, et al., 2018). How to write a textbook, what technology and teaching materials will be used, and what kind of education will be given to teachers depend on the curriculum and its basic philosophy. Curriculum philosophy may be influenced by socio-economic, cultural and political factors. The interest, value and attitude towards the curriculum of each viewpoint may be different and may want to reflect these differences in curriculum. For this reason, it has basic features in different structures as a dynamic tool to create a real-time process (McLachlan, et al., 2018).

Curriculum implementation refers to how teachers deliver instruction and assessment through the use of specified resources provided in a curriculum. Curriculum designs generally provide instructional suggestions, scripts, lesson plans, and assessment options related to a set of objectives. Such designs focus on consistency to help teachers successfully implement and maintain the curricular structure in order to meet various objectives (Olamo, et al., 2019).

In general, implementation is the process of putting into practice an idea, programme, method, procedure, desired purpose, or set of activities and structures new to the people attempting or expected to change (Fullan, 2011). Curriculum implementation is a fulfillment of officially prepared course, content and process (Chaudhary, 2015), an application of ideas and innovations to teach knowledge, skills, concepts, and interpretations (Mulyasa, 2019), daily classroom activities involving students and teacher (Ogar & Opoh, 2015), a way to reduce differences, an activity conducted to implement an idea or reform (Cobbold, 2017), a structure that aims to transform curriculum into classroom activities and to create an attitude towards students accepting

and participating in these activities (Okello and Kagoire 2016; Mkandawire, 2016), instruction of subjects as determined by rules and a systematic process that foresees successful completion of each stage, from the lowest level to the highest (Badugela, 2012).

The main purpose of curriculum implementation is also stated in literature as; to first create a change and then provide development for education (Cobbold, 2017), to provide students with knowledge and skills (Chaudhary, 2015), to ensure students benefit from existing opportunities at the highest level to ensure that student gains knowledge, experience and also make students use all of them effectively (the University of Zimbabwe, 1995 as cited in Badugela, 2012), to restructure students' knowledge by adding a new one to already existing one. Therefore, required curriculum implementation can be achieved when student gains targeted knowledge, skills, experience and attitude (Chaudhary, 2015).

Curriculum implementation is a very important, difficult and inevitable phase for curriculum. The reason for this is that without the implementation of a curriculum, strengths and weaknesses, success, deficiencies and insufficient parts of the curriculum cannot be determined (Dzimiri & Marimo, 2015). Identifying the weaknesses and deficiencies of a curriculum provides educators with an idea to review and reorganize the curriculum (Ekawati, 2017). Each curriculum generally offers teaching related suggestions, texts, lesson plans and assessment options. The teacher is expected to apply the curriculum accordingly (Marques & Xavier, 2020) to transform the curriculum into classroom activities (Okello & Kagoire, 2016). These curriculum activities are carried out to follow student's progress and to evaluate students (Ogar & Opoh, 2015). Though, during all these processes, educators, implementers (teachers),

school management can have problems (O’Sullivan, 2012; Okello & Kagoire, 2016). These problems can be related to implementation. The curriculum should be implemented properly, otherwise, teachers feel demoralized; families experience disappointment, students lose interest in that course (Okello & Kagoire, 2016).

Teachers have a crucial role in transferring curriculum to a student (Lochner, et al., 2015). It is important for teachers to stick to the curriculum. The extent to which teachers adhere to guidelines, the integrity of curriculum principles, and how appropriate opportunities are provided ensure the connection between curriculum and implementation (Okello & Kagoire, 2016). Curriculum implementation involves how teachers practice curriculum, how they teach and evaluate students (Marques & Xavier, 2020), how they interpret curriculum (McLachlan, et al., 2018). The effect of a curriculum implementation on education depends on how well that curriculum is implemented. In this context, different perspectives of teachers are effective in implementation (Ogar & Opoh, 2015).

To ensure that curricular innovations are effectively implemented, instructional practices should be aligned to the learning goals provided in the curriculum (MacDonald, Barton, Baguley, & Hartwig, 2016). Curricular implementation encompasses different components, including the delivery of the curriculum through resources and instructional practices. To be adaptive to the implementation of curricula, instructional practices must align with the curriculum as well as support the individual needs of the students (Causarano, 2015). In addition, teacher preparedness for curriculum implementation plays a vital role (McNeill et al., 2016). Causarano (2015) specifically found this to be true through a study evaluating the quality of math instruction in an urban school and the impact on student-teacher relationships. The

findings from their study supported the need for teachers to know the curriculum well to strengthen instructional practices. Content instruction depends on the quality of the explanations the teachers offer (MacDonald et al., 2016). MacDonald et al. (2016) reinforce the need for quality instruction and commitment on the part of teachers to help deliver the prescribed curriculum.

Meziobi et al. (2016) noted that, the effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum in schools is inextricably dependent on quality Social Studies teachers who are adequately informed about what to teach, attitudes, values and skills expected to be injected in the learners for the realization of functional educational goals. Jemialu (2018) also noted that effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum is synonymous with teaching (teachers) effectiveness. In addition, it can be seen as a manifestation of knowledge of content, skills in lesson presentation, creating desirable atmosphere for learning and also as a kind of classroom transaction that occur between teachers and students resulting in increase in students' knowledge. Social Studies teachers' classroom instructional effectiveness is instrumental to the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in schools (Okello & Kagoire, 2016).

Quashigah et al. (2014) also assert that “the pedagogical content knowledge of Social Studies teachers influences the way they assess their lessons.” This assertion is supported by Bekoe and Eshun (2013) that “the background knowledge of Social Studies teachers is built from their training institutions and this goes to influence the way they teach (i.e., selection of content, unit or topic, formulation of objective(s), mode of teaching, and assessment tool used).” As a result of this, implementers of Social Studies curriculum need to be abreast with how the subject is taught and assessed. Bekoe, Eshun and Bordoh (2013) however stressed that “due to the hasty

nature in formulating formative assessment and scoring, tutors place emphasis on cognitive domain to the neglect of affective and psychomotor domains which are also of paramount importance.” With this, much is needed to assist Social Studies teachers to be abreast with the nature and the content of Social Studies in a harmonized subject matter required to improve the quality of teaching and learning towards effective curriculum implementation (Bekoe & Eshun, 2016).

Aliyu (2019) opines that the teacher is an important human resource in curriculum implementation and explain that when curriculum planners have put in their best to present a curriculum for use in schools, when facilities and other materials needed have been provided, the resource person who would ensure that the curriculum objectives are realized is the classroom teacher and though there are other personnel whose works are quite as important as the teacher, (for example, the school councilor) it is the classroom teacher who is solely responsible for the implementation of curriculum objectives and content. They state that among the important functions of a teacher in curriculum implementation are:

- (i) Breaking down of the syllabus presented by the curriculum planners into small segments.
- (ii) Selecting appropriate learning objectives.
- (iii) Evaluating students’ performance in the programme.
- (iv) Communicating students’ performance to parents and reflect this in planning classroom activities.
- (v) Recognize the complex nature of school children development and reflect this in planning classroom activities.

The implementation of Social Studies must be taken into strict consideration, since it is a known fact that teachers' conceptual understanding of Social Studies influences classroom instruction. Social Studies as a subject should be implemented by trained teachers with its right conceptualization which should be directly in line with the aims and objectives of the subject. Over the years, Social Studies has been marginalized because it is seen as a reading subject, since it is not given the needed attention. This can be curtailed by employing strict measures which place value on its implementation (Eshun, 2020).

For the teaching of the subject to makeover, it is recommended that Social Studies teachers should make it a duty to help students have better and more realistic ideas about the multiple realities of what constitute Social Studies in the real world since they (teachers) influence what is taught. Since Social Studies is seen as an attitudinal subject through time and space, the Ghanaian school curriculum should be enhanced with the current happenings in the society to help develop the 21st century youth who will be well resourced to selflessly help the country to its developmental path. This can best be done when curriculum supervision is understood by both supervisees and supervisors, and professionally carried out by curriculum leaders (Eshun, 2020).

Sometimes the problem with implementation results from a problem with the curriculum itself (Caropreso, Haggerty, & Ladenheim, 2016). To sum it all on curriculum implementation, Cobbold (2017) ends his review of definitions and explanations of curriculum implementation with the following important observations:

Curriculum implementation is the process of using an instructional programme (whether revised or newly designed) in all the educational institutions and at all the levels targeted to use that programme.

Curriculum implementation involves changes in the behaviour of people, especially the implementers, in the direction suggested or implied by the programme. Such changes will depend on the acquisition of new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. In effect, a process of reorganising and adding to what one is able to do, and how one feels, is immediately set into motion.

Curriculum implementation is a slow and gradual process during which the implementers grow from their existing practices through relatively immature approximations of practices suggested by the innovation, to eventually relatively sophisticated use of the innovation.

Curriculum implementation also involves certain changes in an existing programme or within the educational system. These include the need to adjust the teacher training programmes to the requirements of the new programme through modification in both pre-service and in-service training activities and effecting changes in the national examination system, if there exists one.

Problems in exactly how to use the new programme may crop up at the initial stages of implementation due to lack of the knowledge and skills required, negative feelings about the programme and implementation activities, unavailability of particular resources and the nature of the existing institution (Cobbold, 2019).

The above observations are worthy of note by both developers and implementers of instructional programmes. Studies on implementation have revealed that the level and direction of understanding that programme designers and implementers bring to the task of implementation determines the level and direction of commitment they put into the process (Fullan, 2007; Hopkins, 2013). It should however be emphasized that the

implementation of any programme or innovation has never been without impediments. Albeit, there are some other factors that facilitate it. Hopkins, 2013 identified five factors that inhibit effective curriculum implementation. They include:

- (i) Teachers' lack of clarity about the innovation;
- (ii) Teachers' lack of skills and knowledge needed to conform to the role model;
- (iii) Unavailability of required instructional materials;
- (iv) Incompatibility of organisational arrangements with the innovation;
- (v) Staff's lack of motivation.

These barriers can be categorized into three: the problems associated with the teachers' professionalism; those that are administratively oriented; and those problems that are associated with the change itself (Hopkins, 2013).

2.10 Social Studies Education

Social Studies is one discipline whose definition has always been in a constant state of flux. Social Studies as a subject has been defined differently by different authorities and authors (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). It's not surprising but however very interesting how a particular subject is understood and defined by its many scholars. This is because Social Studies deals with studying societies and virtually everything therein and every society has its own beliefs, norms, values, aspirations among others. The subject Social Studies has no single universally accepted definition. The subject also varies in its objectives or aims in different places. Social Studies varies in its meaning, scope, nature, and its objectives from time to time and from place to place depending on the needs, aspirations and desires of a particular group of people or jurisdiction (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013; Quashigah et al., 2014).

These variations in the definition or meaning of Social Studies have existed as a result of how the many scholars believe the subject is all about (Ayaaba & Odumah, 2013). There are therefore many schools of thought about what the subject Social Studies really is or ought to be.

Some scholars believe Social Studies is all about Citizenship education.

Others also believe that Social Studies is an integrative subject which combines disciplines from the Arts, Humanities and the Social Sciences or as an amalgamation of the Social Sciences.

Some also agree that Social Studies is all about the study of man and his environment. (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013; Bekoe & Eshun, 2013; Kankam et al 2014).

2.10.1 Nature, Scope and Philosophy of Social Studies

Subjects that are studied in schools are like human beings. Each has a unique character and is distinctly differentiated from one another by their characters and/or nature (Blege 2001; Ayaaba & Odumah, 2013).

In nature, Social Studies is not static, it is dynamic because of the factors of time and human development. It differs from region-to-region or from country- to-country. It keeps on changing and reflects the changing nature of knowledge, fostering entirely new and highly integrated approaches to resolving issues of significance to humanity (Boadu, 2016).

Social Studies is a problem-solving subject by nature. The subject considers peculiar problems of a country and finds solutions to those problems. Social Studies seek to assist learners to acquire knowledge, skills, positive attitudes and values necessary for active participation in a democratic society and help solve problems in the society. Social Studies should be issue centred as learners search for answers to problems

confronted by people today. Such problems are those issues which can lead to the collapse of the society if they are not addressed over a long period of time (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013; Boadu, 2016).

The nature of Social Studies is also about the study of people (Aggarwal, 2002, p. 7). Social studies should help learners acquire knowledge, master the processes of learning, and become active democratic citizens. According to Boadu (2016) Social studies enable learners connect with other people, learn about others which makes them fascinated by differences among cultural groups while at the same time they will find the commonalities that create a shared sense of humanity which will boost their democratic participation

The term “scope” as used in educational sector, in syllabi and textbooks, gained popularity after the Second World War somewhere in 1945. Developments from the two world wars gradually led to the emergence of new patterns towards the drawing of contents for Social Studies programme and until quite recently the term “scope of social studies” had been shifting sand (Tamakloe, 2008). What Tamakloe meant was that, the scope of Social Studies was not stable or did not centre on one thing.

The scope of a subject is said to be the borders of what is to be taught and the depth of what is to be taught. The field of Social Studies is said to be caught up with ambiguity and this signifies the controversy surrounding the subject. It is of no surprise that some people see social studies as a subject without a scope and is, therefore, described as a schizophrenic bastard child. However, it is important to note that the scope of a subject is determined by its definition. By implication, the different conceptions and definitions will give or determine the different scopes of the subject (Bekoe & Eshun, 2016).

According to (Blege 2001) the boundaries or limits of a subject become its scope. It deals with the aspects of the issues that give the subject its focus. It gives the confines within which teaching learning takes place in Social Studies. In the words of Aggarwal (2015), the scope of Social Studies is very wide as the world itself and as lengthy as history of man on this earth. In other words, the scope of Social Studies in Ghana covers almost everything which is of benefit to learners within the confines of Ghana. The scope of Social Studies is therefore determined by the way it is perceived (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). The scope of Social Studies in Ghana according to Blege (2001) is “OUR COUNTRY GHANA”. This does not mean concentration is solely on Ghana and her problems but also external experiences and ideas could be brought to solve the problems of Ghana.

Of all these, it is pertinent to note that, the goals of every country differ and so the purpose of including Social Studies differ across countries thereby generating varied scopes. This seems not to give a consistent scope of the subject across the world. The ever-changing education of a country can contribute to the changing scope of the subject as the goals of education can change. Therefore, in the case of Social Studies, the varied conceptions or schools of thought suggest different scopes of the subject. Scholars who belong to the school that defines Social Studies as citizenship transmission believes that the scope of the subject should be confined to the values, norms, knowledge and skills manifested in a particular society. Conversely, if the subject is viewed as an amalgamation of social sciences, its scope will include knowledge, skills, attitudes and methods employed in these subjects for the purpose of citizenship. This has virtually created a gap of knowledge as to what the exact scope of the subject Social Studies should be or is. Beard, for instance, perceives social studies as a seamless web and therefore, lacks scope (Eshun, 2013; Bekoe & Eshun, 2016).

One of the recent educational reforms is the Anamuah- Mensah's Educational Review Committee Report of 2002 which was of the view that the philosophy of education in Ghana should be creating well-balanced (intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically) individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes for self-actualisation and for the socio-economic and political transformation of the nation (G.O.G, 2002). Each teacher of Social Studies needs to possess a philosophy of teaching and learning Social Studies. Philosophy provides guidance and direction in choosing objectives, learning activities, and assessment procedures (Eshun, 2020). In Ghana the philosophy of Social Studies is largely based on maintenance of the fundamental values of a democratic living (Aggarwal, 2002, Blege, 2001). Social Studies in Ghana concentrates on transformational education (Blege, 2001). The philosophical background of Social Studies equally creates vantage opportunity for the discipline to package a content that is integrated in nature, with its products becoming integrated individuals who can stand the test of time as traders, teachers, engineers, doctors, bankers, politicians, or whatever they choose to become. It also encourages the making of learners to be socially relevant, economically viable and politically honest in a rapidly changing world. Students should leave the classroom transformed into better citizens, critical of things like how power is distributed, how they themselves as well as others may be privileged or disadvantaged, or things they can do to help change the status quo (Hopkins, 2013; Boadu, 2016).

The SBSSC for JHS (2020) has identified both teaching and learning philosophies for the subject in Ghana. With the teaching philosophy, the Social Studies curriculum will enable learners to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies through a combination of social constructivism and social realism. These theories emphasise learning as an active process where the learner constructs knowledge rather than

acquiring it. The curriculum is designed to provide learners with opportunities to expand, change, enhance and modify ways in which they view the world. Teachers will adopt thematic and creative pedagogical approaches that engage learners in a rich and rigorous inquiry-driven environment, such as talk for learning, project-based learning, games, modelling, questioning, brain- storming, demonstration and role-play which are necessary for achieving learning centred classrooms and developing learners into creative, honest and responsible citizens (NaCCA, 2020).

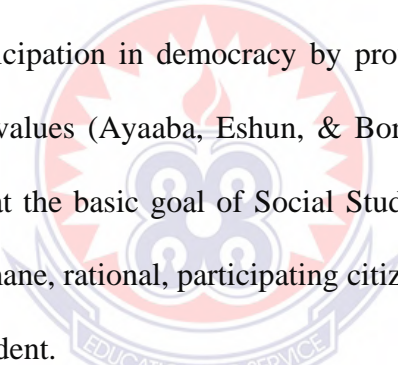
The philosophy of learning Social Studies is based on the need to train citizens who are reflective, concerned, active and participatory to be able to fit into the ever-changing world and contribute their quota to the society. Social Studies will provide avenues for learners to interact with people and interrogate issues to construct new knowledge and ideas, describe, analyse and evaluate issues that are critical to the survival of the human race. In essence, the curriculum is designed to generate activities that will make learning more relevant by using their previous knowledge, experiences and environments to acquire competencies including the following:

- (i) critical thinking and problem-solving skills to be able to compare and contrast, analyse, evaluate and apply geographical knowledge with little or no supervision;
- (ii) creative thinking skills to be able to reconstruct important information confidently;
- (iii) digital literacy skills to be able to use IT tools and resources efficiently for investigations and project works;
- (iv) effective communication skills to be able to share information at various levels of interaction;

- (v) values to live as global citizens capable of learning about other peoples and cultures of the world (NaCCA, 2020).

2.10.2 The Goal and Objectives of Social Studies Education

It appears to be generally agreed that citizenship education is the primary purpose or goal of Social Studies (National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 2014). Citizenship is very fundamental to the teaching and learning of Social Studies with the task of making learners ready for a collective action and willing to contribute their quota towards national development and sustainability. Social Studies in the Ghanaian educational system is a subject that has its goal as citizenship education. The main goal of Social Studies has been mentioned as citizenship education which involves preparing citizens for active participation in democracy by providing them with the essential knowledge, skills and values (Ayaaba, Eshun, & Bordoh, 2014; Eshun, 2020). The NCSS (2014) states that the basic goal of Social Studies education is to prepare the young people to be humane, rational, participating citizens in a world that is becoming increasingly interdependent.



Banks (2016) writes that citizenship education is the primary focus of Social Studies in the school curriculum which promotes desirable participatory citizenship. According to Banks, while the other curriculum areas also help students to attain some of the skills needed to participate in a democratic society, the Social Studies is the only curriculum area which has the development of civic competencies and skills as its main goals. The purpose of Social Studies is citizenship education aimed at providing students opportunities for an examination, critique and revision of past traditions, existing social practices and model of problem solving. Citizenship education provides students with

a wide range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable them to participate effectively in their society (Eshun, 2013; Banks, 2016).

Social Studies education is to educate students for citizenship in a democratic society (Banks, 2016; Tamakloe, 2001). For a better democratic state there should be the national consciousness and unity. Ghana being a multi ethnic and multicultural country, unity, peace and tranquillity are major concerns for us to live harmoniously in a democratic country.

Just as the meaning of Social Studies has varied perceptions and believes, so does the aims or objectives of Social Studies. It has been established that there is an endless debate regarding the objectives of Social Studies and how particular these objectives can be achieved (Banks, 2016). Social Studies varies in objectives from time to time and from place to place depending on the needs, aspirations and desires of a particular group of people or jurisdiction (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013). By general objectives we mean the ideas, the problem-solving skills, and the appropriate attitudes and values we want to develop in our students (Banks, 2016). Our students include the little children in our pre-school programs, the pupils in the primary schools, the students in the Junior and Senior High Schools and beyond (Blege, 2001).

In order to achieve Social Studies goals, specific objectives need to be stated. The objectives of Social Studies education are the development of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes (NCSS, 2014; Banks, 2016). The right knowledge, skills, values and attitudes ensures good citizenry participation. Social Studies should provide students (in this case the Junior High School students) with the knowledge, skills, values and positive attitudes they will need to understand modern life, become good citizens, solve problems, and to participate actively and democratically in the societies in which they

come from (Banks, 2016; Tamakloe, 2001). These would foster Ghana's democratic growth, maturity and sustainability. NaCCA (2020) outlined some specific objectives for Social Studies teachers as well as learners. The syllabus is designed to help students to:

- (i) develop the ability to adapt to the developing and ever-changing Ghanaian society
- (ii) acquire positive attitudes and values towards individual and societal issues
- (iii) develop critical and analytical skills in assessing issues for objective decision-making
- (iv) develop national consciousness and unity
- (v) use enquiry and problem-solving skills for solving personal and societal problems
- (vi) become responsible citizens capable and willing to contribute to societal advancement.

Knowledge acquisition is an integral part of citizenship problem-solving skills which allows for reflective decision making. Skills development is very essential to social studies teaching; they identify in particular what students will be able to do. Skills according to Banks (2016) can be categorized into four groups; these are thinking skills, inquiry skills, academic or study skills and group skills.

Thinking skills include the ability to gather and analyze information before making a decision. According to Banks thinking skills include the ability to conceptualize, interpret, analyze, generalize, apply knowledge and evaluate knowledge. Thus, through thinking skills students are able to act constructively by evaluating evidence through rational conclusions.

Inquiry skills include the ability to formulate scientific questions and hypothesis to collect data and to use the data to test hypothesis to derive generalization. Inquiry raises the curiosity of students and prompts them in seeking further explanation to questionable situations.

Study skills the way people learn new ideas. In social studies these include the ability to locate, organize and acquire information through listening and observing, communicate orally and in writing, read and interpret maps. Through study skills students make sense of new ideas for meaningful understanding of issues.

Group skills include the ability to perform effectively both as a leader and as a follower in solving group problems, to use power efficiently, and fairly in group situation, to make useful contributions to group progress to communicate effectively in a group and to resolve controversy in groups (Banks, 2016).

Attitudes and values cultivation are important areas of human development which are mainly concerned with the affective domain. Attitudes in particular affect how people evaluate situations. Positive attitudes allow people to view human conditions from a variety of perspectives. Values on the other hand, constitute essentials of human relations, Human likes, patriotism, respect of dignity; hard work and right of others provide an area of reflective development. Since values are so central to decision making it behold on schools to teach students to think critically about issues affecting society by analysing event both past and present to bring harmony within society (Banks, 2016; Eshun, 2013).

It must be well noted that knowledge, skills, positive attitudes and values gained, promote active communal and national participation. Social studies teachers must

embark on active teaching methods, techniques and strategies to facilitate the development of students as responsible individuals and citizens. These general objectives of Social Studies have served as the bedrock on what the subject aims to achieve its goals and what content knowledge should be considered.

2.10.3 The Contemporary Social Studies Teacher

For a teacher of any given subject to perform well, he or she needs a sound professional training in addition to the academic knowledge that he or she has acquired. Despite this professional training and academic qualification, the teacher needs some period of experience. All these help in equipping a teacher with an accumulated body of knowledge and requisite skills to perform well as a classroom teacher (Bekoe & Eshun, 2013).

Effective teachers are clear about their instructional goals, are knowledgeable about the content, communicate well, monitor students' understanding, are thoughtful and respectful about their teaching practices. On another note, in a study on conceptions of effective teaching, (Saroyan et al 2009; Sprinkle, 2009) found out that students expressed four ideas about effective teaching: (1) effective teachers have knowledge, (2) prepare and manage instruction, (3) promote learning and (4) help students grow so they can learn independently. Fuhrman et al (2016) carried out a study on effective teaching and found that effective teachers exhibit passion for their subjects, are knowledgeable about and care for students, use a variety of teaching strategies and help students appreciate the relevance of information to their own context.

Considering the success teachers have in achieving the purpose of education, what the skills of both the teacher and the learner should be in order to adapt to the rapidly changing world has become more crucial. Changing learning environments and styles,

new student profiles, and transformations in social life and the business world are critical issues for the role of the teacher (Bekoe & Eshun, 2013).

Expectations about Social Studies teacher competencies have been important in every period of world history. Changes in many areas such as new forms of communication, the transformations in the classroom and the school, the diversity of educational resources, the flexibility of curricula, management styles, learner profiles, and parent profiles have led to discussions on how to develop and update teachers' skills. What makes a good teacher? What makes learning meaningful and relevant? Which learning methods and principles are critical for an employable generation to achieve the economic level wanted by society? What constitutes the main motivation for today's teacher competencies? What knowledge and skills teachers have and should have and in which educational atmosphere will they use their knowledge and skills are fundamental questions. Therefore, teachers can be said to be faced with an unusual proficiency scale, both for the healthy functioning of education and for the ability to manage the skills students are expected to have in the future (Bekoe & Eshun, 2013; Fuhrman et al., 2016).

Concepts such as information processing, reasoning, questioning, critical thinking, and problem solving in relation to twenty-first-century skills include some familiar skills that have been at the centre of school learning for many years while the basic framework of teacher competencies is determined by the characteristics of qualified teachers and what competencies they need (European Commission,). Changes in social life, economy, and educational environments are compelling motivations for what qualifications teachers should have.

Teacher competencies indicated in research by the European Commission (2006) on measuring and teaching twenty-first-century skills that twenty-first-century teachers should have are shared in four groups:

- (i) Ways of Thinking: this comprises Creativity and Innovation, Critical thinking, Problem solving, Decision making and learning to learn
- (ii) Working Tools: this includes Information literacy and Information and Communication Technologies literacy.
- (iii) Ways of Working: this consists of Contact and Collaboration/teamwork.
- (iv) Life in the World: this is about Local and global citizenship, Life and career, Personal and social responsibilities.

Teachers' thinking skills, relationship with knowledge, problem-solving skills, and innovative attitudes are seen as necessary competencies for teachers to be able to develop strategies in accordance with students' situations and learning environment and for meaningful learning to take place (Bekoe & Eshun, 2013). Since teaching is characterized by ambiguity, teachers need adaptable mastery, such as the capability to adapt their plans and practices to fulfil students' learning requirements (Fuhrman et al., 2016). Using information literacy and information communication technologies correctly within the scope of working tools is important for accessing and organizing information as well as distinguishing the right information and being a producer of information to learners is very necessary. Communication skills form an important part of teachers' skill sets, and their being inclined toward cooperation/teamwork is critical for them to be able to perform the requirements of the profession. The ability of the learning atmosphere to offer safe, flexible, innovative, and rich content is closely related to how good a team leader a teacher is. Therefore, having teachers cover all roles by fully understanding and distributing the potential of the whole team starting

with themselves is important (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2015; Fuhrman et al., 2016).

In the words of Darling-Hammond and Bransford, () having teachers maintain their professional development is very important both for increasing educational performance and effectiveness as well as for increasing teachers' commitment, identity, and job satisfaction. Teachers also need to be able to keep up with scientific, pedagogical, and technological developments in their world; to closely follow the needs of a society in constant change; to seek the best for their world; and to view serving society as a responsibility. Studies on twenty-first-century teacher competencies (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2015; Feiman-Nemser, 2015, 2018; Geijsel et al., 2019; González & Wagenaar, 2019; Hagger & McIntyre, 2019; Kelly & Grenfell, 2021; Krauss et al., 2021; Mishra & Koehler, 2021; Williamson & Clevenger-Bright, 2021) have shown the main motivation of competencies to be increasing people's employability in the twenty-first-century economic structure.

These studies show promoting technology-supported learning in a knowledge-intensive economic structure to be a priority for teachers. Darling-Hammond & Bransford (2015) opined that requirement such as teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, communication skills, information organization, and leadership in line with twenty-first-century teacher skills classifications mean teachers must have a high level of education. In the 2008 Report on Teacher Education in Europe, the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) believed today's teachers should receive a master's degree in order to fulfil what is expected of them.

NaCCA (2020) states that the Core Competencies of the 21st-century Social Studies teacher describe a body of skills that the teachers at the basic level should seek to

develop in their learners. The competencies describe a connected body of core skills that are acquired throughout the processes of teaching and learning. They are the relevant global skills for learning that allow learners to develop, in addition to the 4Rs, to become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, creators, innovators, good communicators, collaborators, culturally identified individuals, digitally literate and global citizens who have a keen interest in their personal development. In using this curriculum, we hope the core competencies will be developed in learners to help them develop our country, Ghana. These competencies include:

Critical Thinking and Problem solving (CP): the teacher is expected to develop learners' cognitive and reasoning abilities to enable them analyse issues and situations, leading to the resolution of problems. This skill enables learners to draw on and demonstrate what they have learnt, and from their own experiences, analyse situations and choose the most appropriate out of a number of possible solutions. It requires that learners embrace the problem at hand, persevere and take responsibility for their own learning.

Creativity and Innovation (CI): teachers are to guide learners acquire entrepreneurial skills through their ability to think about new ways of solving problems and develop technologies to addressing the problems at hand. This competency requires ingenuity of ideas in arts, technology and enterprise. It enables learners to think independently and creatively.

Communication and Collaboration (CC): This competence of the teacher aims to promote in learners, the ability to make use of languages, symbols and texts to exchange information about themselves and the world around them. Learners actively participate in sharing their ideas and engage in dialogue with others by listening to and learning

from others in ways that respect and value the multiple perspectives of all persons involved.

Cultural Identity and Global Citizenship (CG): This competence of the teacher aims to develop learners who put country and service foremost through an understanding of what it means to be active citizens, by inculcating in them a strong sense of environmental and economic awareness. Learners make use of the knowledge, skills and attitudes, acquired to contribute meaningfully towards the socio-economic development of the country. They develop skills to critically analyse cultural trends, identify and contribute to the global community.

Personal Development and Leadership (PL): This competence is aimed at improving self-awareness, self-knowledge; building and renewing self-esteem; identifying and developing talents, fulfilling dreams and aspirations and developing other people or meeting other people's needs. It involves recognising the importance of values such as honesty and empathy; seeking the well-being of others; distinguishing between right and wrong; fostering perseverance, resilience and self-confidence; self-regulation and responsibility and developing a love for life-long learning.

Digital Literacy (DL): It involves the teacher to guide learners to discover, acquire skills in and communicate through ICT to support their learning and make use of digital media responsibly.

These days many people can be teachers, but the question is how many people are effective Social Studies teachers including those who know what and those who know how? To be an effective Social Studies teacher does not only involve having a deep content knowledge, but also organizational, management and communication skills,

being able to organize instructions and providing relevant assessment and fair evaluations. In addition, an effective Social Studies teacher is always in a constant learning process due to changes in terms of the students' characteristics, the curriculum, the community and finance among many others. Social Studies teachers are the crux of subjects' implementation, without them teaching effectively, the subjects may not attain its objectives. Teachers' instructional methods facilitate the teaching and learning of Social Studies. The Social Studies teacher is expected to adopt various instructional approaches, illustrations and explanations, such that the learner is maximally involved in the teaching/learning environment. Effective teachers presuppose effective learning by students. Teaching effectiveness can be seen as a teacher's ability to be intellectually challenging, motivating students, setting high standards, approachable, presenting materials well, making Social Studies and class interesting, encouraging self-initiated learning and having good elocutionary skills that triggers learning and produce useful outcome (Akeke & Aluko, 2017; Bekoe & Eshun, 2013; Caena, 2017; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2015).

2.11 Empirical Studies

Several scholars globally have carried out studies to assess Social Studies programme implementation both at national and international levels. At the national level Quashigah et al (2014) conducted research on the evaluation of Colleges of Education (CoE) Social studies curriculum vis-à-vis the Junior High School (JHS) Social studies curriculum in Ghana. Eshun (2020) worked on Social Studies curriculum through time and space to ascertain the relevance of the Social Studies curriculum for national development. Adu-Yeboah (2008) used the quantitative approach to conduct a study on the implementation of the Social Studies programme in Junior High Schools in the Obuasi Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The results of the study indicated

that classroom-centred teaching methodologies were mostly used by the Social Studies teachers and there were few opportunities for inquiry and fieldwork activities. In a similar study, Oppong (2009) examined the teaching and learning of history in the Central Region of Ghana and concluded that the most prominent methods of teaching history were the question-and-answer method, discussion and lecture methods.

In Turkey, Çakir () conducted a study on the instructional materials commonly employed by foreign language teachers at elementary schools. The results indicated that most of the teachers were reluctant to use many of the highly beneficial materials due to reasons such as overcrowded classes, limited technological knowledge, lack of time for preparation, curricular time constraints and heavy work load.

Also, in Kenya, Iraki () investigated school-based factors influencing implementation and the results revealed that teaching methods were not well varied. Discussion, demonstration and lecture methods were the teaching methods frequently used by the teachers. It is expected that at that level, student centred methodologies would be employed to teach children. The researcher concluded that failure of the teachers to vary the teaching methods affected the curriculum implementation.

Iraki, (2014) conducted another study on the availability and use of instructional materials for teaching history in Kenya. Findings from the study revealed that most of the schools did not have adequate instructional materials. Although majority of the schools had the recommended textbooks but other instructional materials needed for teaching history were very few.

In Nigeria similar study was carried out by Aliyu (2019) on the assessment of the implementation of Social Studies curriculum in primary schools in Kano Metropolis

which basically focused on the differences in the opinion of primary school teachers of Social Studies. Umudi (2012) examined importance of content implementation in Junior Secondary School Social Studies. This involves considering what the teachers and learners should pay attention to during teaching and learning situation. Also, Ebiere and Adediran (2013) worked on the quality assurance of teachers in the assessment of Social Studies curriculum of secondary schools in Abeokuta Metropolis in Ogun State, Nigeria which was limited to the quality of teachers in the assessment of the social studies curriculum implementation in secondary schools in the study area. Soneye and Agbonluare (2013) assessed the effective implementation of the new Senior High School (SHS) curriculum. The study revealed that the former Nigeria SHS curriculum was fair but not effectively implemented due to factors such as theory- based teaching methods, and insufficient specialist teachers.

Therefore, it could be ascertained that a number of scholars have assessed different aspects of Social Studies curriculum implementation process separately. The foregoing review particularly in Ghana shows that the few studies carried out on curriculum implementation focused on teachers' perspectives. For instance, this was found in the works of Adu-Yeboah (), and Oppong (). Again, these studies conducted on curriculum implementation have been largely situated in the Central, Western, and Ashanti Regions of Ghana. This makes it difficult to fully appreciate the effective implementation of the curriculum from a broader perspective. Methodologically, most of these studies were approached quantitatively giving little knowledge about the depth of the effective implementation of the curriculum.

Ghana in particular has seen several changes in its educational curricula for Social Studies but it still appears the desired products have not been channelled out all these

years for the betterment of the country. This has led to the design of a new Standards-Based Curriculum enriched in content and resources and which is supposed to be basically implemented differently from the old curricular for its products to be well equipped with the requisite 21st – century skills, knowledge and attitudes to solve societal problems for national development. No studies seem to have been conducted on the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum since its inception for almost four years now. This research therefore seeks to do a study in assessing the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools at Nkoranza South municipality to basically explore how teachers are adapting to the implementation of the programme so as to achieve its original intensions to bring forth the desired products for the betterment of our country.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section presents the research methodology that was used to undertake the study. It includes the philosophical underpinning to the study, research paradigm, research approach, research design, population of the study, instruments for data collection, sampling and sample procedures, administration of instruments, and data analysis procedure.

3.1 Research Paradigm

This research adopted pragmatism as the research paradigm for “Assessing the Implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools at the Nkoranza South Municipality.” Pragmatism posits that the value of knowledge lies in its practical utility. In the context of curriculum implementation, practicality is paramount. By incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods, the researcher acknowledged the multifaceted nature of curriculum implementation. Qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews and participant observations, allowed me to capture the rich, nuanced experiences of teachers, unveiling the lived realities of curriculum adoption and adaptation. Quantitative methods on the other hand enabled me to aggregate data, identified trends, and measured the extent of curriculum adherence and its impact. By employing mixed-methods approach, the researcher aimed to provide comprehensive insights into the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum by teachers which were translated into concrete recommendations for educators, administrators, and policy makers to enhance curriculum delivery,

support teachers' development, and improve students' learning outcomes (Teddle & Tashakorri, 2018; Maxcy, 2018).

Many researchers have stressed that pragmatism can provide a philosophical justification for the mixed research approach (Teddle & Tashakorri, 2018; Maxcy, 2018; Creswell and Plano Clark 2017; Fetters, 2016; Molina-Azorin, 2016). Pragmatism is oriented toward solving practical problems in the real world rather than being built on assumptions about the nature of knowledge (Shannon-Baker, 2016; Creswell and Plano Clark 2017). Pragmatism supports the use of both quantitative and qualitative in same study and rejects incompatibility stance. Pragmatism uses multiple methods but the use of the methods should always be guided by research problems. It values both objective and subjective knowledge to meet research objectives. Researchers adopting a pragmatist position have the liberty to choose those research methods or strategies that can best answer their research questions (Creswell, 2016).

3.2 The Research Approach

Mixed methods approach was adopted to gain holistic understanding of the assessment of the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools at the Nkoranza South Municipality. The purpose of mixed methods approach is to provide a more complex understanding of a phenomenon that would otherwise not have been accessible by using a mono-method. Mixed method research was necessary for this research as it aims to explore a phenomenon from a number of vantage points and it also highlights the basic tenets of pragmatism. This approach combined the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods to offer depth and breadth in the exploration of curriculum implementation specifically targeting teachers within the unique context of the Nkoranza South municipality.

Mixed methods research is a research methodology that incorporates multiple methods to address research questions in an appropriate and principled manner, which involves collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting both qualitative and quantitative data. Mixed methods approach helps to obtain more rigorous conclusions by employing two methods in such a way that the strengths of the qualitative methods offset the weaknesses of the quantitative methods and vice versa (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016; Bryman, 2015; Creswell, 2015).

3.3 Research Design

The study adopted the explanatory sequential design of the mixed methods research. This design permits the gathering and analysis of quantitative data in a first phase, planning and executing a second phase based on the quantitative results where qualitative data is gathered for the purposes of explaining the quantitative results. (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). In using this design, Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann and Hanson (2013) indicated the researcher must pay attention to its variants. These are the follow-up explanations model and the participant selection model.

The researcher could first collect quantitative data through the questionnaire which allowed for the identification of the overall trends and patterns in the implementation process. This data informed the researcher of the subsequent qualitative phase, which helped to explain, and provided context for the quantitative findings. By incorporating the qualitative methods i.e., observation and interview, the researcher gathered in-depth insights into the experiences, perspectives, practices, and challenges faced by the instructors, and gave a more comprehensive understanding of the curriculum implementation process. The explanatory sequential design allowed for the comparison

and integration of both quantitative and qualitative data. This process of triangulation strengthened and enhanced the overall rigor and understanding of the research.

Starting the research with a quantitative phase (questionnaire) and making a follow up with a qualitative phase (interview and observation) allowed for a systematic and broad examination of the overall implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017; Shorten & Smith, 2017; Wisdom & Creswell, 2013). This helped to determine what quantitative results needed further explanation, that enabled me to follow up on a specific quantitative finding and explained it with the qualitative data (Wisdom & Creswell, 2015).

According to Kothari (2022), a research design refers to the conceptual structure and decisions regarding what, how much, when, where, and by what means a research study will be conducted. It is the blueprint for conducting the study that maximises control over factors that could interfere with the validity of the findings. Designing a study helps the researcher to plan and implement the study in a way that will help the researcher to obtain intended results, thus increasing the chances of obtaining information that could be associated with the real situation (Burns & Grove, 2021).

3.4 Population of the Study

The population for this study comprised all public and private Junior High School (JHS) teachers in the Nkoranza South Municipality in the Bono East Region of Ghana. The target population for this study comprised all teachers who were directly involved in teaching Social Studies in public junior high schools (JHSs) in the Nkoranza South Municipality of the Bono East region of Ghana. The accessible population and primary participants of this study were all 133 public JHS Social Studies teachers within the Nkoranza South municipality of the Bono East Region. There were 75 junior high

schools which was made up of 60 public JHS and 15 private JHS. The public JHS Social Studies teachers were used because the researcher was very certain that all public teachers had undergone compulsory training or workshops by the government unlike the private school teachers where there was not that certainty.

Research Population may be defined as the total number of units (individuals, dyads, groups, organizations, events, objects, or items) from which samples are selected for measurement (Kindy et al, 2016). The target population is the specific, conceptually bounded group of potential participants to whom the researcher may have access that represents the nature of the population of interest (Kindy, et al, 2016). The accessible population is the population in research to which the researchers can apply their conclusions. This population is a subset of the target population. It is from the accessible population that researchers draw their samples (Asiamah et al., 2017). The table below demonstrates the distribution of teachers in the public basic schools.

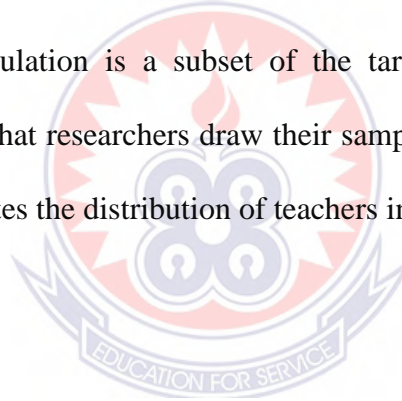


Table 1: Name of School and the Total Number of Social Studies Teachers

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Name of School		
Abuontem M/A JHS	1	0.8
Akropong M/A JHS	2	1.5
Broahoho M/A JHS	1	0.8
Akuma M/A JHS	2	1.5
Akuma Presby JHS	1	0.8
Akuma SDA JHS	2	1.5
Nkwabena S.D.A JHS	2	1.5
Nkwabeng Presby JHS	2	1.5
Nkwabeng R/C JHS	2	1.5
Nkwabeng Saviour JHS	2	1.5
Ahyiayem M/A JHS	2	1.5
Ayerede M/A JHS	3	2.2
Bredi No.1 M/A JHS	3	2.2
Dasagwa M/A JHS	2	1.5
Kantankani M/A JHS	1	0.8
Pruso M/A	2	1.5
Asonkwaa M/A JHS	3	2.2
Bonsu Islamic JHS	1	0.8
Bonsu Methodist JHS	1	0.8
Bonsu R/C JHS	2	1.5
Dotobaa M/A JHS	3	2.2
Koforidua/Bibiani M/A	2	1.5
Wagadugu M/A JHS	1	0.8
Beboano JHS	2	1.5
Dompoase JHS	2	1.5
Makyinmabre T.I	3	2.2
Meta M/A JHS	2	1.5
Mim-Amponsakrom	2	1.5
Nsugum M/A JHS	2	1.5
Nsuensa M/A JHS	3	2.2
Aboasu M/A JHS	2	1.5
Asuano M/A JHS	1	0.8
Aswaj Islamic JHS	2	1.5
Banofour M/A JHS	1	0.8
Donkro Nkwanta Ang.	3	2.2
Donkro Nkwanta M/A	3	2.2
Donkro Nkwanta Islamic	1	0.8
Anana M/A JHS	1	0.8
Chechewere M/A JHS	2	1.5
Kyiradeso M/A JHS	2	1.5
Nwoase M/A JHS	2	1.5

Salamkrom M/A JHS	2	1.5
Dandwa M/A JHS	2	1.5
Jerusalem M/A JHS	1	0.8
Nkoranza M/A 'A'	3	2.2
Nkoranza Girl's Model	2	2.2
Nyinase M/A JHS	2	2.2
Akumsa Domase M/A	4	3.0
Akumsa Domase Presby	3	2.2
Nkoranza Methodist	4	3.0
Nkoranza R/C	4	3.0
Nkoranza SDA	3	2.2
Okatakyie M/A JHS	3	2.2
Nkoranza Anglican	4	3.0
Nkoranza Effah Presby	3	2.2
Nkoranza Islamic JHS	3	2.2
Nkoranza M/A 'B'	3	2.2
Nkoranza St. Barnabas	2	1.5
Nkoranza St. Theresa's	4	3.0
Sessiman M/A JHS	2	1.5
Total	133	100

3.5 Sampling and Sample Procedure

Given the size of the population and research objectives for assessing the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools within the Nkoranza South Municipality, Census sampling was employed for the distribution of questionnaire. This meant that all the accessible 133 Social Studies teachers in the population were invited to participate in the survey. This method was chosen to gather comprehensive data from the entire population, ensuring a representative sample for quantitative analysis. Census sampling was selected for the distribution to obtain responses from all 133 Social Studies teachers. The approach eliminates risk of sampling bias and ensures that the entire population's perspectives were included in the analysis. This ensured that the researcher obtained a complete and representative understanding of the Social Studies teachers' perceptions, teaching techniques, teaching and learning resources usage and experiences, and assessment methods.

Census sampling is a technique where data is collected from every individual in the population of interest (Creswell, 2015).

Convenient Sampling technique was used for the observation because it allowed the researcher to collect data efficiently and in real classroom settings. In this case, the researcher conducted observations of Social Studies teachers to directly observe the implementation of the curriculum. The researcher observed 60 teachers from different schools within the Nkoranza South Municipality. These teachers were based on their availability and willingness to participate in the observation process. This provided valuable insights into the actual classroom practices regarding the implementation of the curriculum. Convenient sampling is a technique where data is collected from individuals who are easily accessible or readily available (Cresswell, 2015).

Purposive sampling was used to select 10 teachers with four or more years of experience in teaching for the interviews. These were experienced educators had in-depth knowledge of the curriculum and offered valuable perspectives and rich insights on curriculum implementation. The interviews were conducted or held face-to-face using a semi-structured format, which allowed the researcher to prepare guiding questions around four main themes – teachers’ perceptions of the new curriculum, the teaching techniques they employ, the availability of instructional resources, and their assessment methods. At the same time, the format provided flexibility to probe and followed up with questions that allowed respondents to express their views freely. This helped to gain deeper insights into teachers’ lived experiences and their professional judgements. The interviews enriched the study and provided narrative data that complemented the broader quantitative findings and allowed a more holistic picture of the curriculum implementation at the Nkoranza South Municipality to be presented.

Purposive Sampling is a technique where data is intentionally collected from individuals who are specifically chosen based on their knowledge, expertise, or experiences in the research area (Etikan et al., 2016).

3.6 Instruments for Data Collection

Three primary instruments were employed to the study. These were questionnaire, observation (direct), and interview (Semi-structured). These instruments were exclusively used for gathering insights from teachers, with no involvement of students or other stakeholders.

Questionnaire was designed to collect quantitative data on Social Studies teachers' perceptions, experiences or opinions, their teaching techniques, their usage of instructional resources, and assessment methods, all regarding the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum implementation. The questionnaire included series of close-ended, open-ended questions, and Likert-scale items. It covered various aspects, including curriculum content, and resources. Respondents were given a specific timeframe to complete and return the questionnaires. The questionnaire could also guarantee confidentiality since it is generally a self-report and thereby could elicit truthful responses.

Observation was used to assess the actual classroom practices related to the 2021 Standards-Based Social Studies Curriculum content. The observation protocols included a structured checklist of curriculum components, teaching methods, and classroom interactions. The researcher recorded observations during scheduled classroom visits. Observation provided valuable insights into the practical implementation of the curriculum, including instructional techniques, use of instructional resources, and student-teacher interactions.

Interviews aimed to gather qualitative data by engaging teachers in open-ended discussions about their experiences with 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. Semi-structured interview guides were prepared, covering topics such as teachers' perceptions, instructional techniques, teaching and learning resources, and assessment methods. The interviews allowed for in-depth exploration of teachers' perspectives, and suggestions providing deeper understanding of the curriculum's implementation.

Polit and Hungler (2019) define data as information obtained in a course of a study. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of printed (pre-arranged) questions presented in a specific order pertaining to the problem under study for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. (Kindy et al., 2016; Krishan Kumar, 2022). The questionnaire, as an instrument, has some inherent problems. For instance, some of the questions could be misinterpreted due to wording or differential meanings of terms. The respondent's responses to the questions might not give the true reflection of the degree of implementation (McLean, 2016; Kindy et al., 2016).

Observation method is described as a method to observe and describe the behaviour of a subject and it involves the basic technique of simply watching the phenomena until some hunch or insight is gained. It involves 'seeing' things, recording and analysing what is seen. Observation can be used to triangulate information obtained through other data collection methods or provide information that can help explain results acquired through other data collection tools or methods (Polit & Hungler, 2019). Observation was also employed because it allows the description of teaching and learning behaviour as they occur naturally (McMillan, 2016).

Interviews are primarily done in qualitative research and occur when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record their answers. Often

audiotapes are utilized to allow for more consistent transcription (Creswell, 2015). The researcher often transcribes and types the data into a computer file, in order to analyse it after interviewing. Interviews may be useful to follow-up with individual respondents after questionnaires, e.g., to further investigate their responses (Creswell, 2015).

3.7 Legitimation of Instrument

- 1) The requisite measures were taken that ensured the legitimization of the instruments. 1) For sample integration, questionnaire, observation, and interview ensured that data collected from Social Studies teachers in various Junior High Schools within the Nkoranza South Municipality were effectively integrated and compared to draw meaningful conclusions about the overall implementation of the curriculum. All teachers involved in the study successfully completed the questionnaire and some participated in the interview and observation.
- 2) Insider-outsider perspective was employed to strengthen the credibility and trustworthiness of the research instruments in line with the researcher's positionality. The insider position helped the researcher to design the questionnaire, observational checklist, and interview guide in a way that reflected the realities of Social Studies teaching and the practical challenges faced in the curriculum implementation. This helped to ensure that the items resonated with teachers' experiences and were clearly understood. The outsider legitimation helped to minimize personal bias, ensure that the instruments were aligned with research objectives, and confirm that the question were framed in ways that were consistent with established curriculum research methodologies. The insider position enriched the tools with practical relevance, the outsider reviews reinforced their objectivity and methodological soundness.

- 3) In ensuring weakness minimization, the quantitative method was used to identify patterns and to establish correlations. The qualitative method was used to further comprehend the quantitative responses and to complement it. Both approaches compensated the weaknesses and strengths of each other.
- 4) The study followed a sequential approach starting with administration of questionnaire, followed by observation, and interview with a subset of participants which allowed for both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis of the curriculum implementation.
- 5) For data conversion, quantitative data were analysed using statistical software. Qualitative data were transcribed and coded for thematic analysis. This data conversion processes allowed to merge both types of data to gain comprehensive insight of the curriculum implementation.
- 6) Paradigmatic mixing established pragmatism as philosophical standpoint which is the paradigm of mixed methods, to gain holistic understanding of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum implementation.
- 7) Commensurability was established by moving back and forth from the quantitative and qualitative data sets to get a complete picture of teachers' implementation of the curriculum. Standardized methods (questionnaire, observation and interview) were used and data analysed using established procedures to maintain consistency in data analysis.
- 8) Multiple validity involved the use of various methods to study the same issue. Questionnaire for identification of patterns and relationships. observation and interview data to get teachers' actual practices.

- 9) Political legitimation ensured that the data collected adequately addressed the research objectives or questions and ethical guidelines were followed to protect the rights and privacy of the teachers involved.

As recommended by Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006), we use the term legitimation instead of validity because “some qualitative researchers (e.g., postmodernists) view the concept of validity (and the word) as representing a debunked modernist perspective that champions universal rationality, rules, order, logic, and the like (p. 551) and because the term legitimation is used by both quantitative researchers and qualitative researchers.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

To effectively collect data on the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools at the Nkoranza South Municipality, three main instruments were used: Questionnaire, Observation, and Interviews. Prior to the actual data collection, head teachers and the Social Studies teachers in Junior High Schools within the Nkoranza South Municipality for the study were officially consulted. This enabled the researcher to establish familiarity with them. The questionnaire was distributed to the teachers in the selected schools. Classroom observations were made for teachers and follow up interviews conducted for teachers.

In line with Creswell’s (2015) recommendations, the first instrument used was questionnaire to collect quantitative data from the teachers on their perceptions of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum, techniques for teaching, the use of teaching and learning resources, assessment methods and how they were adaptive to the implementation of the curriculum. A set of carefully designed questions were used because the respondents could read and respond to the questions. Answering each set

of questionnaire items by the participants lasted at least 10 minutes. All questions were asked to address the research questions which were professional and included clear and concise instructions to allow for quantitative analysis, enabling the researcher to generate data that was statistically analysed. I utilized Likert-scale; closed ended and open-ended questions to collect the data. Closed ended question-structure allow responses that fit into pre-decided categories. Open ended questions allow people to express what they think in their own words. Open-ended questions enable the respondent to answer in as much detail as they like in their own words (Polit and Hungler, 2019). This was beneficial as it meant both quantitative and qualitative data can be obtained. Closed questions also provided ordinal data (which can be ranked).

This involved using a continuous rating scale to measure the strength of attitudes or emotions. For example, strongly disagree / disagree / undecided / agree / strongly agree (Polit and Hungler, 2019). The questionnaires were divided into five sections A, B, C, D, and E. Section A covered the background information of respondents. The rest of the sections dealt with issues related to the research questions. This was done in order to help elicit adequate information on the topic under study. I emphasized and ensured that the information provided by the respondents were kept confidential. This I believed made the respondents to be more honest or sincere in their responses. The questionnaires were personally administered and collected within a period of four weeks visiting at least 15 schools a week within which the participants were able to respond appropriately. I had to go round at the end of the fourth week to retrieve all the completed questionnaires that were not in my custody.

The second method for data collection included classroom observations as a qualitative instrument to directly observe the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in

classrooms. This was done for the purpose of cross-checking views expressed on the questionnaire. The observation was also to find out the situation on the ground with respect to the teaching and learning of Social Studies. The researcher visited different public schools within the Nkoranza South Municipality to observe Social Studies classes. The observation process involved carefully documenting the teaching techniques, assessment methods, teaching and learning resource utilization, student engagement and overall effectiveness of the implementation. This provided insights into the actual classroom practices and can be used to supplement the questionnaire data. This concerned teachers' lessons deliveries and experiences when implementing the SBSSC.

Classroom observation provided insight into which aspects of the curriculum were (or were not) implemented effectively. The teachers were rated on a four-point scale, indicating the extent to which they demonstrated the competencies outlined on the observation guide. I was able to carefully follow the teachers' classroom lesson or instructional deliveries. Specifically, direct observation was employed for the study. Participant observation is a method of collecting data in which the researcher becomes a part of the group or community being studied, experiencing events from their perspective, and watches the subject in his or her usual environment without altering that environment (Matson & Wilkins, 2017).

The observation also encompassed how teachers were implementing the 2021 Social Studies curriculum. Observations lasted at least 40 minutes per teacher (Matson & Wilkins, 2017). Sixty teachers were conveniently selected for the observational study. I did the observations by myself within two weeks. I had little knowledge so I subjected myself to one-week observational lessons to reach an appreciable level to use the

instrument to collect data. The teachers were asked to teach according to their normal classroom teaching. They were also assured that the publication of the results would be absolutely confidential.

The third method used was interview. It was conducted to gather in-depth insights and perspectives on the implementation process. Semi structured interviews were conducted purposively for the teachers based on the convenience of the observation. These interviews were conducted based on their experiences and roles in implementing the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. This further clarified teacher's perception, teaching practices, resources utilization, and assessment methods, adaptations, beliefs, attitudes, successes, challenges and recommendations regarding the curriculum implementation.

The combination of questionnaire, observation and interview provided a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum at the Nkoranza South Municipality. The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods allowed for a more holistic understanding of the challenges, successes and overall effectiveness of the curriculum implementation from the teachers' perspective. The mixed methods approach enhanced the credibility and validity of findings, as data from multiple sources were utilized and triangulated to ensure trustworthiness.

3.9 Data Presentation and Analysis

The questionnaires developed for the data collection were first checked, coded, and entered into a statistical software for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and mean scores were used to summarize teachers' responses on their perceptions, teaching techniques, availability of resources, and assessment methods based on the

research questions and objectives of the study. Each section provided answers for each of the research questions for respondents to tick as well as spaces provided for respondents to feed in their own responses. Prior to holding and tabulating the questionnaire for analysis, all the items were checked. This enabled the researcher to examine if instructions were followed uniformly and whether all items were responded to. The responses to the questionnaire were coded by assigning numbers to the various sections of responses for the purpose of analysis. This was followed by a preparation of a sheet showing the coding scheme. This provided a guide for the interpretation of variables in the analysis. After checking incomplete and inaccurate questionnaire, the responses were transferred to a spread sheet (Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS)). The data were then examined for any errors and finally analysed using the SPSS. Percentages and tables were employed to present the outcome.

Observational method directly involved observing and recording behaviours or practices, actions, or events in the natural classroom setting capturing both qualitative and quantitative details. An observational checklist was used. The observational data was broken down into meaningful codes or categories that represented specific patterns or behaviours. The codes were grouped into themes that reflected common patterns observed across the data and in line with the research questions which allowed the researcher group similar responses. I used thematic data analysis method to analyse the data that emerged from the personal observation during the study.

Data presentation and analysis in the interviews involved a systematic process of breaking down, examining, and interpreting interview data to uncover meaningful insights. This process aided in addressing research questions. The recorded conversations (interviews) were transcribed into written text. The transcribed texts were

broken down into smaller units, often called “codes.” The codes were grouped into broader themes that represented the common topics or patterns (research questions) across the interviews. The codes were categorized thematically in a systematic manner and analysed, allowing for a rich and descriptive understanding of the implementation process. The identified themes were examined, their meanings interpreted, and conclusions drawn based on the data collected during the interviews.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

I secured informed consent from the identified research participants before their involvement in the study. I ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. This involved taking steps to protect the identity and personal information of participants, both in qualitative and quantitative data collection. As part of ensuring confidentiality, pseudonyms were used. Data were securely stored and only accessible to trusted and authorized personality. In order to make sure there was originality and credibility for the study, the questionnaires, observation and interview procedures were carefully planned and structured. I offered participants the right to withdraw from the research at will and all inconveniences on the part of participants were drastically minimized.

When reporting the study findings, the researcher accurately represented the data collected, providing a fair and balanced representation of both qualitative and quantitative data. The researcher presented an unbiased interpretation that reflects the complexities of the research topic. These ethical considerations ensured that the rights and well-being of research participants were protected. It enhanced the credibility and integrity of the research. Data was safeguarded by ensuring that it was stored securely and protected from unauthorized access. Ethical considerations in research are a set of

principles that guide research designs and practices. They include the genres that researchers follow to protect the rights in developing research strategies and building a trusted relationship between the study participants and investigator. Research ethics is important in our daily life research endeavours and requires that researchers should protect the dignity of their subjects and publish well the information that is researched (Wallington, 2018).



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of data. Data was gathered through questionnaire, participant observation, and semi-structured interview. The questionnaire and interview were interpreted or described in detail in relation to the research questions. The first part of the analysis presents the quantitative data (questionnaire) of the respondents, where 133 questionnaires were administered. The second part presents the qualitative data specifically interview, where 10 teachers were interviewed, and participant observation, where 60 teachers were observed in their respective classrooms. All these were in line with the research questions.

The fear was that if Social Studies Teachers (SST) were not having positive perceptions of the curriculum, not employing the appropriate teaching techniques and assessment methods aligning with the curriculum, and lacked the requisite instructional resources towards the implementation of the Standards-based Social Studies Curriculum as planned or developed, they might revert to the old practices of teaching and learning of the immediate scrapped objective based curriculum since many teachers have been accustomed to its tenets and practices for long and that might not help in the full realization of the goals and objectives of the new Social Studies curriculum.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents demographic data of the participants. Understanding the demographic characteristics of participants provides a foundation for interpreting how Junior High School Social Studies teachers at the Nkoranza South Municipality implement the curriculum.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Sex	Male	89	66.9
	Female	44	33.1
Total		133	100
Academic Qualification	Diploma	47	35.3
	First Degree	79	59.4
	Master's Degree	7	5.3
Total		133	100
Programme pursued at the College or University	B.Ed. JHS Social Studies Education	23	17.3
	BA. Social Studies Education	10	7.5
	Other programmes not Social Studies related (diploma, first and second degrees)	100	75.2
Total		133	100
Working Experience as a Social Studies Teacher	Below Four Years	76	57.1
	Four Years and Above	57	42.9
Total		133	100

Source: Field Data (2023)

Regarding the sex of the respondents, 89 (66.9%) were males and the remaining 44 (33.1%) were females. This information indicates that, teachers (both males and females) were well spread at various villages and towns within the Nkoranza South Municipality. The higher number of teachers were obviously in schools that had higher population. Having well-distributed teachers irrespective of the location of schools help to ensure accessibility to education, help cater for diverse needs of learners, enhance equal opportunity for learners at various or different locations (Moore, 2017).

Most of the respondents, 79 (59.4%) out of the 133 were first-degree holders, 47 (35.3%) were diploma holders, and 7 (5.3%) had a master's degree. This means that there were more qualified teachers handling the subject. Moreover, 33 (24.8%) out of the 133 respondents pursued Social Studies education while the remaining 100 (75.2%) did not pursue Social Studies education. Table 1 further shows that 23 (17.3%) read B. Ed. Social Studies Education (JHS), while 10 (7.5%) read BA. Social Studies Education. This indicates that majority of the teachers handling the subject are not specialists and were outnumbered by those who have not specialized in the discipline Social Studies. Some had their specialization in areas such as Mathematics, ICT, English, and Guidance and Counseling teaching Social Studies at the Nkoranza South Municipalities.

In general, studies of teachers' understanding of the subjects they teach have shown that, their conceptions affect the way they teach and assess (Thompson, 2012; Ertmer, 2015; Prosser et al 2015; Bekoe & Eshun, 2013; Quashigah et al., 2014). Bekoe and Eshun (2013) assert that "the background knowledge of Social Studies teachers is built from their training institutions and this goes to influence the way they teach (i.e., selection of content, unit or topic, formulation of objective(s), mode of teaching, and assessment tool used)." As a result of this, implementers of Social Studies curriculum need to be well versed with how the subject is taught and assessed.

Regarding the respondents' years of working as Social Studies teachers, 76 (57.1%) mentioned that they had taught the subject for less than four years, while 57 (42.9%) had taught Social Studies for four years and above. This presupposes that there were more modern-trained teachers supposed to be well versed in modern teaching and learning and assessment methods than those accustomed to traditional teaching

practices. Again, Teaching experiences including the number of years taught, tend to have effect on teaching and learning. There is also an adage that “Practice makes man perfect”. Long service is also very key towards effective curriculum delivery. Teachers who are experienced in terms of years taught usually possess deeper understanding of pedagogy, effective management skills in the classroom, engages and deliver instructions to meet diverse needs of learners (Moore, 2017). This study was blessed to have an appreciable number of both modern-trained and experienced instructors that was collectively good and appropriate for the study.

4.2 Perceptions of Social Studies Teachers of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum.

The perception of teachers plays a crucial role towards the successful implementation of any educational curriculum. In the context of the Nkoranza South Municipality, how the Social Studies teachers perceive the curriculum is essential for assessing its effectiveness and identifying potential areas for improvement. Teachers’ attitudes, experiences, and challenges are very important since they can significantly influence how the curriculum is delivered in the classrooms.

Table 3: Teacher's Perception of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum

Statement	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Teachers had adequate information and training that enhanced their understanding of the curriculum prior to its implementation.	52	39.1	44	33.1	-	-	15	11.3	22	16.5	133	100
The 2021 curriculum covers all the necessary topics, skills and needs of learners that equip learners for active citizenship.	8	6	5	3.8	-	-	52	39.1	68	51.1	133	100
The 2021 curriculum purposefully allows teachers to make their own inputs to suit their learners or local context where necessary.	25	18.7	36	27.1	-	-	36	27.1	36	27.1	133	100
It provides for use of appropriate teaching techniques that promote student's active classroom participation	5	3.8	56	42.1	-	-	-	-	72	54.1	133	100
Assessment methods help measure learner's understanding and mastery of Social Studies concepts.	5	3.8	8	6	-	-	60	45.1	60	45.1	133	100
It emphasizes the usage of TLRs including ICT that align with topics to be taught	13	9.8	4	3.0	7	5.3	48	36.1	61	45.8	133	100
The Social Studies curriculum effectively promote learner's acquisition of 21 st century skills, contemporary issues and active citizenship participation.	9	6.8	-	-	4	3.0	52	39.1	68	51.1	133	100

Source: Field Data (2023)

Table 2 illustrates the frequency distribution of teachers' perception of the 2021 Social Studies curriculum in JHSs at the Nkoranza South Municipality. The frequency

distribution provides a detailed breakdown of the number of teachers who hold specific views on different aspects of the curriculum. Table 2 helps in understanding the prevalence of certain perceptions among the Social Studies teachers. By examining the frequency of responses, we can gain insights into the general consensus or divergence in opinions regarding the curriculum.

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with statements supplied in the questionnaire by ticking/indicating the extent of agreement or disagreement. The questionnaire contains perception statements that require respondents to indicate their level of agreement on a Likert-scale ranging from (1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3 = Undecided (U), 4 = Agree (A), and 5 = Strongly Agree (SA). These are statements regarding how JHS Social Studies teachers at the Nkoranza South Municipality perceive the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum.

The findings in Table 2 summarize the teachers' perceptions of the 2021 Social Studies curriculum. It shows that majority of the Social Studies teachers (96 out of 133) representing 72.2% in the Nkoranza South Municipality teachers were against the assertion that teachers had adequate information and training that enhanced their understanding of the curriculum prior to its implementation with 37 representing 27.8% in favour of the above assertion. 52 teachers representing 39.1%, and 44 teachers representing 33.1% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. On the other hand, 15 (11.3%) strongly agreed, and 22 (16.5%) also agreed to the above assertion and were satisfied with the kind of information and training received.

Table 2 further shows that 68 (51.1%) respondents strongly agreed that the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum covers all the necessary topics, skills, and needs of learners to equip them for active citizenship. While 52 (39.1%) also agreed with this assertion, 8 (6%)

strongly disagreed and 5 (3.8%) disagreed. Moreover, 72 (54.1%) respondents strongly agreed that the 2021 Social Studies curriculum employs appropriate teaching techniques that promote students' active classroom participation. Conversely, 56 (42.1%) disagreed and 5 (3.8%) strongly disagreed. Regarding the perception that the 2021 Social Studies curriculum emphasizes assessment methods or methods that help measure learners' understanding and mastery of Social Studies concepts, 60 (45.1%) strongly agreed and 60 (45.1%) agreed. 5 (3.8%) strongly disagreed and 8 (6%) disagreed. It was also discovered that 68 (51.1%) respondents strongly agreed and 52 (39.1%) agreed with the view that the Social Studies curriculum effectively promotes learners' acquisition of 21st-century skills, contemporary issues, and active citizenship participation, while 6 (6.8%) strongly disagreed.

On the notion that the 2021 Social Studies curriculum purposefully allows teachers to make their own inputs to suit their learners or local context where necessary, 25 (18.7%) strongly disagreed, and 36 (27.1%) also disagreed. However, 36 (27.1%) and another 36 (27.1%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively, so majority of the teachers (72, 54.1%) were of the view that the new curriculum allows them to adapt or make their own inputs to suit their learners whilst 61 (45.9%) also believed that there was no room for adaptation.

Table 2 indicates that majority of the Social Studies teachers hold a positive view of the curriculum. Positive perceptions encompass views on the relevance, appropriateness, and practicality of the curriculum in achieving its intended educational outcomes. However, inadequate professional development training and resource provision were areas of concern reported by the teachers which need to be addressed. There was the need to gain deeper understanding of the responses provided by the

teachers in Table 2. This was followed up with interviews. The results of the basic school teachers' perception of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum indicated mixed views. Inadequacy of information and training, curriculum content, coverage, and structure, teaching and learning approaches, assessment methods, and adaptation of the curriculum were the themes derived from the participants.

4.2.1 Inadequacy of Information, Training and Familiarity

Teachers' perception of the curriculum often hinges on how well they have been prepared to implement it. The responses of the participants were captured as:

I faced a bit of difficulty getting familiar with the curriculum at the initial stages of implementation but got very much acquainted with it with time as the implementation progressed. I will relate this to the inadequate training prior to the implementation of the programme. The teachers had less than a week training, about three to four days towards the implementation of the curriculum so it made some of us struggle a bit earlier but now I am very ok. I wished they had more days of effective training with us. (SST, 3).

We are being given workshops to get ourselves more familiar with the curriculum even though it is not enough and not all that effective. The trainers' interest is more on the monies the teachers' pay for the training rather the knowledge to be imparted. This has made several teachers to become apathetic hence affecting their participation. Some teachers just pay their monies and return to their various schools without participating in the training. Some teachers have even stopped attending. This posture by the organizers and trainers has rendered the training sessions ineffective. (SST, 4).

The training they gave to us wasn't adequate. If there is going to be a change, then we need to have more insight about what is going to replace the old one that we're very much accustomed to. To train teachers for just three days towards the implementation of a curriculum nationwide, suggests that it was woefully inadequate. (SST, 2).

The participants further expressed that:

We were even expecting a more effective and continuous workshop during the implementation stage but unfortunately, it hasn't been forth coming as we expected. The workshops we've been attending are that of the continuous development programme and it is not directly related to the implementation of the Standards-Based Curriculum. We are getting ourselves more acquainted to the curriculum as the implementation progresses but we still have challenges. (SST, 1).

The training hasn't been enough. I think we had about 3 to 5 days training. To give us a week or even less than a week's training for a new standard-based curriculum is woefully inadequate. Training has not been adequate since its inception and it has been ineffective too. Some of the teachers do not have Social Studies background but are teaching the subject. Some of the teachers are still struggling with the curriculum delivery. The lesson notes appear to be a bit complex. We should be having more effective workshops and in-service training. (SST, 6).

The training they gave us was a collective one, the duration for it was short and inadequate for us. I will say that it was not adequate but now we intermittently go for training and very familiar with it now. The curriculum does address the needs of learners academically but there are challenges with teaching and learning materials. (SST, 5).

The training we received prior to the implementation of this curriculum wasn't all that effective. There are intermittent training programmes ongoing but the organization is not the best. For now, we are very ok with the curriculum unlike previously that we had some few challenges implementing it. We feel some of the topics seem to be above our pupils here but we manage to get them to move well with it. (SST, 7).

These excerpts revealed how basic school Social Studies teachers at the Nkoranza South Municipality had insufficient training at the initial stages of implementing the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. The responses from the participants confirmed the

quantitative data signalling the teachers inadequate training prior to the implementation of the new curriculum hence affected their understanding and delivery of the curriculum particularly, at the initial stages of implementation. Alsubaie (2016) posited that the involvement of teachers in curriculum development and also suggested some strategies to enhance teacher participation, such as providing training, feedback, support and recognition for teachers in order to promote effective curriculum implementation. Philpott (2014) argued that teachers need to have a deep understanding of the curriculum and its underlying principles, as well as the ability to adapt it to the needs and interests of their students. He also suggested that teachers should engage in continuous professional learning to update their knowledge and skills related to the curriculum.

Henderson and Hawthorne (2010) claims that teachers' familiarity with the curriculum is essential for ensuring its relevance, coherence, and effectiveness. They also highlighted the importance of providing teachers with adequate support, resources, and feedbacks to facilitate their participation in curriculum reforms and implementation.

OECD (2020), reports that teachers are central actors in curriculum implementation, as they are responsible for translating the curriculum into meaningful learning experiences for students. The report also recommended that teachers should be provided with clear guidance, quality materials, professional development opportunities, and constructive feedbacks to enhance their familiarity with the curriculum and their capacity to implement it.

4.2.2 Content, Coverage, and Structure

The structure, content, and coverage of the curriculum are central to how teachers view its effectiveness. If the curriculum is perceived as comprehensive and logically

structured, it can be seen as supportive to teaching goals. However, if it appears too broad, too narrow, poorly organised, teachers may struggle to align it with their instructional needs, impacting their overall satisfaction and perception of its practicality. With all combined, the basic school teachers further expressed their views on how the 2021 Curriculum addresses the learning needs of students, teaching and learning practices, ICT usage, and promotion of 21st century skills acquisition.

Participants stated that:

*The **content** of this 2021 Standard-based Social Studies Curriculum is better than the old objectives-based curriculum because of its continuity unlike the old one that the topics were treated at a go and that will be all. The curriculum ensures that a topic is taught continuously from Basic 7 through to Basic 9, until the learner completes school. Some of the strands include environment, governance, politics, and stability, social and economic development, our culture and national identity. These further break into sub-strands with relevant real-world exemplars. Its emphasis on ICT, 21st century skills, interactive teaching and learning. (SST 1)*

*I also believe that the new curriculum aligns with the learning needs of learners better than the objective based. Its **coverage** is quite broad but well-structured which spans across Basic 7 to 9 around five to six main strands. The 2021 curriculum is so much learner-centred and helps them gain deeper understanding of concepts unlike the old one which the teacher needed to rush through just to complete each topic on time making it leaned towards the teacher-centred approach which didn't benefit learners that much. It also made learners so much exams oriented and concepts memorized most often rather than gaining understanding. (SST, 2).*

Under the structure, one teacher said that:

Looking at the structure of the new curriculum, it is designed to focus on core competences, values, and essential skills. It is structured around broad thematic areas, that is the strands. The strands also break into more specific learning areas, that's the sub-strands. It also has practical examples of how learners

should demonstrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes. I can say it is better than the old one. If we are to be very serious with addressing its related challenges, it is really far better as compared to what we were using previously. (SST, 3).

In addition to the above statements, participants expressed that:

Yes! This curriculum better addresses and it aligns with the needs of students. It can equip them to become better Ghanaians in future when implemented with all seriousness. It is also very simple to use. (SST, 5).

Yes! This curriculum suits the current trend of teaching and learning and so it fits the situation of the day so it's better as compared to the old one." How we are to teach and assess the students is very good. (SST, 6).

With this curriculum, the topics have been spread out from Basic 7 to 9. It is in a form of a top up until the topic is completed at Basic 9 unlike the previous one that if you learn one topic at JHS 1 that you wouldn't meet it anywhere again so comparatively this new Curriculum is better. It has also dealt away with that strong examination-oriented mind-set. It really aligns with the academic needs of the pupils. (SST, 7).

Participants indicated a conviction that the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum was better as compared to the old objective-based curriculum. They believed it is learner-centred, which is a modern trend in formal education, and also aligned more with the academic needs of learners. Spady (2014), in preference of learner-centred approach, criticised the traditional objective-based curriculum for being fragmented, superficial, and not very meaningful to students' lives. He proposed alternative models in the form of the standard-based or the outcome-based education that focuses on what students can do with what they know or understand, rather than what they just know.

Darling-Hammond (2017), examined the characteristics of quality standard-based curricular and highlighted their benefits and alignments with students' needs. He

believes that such curricular promote learners' skill development, provide feedback for improvement, and motivate students to learn.

4.2.3 Teaching and Learning Approaches

The curriculum's emphasis on specific teaching and learning approaches significantly affects teachers' perception. A curriculum that supports active, student-centred, and incorporates diverse methods such as inquiry-based, or collaborative approaches, is often seen positive. Teachers generally favour curricula that align with contemporary educational practices and facilitate engagement for learners.

I've noticed that the curriculum encourages collaborative learning, which helps students develop not only content knowledge but also social skills. This approach aligns with effective teaching techniques that are learner-centred.” (SST, 4).

The curriculum really does well of incorporating diverse teaching methods. By focusing on inquiry-based learning, it allows us to guide students through active exploration rather than just passive learning. (SST, 5).

The new curriculum aligns with the educational or academic needs of learners such as ICT, the topics captured, the learner centred approach of teaching, and even how we are to assess them. It is just unfortunate that, in my school, in this remote area, the learners struggle academically and difficult pushing them up academically. (SST, 4).

I appreciate this new Social Studies curriculum for its emphasis on critical thinking, skills acquisition, which I believe are crucial for students' academic growth. (SST, 6).

Participants were of the view that:

This new curriculum encourages interactive and inquiry-based learning, which I find it to be very effective in engaging students and fostering a deeper understanding of concepts. (SST, 7).

I agree with the curriculum's focus on developing learners' ability to analyse and construct well-supported arguments, as these are essential skills for academic success." (SST, 8).

One of the best aspects of this curriculum is how I believe it supports differentiated learning and instructions. It gives us the room to cater for the various learning needs of our pupils, which is very needful in today's classrooms. (SST, 9).

The integration of ICT and real-world applications in the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum makes lessons more relevant and engaging for students. It really promotes best practices in teaching that are suited to our times. (SST, 10).

It is in light of this that Musuko, (2016), posit that participatory methods enable learners to be actively involved in the learning process either as individuals or in groups. Students are challenged to examine, investigate and explore an issue or problem. The teacher's overall approach is to engage the students in activities such as field trips, small group discussions, or project in which they are to investigate a problem themselves to find a solution. (Ayaaba & Oduma, 2013).

4.2.4 Assessment Methods

Teachers' perceptions of assessment methods within the curriculum involve the relevance, clarity, and effectiveness of the evaluation methods. The right assessment methods that align well with teaching goals and student learning outcomes are valued by teachers. The participants highlighted that:

The various ways to assess the pupils in this new curriculum are very helpful (SST, 8).

Yes! This curriculum has better assessment modalities (SST, 9).

This curriculum has also dealt away with that strong examination-oriented mind-set. It really aligns with the academic needs of the pupils. (SST, 10).

I absolutely agree that the new Social Studies curriculum encourages suitable assessment methods. The emphasis on formative assessments allows me to gauge my pupils' understanding regularly and adjust my teaching accordingly. (SST, 7)

Yeah, it really supports effective assessment methods. I love how it emphasizes assessments that reflect real-world scenarios, allowing learners to apply their learning in practical contexts, (SST, 6).

4.2.5 Adaptation of the Curriculum to Suit Learners

The ability of teachers to adapt the curriculum to fit their classrooms' environment is a crucial factor in their overall perception. Flexibility in the curriculum allows teachers to modify content and methods to better suit their learners' needs leading to more positive views. However, if the curriculum is perceived as rigid or difficult to adapt, teachers might feel constrained, which can affect their motivation and effectiveness in using it. The following were their responses from the participants to anchor their thought:

The curriculum gives us the opportunity to make personal inputs to suit our learners. Majority of the aspects demand that you go by what is in the syllabus as a teacher. However, it also creates the room for us to make some adjustments. (SST, 3).

Yes! To some minimal extent the curriculum permits us and we take advantage of that to the benefit of our learners. (SST, 2).

Yes! We are permitted to go beyond the syllabus and adapt to suit our learners within our own local context. We adapt the teaching techniques since most of them suit learners in the cities like Kumasi, Accra, and Koforidua where I was initially. (SST, 4)

With the content you have to deal with it as it's stipulated in the curriculum but there is also room to go beyond that and include certain things that may suit your learners within the local context. (SST, 1).

This curriculum has the fidelity aspect and where we can also adapt to suit our learners within our local context. We improvise in those moments to achieve the objectives of the curriculum. (SST, 5).

The teachers appreciated the room they had to adapt certain aspects of the curriculum reducing the high levels of fidelity or faithfulness in its implementation. This goes to confirm the quantitative data, as it can be deduced from the respondents that there were aspects of the curriculum that the Social Studies needed to remain faithful in its implementation and certain aspects, they had the laxity to adapt but the many of the teachers appeared to be much comfortable going by the dictates of the new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum implementation rather than being adaptive.

From all the quantitative and qualitative data, it can be deduced that the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum content is well-received by the Junior High School Social Studies teachers in the Nkoranza South Municipality. However, it could be inferred from the data that, there is significant need for more professional development.

Hargreaves and Shirley (2019) in their exploration of *The Inspiring Future for Educational Change* argue that when teachers adapt curriculum materials to local contexts, it enhances relevance and engagements, leading to better students' understanding and performance. Local adaptations make learning more reliable and meaningful to students.

Gay (2010) in his research on *Culturally Responsive Teaching* emphasizes that adapting curriculum to reflect students' cultural backgrounds and local experiences

fosters inclusivity and helps bridge cultural gaps in education. He argues that curriculum adaptation by teachers leads to improved students' performance, motivation and achievement. It is in the same vein that Pinar (2012) states that teachers who adapt curriculum materials to local contexts contribute to the development of culturally rich and responsive curriculum. This approach he believes supports students in understanding their own cultural heritage while promoting that of national perspective.

Banks (2010) and Au (2018) all seem to be in agreement that teachers' adaptation of curriculum benefit students from diverse backgrounds, helps develop deeper understanding and perspectives, empower and promote students' social justice in education. All these references highlight the need or essence of teachers adapting curriculum to suit local contexts so as to benefit their students, such as increased student engagements, improved learning outcomes, and the promotion of cultural inclusivity and diversity in education. From Table 2, it could be said that JHS Social Studies teachers at the Nkoranza South Municipality hold a very positive perception of the new curriculum. However, majority of the teachers reported poor or inadequate training and education before the implementation of the curriculum as well as insufficient instructional resources, hence the need for regular training and updates for them in the implementation process.

The quantitative analysis, as presented in Table 2, reveals significant insights into teachers' perceptions of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. To complement these quantitative findings, qualitative data from interviews were analysed to provide a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons behind these perceptions. From all the quantitative and qualitative data, it can be deduced that the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum content is well-received by the Junior High School Social Studies teachers

in the Nkoranza South Municipality. However, it could be inferred from the data that, there is significant need for more professional development.

4.3 Teaching Techniques Adopted by the Social Studies Teachers

Effective teaching techniques are crucial for the successful delivery of any curriculum, particularly in Social Studies which aim to develop learners' civic responsibility and competence, critical thinking, problem solving, and understanding societal issues. In the context of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum for Junior High Schools in the Nkoranza South Municipality, teachers' adoption of appropriate teaching techniques is very essential for facilitating effective delivery of the curriculum. Table 3 presents data on the specific teaching techniques adopted by the teachers. Table 3 presents the frequency distribution of the teaching techniques adopted by Social Studies in the Nkoranza South Municipality for the new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. Table 3 illustrates a detailed breakdown of the number of teachers who prefer specific teaching techniques. It helps to identify the most and least commonly preferred approaches or techniques in delivering the curriculum among teachers.

Table 4: Techniques for Teaching Concepts in Social Studies

Teaching Techniques	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Discussion	-	-	-	-	-	-	81	60.9	52	39.1	133	100
Lecture	28	21.1	55	41.3			25	18.8	25	18.8	133	100
Questioning and answering	-	-	-	-	-	-	77	57.9	56	42.1	133	100
Brainstorming	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	48.9	68	51.1	133	100
Dictation of notes	17	12.8	72	54.1	-	-	20	15	24	18.1	133	100
Presentations (Individual or Group)	-	-	-	-	4	3	44	33.1	85	63.9	133	100
Dramatization/Simulation/Role play	4	3	8	6	-	-	40	30.1	81	60.9	133	100
Online teaching (ICT)	81	60.9	48	36.1	-	-	4	3	-	-	133	100
Field trip	-	-	13	9.8	4	3	48	36.1	68	51.1	133	100
Projects (Individual or Group)	-	-	4	3	8	6	56	42.1	65	48.9	133	100
Guided debates	-	-	17	12.8	8	6	28	21.1	80	60.1	133	100
Team teaching	-	-	4	3	8	6	56	42.1	65	48.9	133	100

Source: Field Data (2023)

Concerning the views of the Social Studies teachers on teaching techniques that suits the implementation of the new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum, these items sought to analyse if they aligned with that of the curriculum, that is the learner-centred approach. The exploration of these teaching techniques employed by the Social Studies teachers at the Nkoranza South Municipality illuminated the instructional approaches utilized in their classrooms.

Table 3 shows that 81 (60.9%) agreed and 52 (39.1%) strongly agreed with the discussion techniques. Again, 77 (57.9%) agreed and 56 (42.1%) strongly agreed with questioning and answering. Sixty-Eight (51.1%) respondents strongly agreed with brainstorming and the remaining 65 (48.9 %) agreed. Regarding individual or group presentations, 85 (63.9%) strongly agreed, 44 (33.1%) agreed, and 4 (3%) was

undecided. The following results were obtained for Role play / dramatization / simulation: 81 (60.9%) strongly agreed, 40 (30.1%) agreed, 8 (6%) disagreed, and 4 (3%) strongly disagreed. All these imply the usage of teaching techniques that are student-centered by Social Studies instructors in the Nkoranza South Municipality.

Freire (2015) opines that student-centered approach prioritizes the active participation and empowerment of students in the learning process. He emphasizes discussions, critical thinking, simulation and role play. Lev (2018) also touches cooperative learning, problem-based, inquiry-based, and project-based forms of learning as key components of student-centered approach of instruction. The teacher in these instances provides guidance and support to assist learners maximize their potentials.

However, a total of 83 teachers representing 62.4% viewed the new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum of discouraging the usage of the lecture technique in lesson deliveries, that is 29 (21.8%), and 56 (42.1%) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively to the adoption of lecture method whilst 50 (37.6%) supported the usage of the lecture method in the implementation of the curriculum. Varied responses were obtained for the dictation of notes. While 72 (54.1%) disagreed and 17 (12.8%) strongly disagreed, 20 (15%) agreed and 24 (18.1%) strongly agreed. This suggests an instructional shift from techniques that are teacher-centered. Hattie (2019) defines teacher-centered instruction as an approach where the teacher has a dominant role in the classroom, controlling and directing the learning process. The teacher is primarily responsible for delivering content and facilitating student understanding through direct instruction. Such include lecture, where the teacher provides information and explanations in a very structured and systematic manner with students or learners to primarily listen and take notes. Dictation of notes is common practice under the teacher-centered approach of

instruction. The teacher delivers the curriculum in a step-by-step practice. It is a direct transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the students (Hirsh, 2013).

Table 3 presented the frequency distributions of various teaching techniques providing a quantitative summary of the appropriate and predominant teaching methods adopted by the teachers. Following the analysis of these quantitative measures, interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into the rationale behind the teachers' choices techniques, their experiences, and the contextual factors that influenced their instructional practices.

The results of the evaluation indicate that the teachers in the Nkoranza South Municipality generally agree on the appropriateness of various teaching techniques for Social Studies concepts. These have been grouped under two major themes: Learner Engagement and Participation (Learner-Centred Approach) and Structured and Content Delivery (Teacher-Centred Approach).

4.3.1 Learner Engagement and Participation (Learner-Centred Approach).

These techniques focus on actively involving learners in the learning process to make lessons more dynamic, and interactive. These teaching techniques encourage students to share ideas, collaborate, and research. They help to maintain student interests, foster deeper understanding, and promote inclusiveness. These have been put under one sub-theme: Experiential and Active Learning Techniques.

4.3.1.1 Experiential and Active learning.

These techniques enhance adaptability, flexibility, and application from learners. They emphasize learning by doing allowing students to engage actively and directly with content through practical activities such as role play, dramatization or simulation,

presentations, discussions, brainstorming, hands-on projects, and experiments for learners to apply concepts in practical world. They improve retention, help to deepen understanding, develop critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

Probing further with interviews to find out why the usage of these teaching techniques in Table 4 by Social Studies in delivering the curriculum, these were some of their responses:

There are several techniques the new curriculum requires from us. This includes brainstorming, discussions, group works, project works etc., that help the learners to grasp the various concepts. It is up to the teacher to select the most appropriate technique that suits the topic and learners. I don't remember the last time I lectured. Hahaha! I usually employ the discussion and brainstorming techniques. (SST, 2).

It basically emphasizes on all the techniques that promote learner-centred engagements. I use the role play, question and answer, and discussion most often. With the role play, my students are very eager to partake anytime I employ that one. In fact, they love it so I use that often as compared to the others because it helps my students more. For me, the lecture method is a thing of the past now (SST, 3).

The new curriculum is primarily learner-centred so the teaching techniques employed must ensure students' engagement. I usually use the discussion most often and the learners contribute very well. (SST, 4).

As a teacher you select your techniques depending upon the environment you find yourself and the pupils you have. Things around here may be different from that of the Cities so you consider these things and become so creative in your techniques and not just stick to what the curriculum suggests or prescribes. This time around, it's more of child-centred. (SST, 1).

Brainstorming and discussions are more and that is what we usually use. We also consider the individual differences among the learners and adapt the most

appropriate technique. Majority of them have low thinking capacities when it comes to the concepts learning in Social Studies. (SST, 6).

It is in this same regard that, Darling-Hammond and Bransford, (2015) opine that, having teachers maintain their professional development is very important both for increasing educational performance and effectiveness as well as for increasing teachers' commitment, identity, and job satisfaction. Teachers also need to be able to keep up with scientific, pedagogical, and technological developments in their world; to closely follow the needs of a society in constant change; to seek the best for their world; and to view serving society as a responsibility.

Day (2002) opines that requirements such as teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, communication skills, information organization, and leadership in line with twenty-first-century teacher skills classifications mean teachers must have a high level of education.

NaCCA (2020) states that the Core Competencies of the 21st-century Social Studies teacher describe a body of skills that the teachers at the basic level should seek to develop in their learners. The competencies describe a connected body of core skills that are acquired throughout the processes of teaching and learning. They are the relevant global skills for learning that allow learners to develop, in addition to the 4Rs, to become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, creators, innovators, good communicators, collaborators, culturally identified individuals, digitally literate and global citizens who have a keen interest in their personal development.

4.3.2. Structured and Content Delivery (Teacher-Centred Approach).

Structured and content delivery techniques such as lecturing, dictation, text-book teaching are traditional teacher-centred approaches that focus on the systematic

presentation of information. These methods prioritize the clear and organised delivery of content, allowing teachers to control the flow of information and ensure comprehensive coverage of the curriculum. Students primarily listen, take notes, and follow along with the teacher's guidance, potentially limiting student engagements and interaction.

When participants were asked for further clarifications on why the minimal usage of these methods, they stated as follows:

I found out that my students were more passive and less engaged when I used the lecturing and dictation. The new curriculum emphasises interactive learning, critical thinking so I have shifted to techniques like discussions, presentations, and project-based learning, which my students are more involved. (SST, 10).

The traditional methods seem outdated with the introduction of the new curriculum so we also needed to change our style to suit the new curriculum and our pupils as well. (SST, 9).

I realized that leaning so much on the lecture and dictation didn't cater for the diverse learning styles of my students. I needed to quickly adapt myself to the demands of this curriculum and so far, it's been fruitful. (SST, 8)

To the teachers who were still using the lecture, these were what some of them had to say:

Just to bring balance because I have realised that some of my pupils prefer the lecture and dictation. Some prefer direct instruction so I use it sometimes" (SST, 4).

As you can see, it is because of my large class so it helps me to cover a lot and reduce stress at times. Hahaha! I also go by the techniques of the new curriculum as well (SST, 3).

Despite the shift, I still feel certain topics need to be lectured and notes dictated, that's why (SST, 1).

Hattie (2019) defines teacher-centered instruction as an approach where the teacher has a dominant role in the classroom, controlling and directing the learning process. The teacher is primarily responsible for delivering content and facilitating student understanding through direct instruction. Such include lecture, where the teacher provides information and explanations in a very structured and systematic manner with students or learners to primarily listen and take notes. Dictation of notes is common practice under the teacher-centered approach of instruction. The teacher delivers the curriculum in a step-by-step practice. It is a direct transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the students (Hirsh, 2013).

Overall, participants endorsed learner-centred teaching techniques as more appropriate for teaching the 2021 Social Studies curriculum in the Nkoranza South Municipality. While there may be some variation in opinions regarding specific techniques, most of the teachers welcome learner-centred techniques as more appropriate for facilitating student learning and understanding in delivering the 2021 Social Studies curriculum.

To validate and further explore these findings, classroom observations were conducted, as detailed in table 4. The observations were conducted to directly assess the application of the teaching techniques reported in the questionnaires and interviews. By comparing the observed practices with the data in Table 3, and the insights from the interviews, the observation findings in Table 5 below serve to augment the previously collected data.

Table 5 illustrates frequency distributions of teaching techniques observed during classroom lessons. The frequency distribution provides a detailed breakdown of the

number observations for each teaching technique. It helps to understand the prevalence and consistency of various teaching methods as observed in practice. By examining the frequency of observations, the researcher could identify the most commonly used teaching techniques and their effectiveness. This augments the questionnaire and interview.

Table 5: Lesson Observation: Teaching Techniques

Statement	Poor		Average		Good		Very Good		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Teacher's usage of appropriate warm-up techniques or activities that stimulate and engage learners at the beginning of the lesson	-	-	14	23.3	33	55	13	21.7	60	100
Promotion of student's active participation in discussions and activities (21 st century skills)	-	-	13	21.6	27	45	20	33.3	60	100
Teacher usage of questioning techniques to promote critical thinking and class engagements.	-	-	13	21.7	27	45	20	33.3	60	100
Promotion of group activities fostering collaboration and communication among students	-	-	27	45	13	21.7	20	33.3	60	100
Using appropriate teaching techniques to accomplish the lesson (Variation of techniques where necessary)	-	-	14	23.3	46	76.7	-	-	60	100
Teacher flexibility and adaptation of instruction to meet diverse needs of learners	-	-	20	33.3	27	45	13	21.7	60	100
Strategies to catering for both struggling and advanced learners (e.g., pacing).	7	11.7	13	21.7	40	66.7	-	-	60	100
Motivating or encouraging students to ask questions and explore topics being taught	-	-	7	11.7	33	55	20	33.3	60	100
Opportunities for learners to conduct research and present their findings	27	45	20	33.3	13	21.7	-	-	60	100
Problem solving assignments	40	66.7	20	33.3	-	-	-	-	60	100

Source: Field Data (2023)

In addition to the above, Table 4 also presents the results obtained from observing and evaluating the teaching techniques employed by Social Studies teachers and their

suitability to learner-centered approach in delivering the curriculum. It was found that, among 33 (55%) of the participants, the usage of appropriate warm-up techniques or activities that stimulate and engage learners at the beginning of the lesson was good, 14 (23.3%) were average and 13 (21.7%) very good. Regarding the use of appropriate teaching techniques to accomplish the lesson, 46 (76.7%) were found to be good, whereas 14 (23.3%) were average. Regarding strategies to cater to both struggling and advanced learners, Table 4 shows that 40 (66.7%) were good, 13 (21.7%) were average, and 7 (11.7%) were poor at implementing such strategies. Moreover, 33 (55%) were good at motivating or encouraging students to ask questions and explore the topics being taught, 20 (33.3%) were very good at it, and 7 (11.7%) were average.

These observational results mean that Social Studies teachers employed appropriate techniques that were friendly to their students emphasizing the adoption of learner-centred techniques for implementing the curriculum. This emphasizes a pedagogical focus on learner's active participation and collaboration. Ayaaba & Oduma (2013) write that technique of teaching refers to any activity teachers ask their students to perform during a lesson delivery and such activities include dramatization, discussion, role play, debate, simulation and brainstorming. It is a well-defined procedure used to accomplish a specific activity or task as it promotes learners' active involvement in lessons.

Ayaaba & Oduma, (2013) opine that learner-centred method is a discovery, inquiry and problem-solving method. Students are challenged to examine, investigate and explore an issue or problem. The teacher's overall approach is to engage the students in activities such as field trips, small group discussions, or project in which they are to investigate a problem themselves to find a solution. In the same vein Musuko, (2016)

opines that participatory methods are methods which enable learners to be active involve in the learning process either as individual or group.

Elif and Ceyda (2019) reports of teachers' positive attitudes towards student-centred approaches towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies concepts and suggest that more training and support should be provided for teachers to use student-centred methods more effectively.

Ilhan (2017) corroborated that most of the practices reported by teachers reflected student-centred techniques for teaching. Such techniques he believes enhance students' better understanding of concepts since they are highly engaged in most aspects of lesson deliveries.

With all the discussions on teaching techniques, the alignment between quantitative data and qualitative feedback demonstrate that these teaching practices are not only theoretically sound but also practical. The positive teaching practices observed and reported suggest a strong alignment with goals of the 2021 Social Studies curriculum. This indicates that teachers are generally implementing teaching techniques that promote critical thinking, problem solving, and active classroom engagements, which are key components of the 2021 Stands-Based Curriculum.

Most of the teachers favour learner-centred teaching practices, which emphasize learner engagement, interactive learning, and personalized instruction. This suggests a shift towards teaching techniques that cater for diverse learning styles and encourage student participation, fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

Although most teachers support learner-centred approaches, the few who are against such practices highlight a potential gap in understanding or skill. This suggests a need

for both targeted and general regular professional development or training to address hesitations and also equip all teachers with the requisite knowledge and skills to implement learner-centred strategies and techniques effectively. The few teachers who were still employing instructional techniques or practices that were unfriendly to learner-centred methods face large class sizes, lack of resources, or insufficient training. Identifying and addressing these challenges among others could further enhance the implementation of effective teaching practices across the board.

To bridge the gap between current teaching practices and ideal learner-centred approach that includes technology, there is also the need for investment in technological resources. This includes not only acquiring hardware such as computers and projectors but also, ensuring access to reliable internet and relevant educational software. Professional development focused on effectively integrating ICT into teaching is very crucial. Even with adequate resources, without the proper training, teachers may not fully utilize these tools to enhance learning.

All three instruments (questionnaire, observation, and interview) for the study revealed or confirmed with one another that most of the Social Studies teachers at the Nkoranza South Municipality stuck to the learner-centred approach of lesson deliveries in their respective classrooms, thus, instructors preferred and adopted appropriate teaching techniques that benefitted their learners to deliver the curriculum to their students. In several instances, the teachers adapted some of these learner-centred techniques that best suit their learners. These teachers expressed their contentment of such techniques promoting active student participation, critical thinking skills, and knowledge application. Few teachers adopted the traditional technique basically the lecture-style instruction and notes based, attributing their adaptation of these styles to the

inactiveness and poor responsiveness (thinking and interactive skills) of their students to the student-centred techniques and with that, they admitted limited engagements with students. The findings underscored the relevance of balancing teaching techniques and adopting pedagogical approaches that foster students' understanding, collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills.

The above findings corroborate what Eshun (2013, p. 17) asserts that, "teaching Social studies is stressed to be done in student-centred techniques and strategies". Eshun, further stress that brainstorming, role playing, simulation, discussion and debate were the major techniques stressed by the Junior High School Social Studies syllabus in Ghana. This makes it prudent for the Social Studies teacher to be familiar with the major objectives in the subject area in order to formulate objectives in all the domains of learning.

Brophy and Alleman (p. 3), as cited in Eshun and Mensah (2015, p. 178), give us good insights because they argue that the goal of Social Studies education is "providing students with the knowledge, skills and values that they will need to understand modern life and participate effectively as pro-social group and responsible citizens". Thus, the tenet of learning is the development of skills and values necessary for citizenship. In achieving this, research conducted by Bekoe et al (2016), suggested that children should take integral part in teaching and learning activities and without their involvement in classroom activities implies learning has not taken place. Teachers must not only be abreast with teaching skills in the affective, but must also be knowledgeable in how to assess attitudinal learning.

4.4 Availability and Readiness of Teaching and Learning Resources

The availability and readiness of teaching and learning resources are crucial factors that significantly influence the effective delivery of any curriculum. In the context of JHS Social Studies education within the Nkoranza South Municipality, understanding the state of these resources is very important for identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement. To address this, a combination of data collection methods was utilized, including questionnaire, interview, and observation. These methods aimed to capture not only the physical presence of these resources such as textbooks, teaching aids, and technological tools but also their accessibility, condition, and suitability for enhancing the teaching and learning processes giving a comprehensive overview of the current resource landscape in the Nkoranza South Municipality, highlighting both strengths and areas in need of intervention.



Table 6: Availability of Teaching and Learning Resources

Statement	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
There are enough TLRs in the form of print, non-print or community resources available and ready for implementing the Social Studies curriculum.	60	45.1	60	45.1	-	-	13	9.8	-	-	133	100
The curriculum requires teachers to develop their own curriculum resources/improvisation.	-	-	4	3	-	-	81	60.9	48	36.1	133	100
There are specific textbooks or reference materials provided for Social Studies teaching	78	58.6	48	36.1	-	-	7	5.3	-	-	133	100
There are professionally organized workshops for effective resource utilization	72	54.1	48	36.1	4	3	5	3.8	4	3	133	100
There online platforms or digital resources to support Social Studies instruction.	52	39.1	68	51.1	-	-	5	3.8	8	6	133	100
There are available TLRs regularly updated or revised to align with best practices and standards in Social Studies education.	61	45.9	61	45.9	11	8.2	-	-	-	-	133	100
Teachers collaborate or share resources with other teachers to enhance teaching and learning of the subject.	5	3.8	8	6	-	-	36	27.1	84	63.2	133	100

Source: Field Data (2023)

The results in Table 5 indicate that most of the respondents, 60 (45.1%) strongly disagreed and another 60 (45.1%) disagreed with the claim that there are enough teaching and learning resources in the form of print, non-print, or community resources

for implementing the Social Studies curriculum, with only 13 (9.8%) agreeing to the aforementioned claim. Moreover, 78 (58.6%) strongly disagreed, 48 (36.1%) disagreed, and 7 (5.3%) agreed that there are specific textbooks or reference materials provided for teaching Social Studies. This suggests an issue with resource support and indicates deficiencies in the materials or resources that are provided for Social Studies instruction.

Again, from Table 5, 81 (60.9%) agreed and 48 (36.1%) strongly agreed with the assertion that the curriculum requires teachers to develop their curriculum resources, while 4 (3%) disagreed. It was also discovered that whereas 84 (63.2%) strongly agreed and 36 (27.1%) agreed that teachers collaborate or share resources with other teachers to enhance teaching and learning of the subject, 8 (6%) disagreed and 5 (3.8%) strongly disagreed. It could therefore be deduced from the above that the curriculum permits or gives freedom and flexibility to teachers at the local levels to develop their own resources for teaching and learning that align with the curriculum objectives and cater for the unique needs of learners instead of solely relying on pre-designed textbooks. The data also reliably informed us of the collaboration and sharing of teaching and learning resources among teachers in the Nkornaza South Municipality amidst the scarcity of these instructional resources particularly textbooks and multimedia presentations, to enhance teaching and learning. This approach among teachers also emphasized the spirit of improvisation which empowers them to tailor their instructions and make it more engaging and effective for learners. Concerning whether professional workshops are organized for effective resource utilization, 72 (54.1%) strongly disagreed and 48 (36.1%) disagreed. Whereas 5 (3.8%) agreed, 4 (3%) strongly agreed, and 4 (3%) were undecided.

Investigating further on the availability of teaching and learning resources for the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum at Nkoranza South Municipality highlighted very crucial aspect of the curriculum implementation. Four themes were derived from the responses of the participants: Inadequacy of Teaching and Learning Resources, Inadequate Professional Development Programmes, and Managing Instructional Resource Scarcity

4.4.1 Inadequacy of Teaching and Learning Resources

The inadequacy of teaching and learning resources refers to the insufficient availability of essential materials, tools, and technologies needed to effectively deliver the curriculum. Such inadequacies could hinder teachers' ability to provide quality education and limit students' engagement and learning outcomes. The participants expressed that:

We are using the teachers' guide and the resource packs but honestly speaking, the TLRs are just not there and it is really affecting the implementation of the curriculum adversely. We only improvise with our phones and laptops and we call them in groups to observe and this consumes time. (SST, 7).

They are just not there especially the textbooks. Right now, all my 40 students rely on my textbook in class. This is very frustrating to me. Sometimes, in case of any relevant information, I have to pass the book around for them to have access to it. I have not even received my teacher's laptop. I sometimes use my phone as well. (SST, 3).

There are no textbooks. Parents are even not willing to buy for their wards and some even don't see the essence of these books. Parents need to come in and help. There is even no electricity in my school and no ICT equipment. I have managed to buy one of the CCSSC textbook for my personal use and sometimes use it to help the learners. (SST, 2).

Other respondents also stated that:

I am quite fortunate that in my school, by the help of our church and some benevolent people outside the country who have been helping, we have access to projector and computers during instruction that enhances the learners' understanding of concepts but they are still not enough. We only manage with them. I have seen that the students appreciate the usage of ICT during instructional hours and they actively participate. (SST, 4).

One other major challenge is the absence of textbooks. The government hasn't provided and parents are not buying for their wards. We lack maps and globes. I cannot as a teacher provide. You know our salary. Hahahaha!

"The central government and Education ministry have not done well. To date, we have not gotten the requisite textbooks and it is an important matter bothering teaching and learning. Some teachers need to go to bookshops and buy the handbooks to support teaching and learning and at times the Parents Association help. (SST, 1).

The implementation of this new curriculum is better but activating it well with the requisite resources is the problem. We are not getting the teaching and learning resources in our area here. The capitation is not enough and does not even come on time.

These findings of my study confirm the studies of Lyons (2012) who points out that the availability of TLR therefore enhances the effectiveness of schools as they are the basic resources that bring about good academic performance in the students. The necessary resources that should be available for teaching and learning include material resources, human resource such as teachers and support staff and, physical facilities such as laboratories, libraries and classrooms.

Availability of curriculum materials according to Ughamadu (2017) are indispensable in the teaching learning process or curriculum implementation. The teacher is expected

to have knowledge of a wide range of curriculum materials available for curriculum implementation. Added to this is the need for teacher to have knowledge of the roles of these materials in the teaching/learning process, qualities of useful curriculum materials and other issues related to curriculum materials.

Textbooks together with other instructional materials provide structure and order in the teaching and learning process (Johansson, 2006; Triyoga, 2010) and in the classroom, they are considered as useful and effective tools or instruments whose purpose is to facilitate the work of the teacher on a daily basis (Johansson, 2006; Padururu, n.d.). Padururu (n.d.) observes that textbooks usage complimenting other relevant teaching and learning resources give students stability and confidence. Textbooks also provide security and confidence to inexperienced teachers (Triyoga, 2010).

On the organization of professional workshops for effective resource utilization ($M=1.59$, $SD=1.25$). These low mean scores and high standard deviation underscore the general disagreement among teachers concerning workshops needed to equip them with requisite knowledge and skills for the effective implementation of the curriculum.

4.4.2 Inadequate Professional Development Programmes

Inadequate professional development highlights the lack of ongoing training and support for teachers to enhance their skills, stay updated with new teaching strategies and techniques to effectively implement new curricula. Without sufficient professional development, teachers may struggle to adapt to educational changes, which can affect their confidence and effectiveness in delivering the curriculum. To buttress this claim, the respondents expressed that:

Since the implementation began, the training they have been giving to us isn't adequate and not even centred on resource utilization. It is a holistic something

and not to be well planned. We have to change and have to be more serious with professional training and development.” (SST, 2).

We have been expecting a more effective and continuous workshop since the implementation but unfortunately, it hasn't been so. The workshops we've been is not directly related to effective resource utilization for the curriculum implementation since they themselves are aware that these resources are not available. We are always improvising to our very best to at least support our teaching and learning. (SST, 4).

There is nothing like professional workshops seriously done for teachers let alone to talk about resource utilization. I will say that it is not adequate but now we are only adjusting. (SST, 5).

There are no serious workshop programmes but the organization is not the best. For now, we are very ok with the curriculum implementation but still needs regular training. Very important. (SST, 7).

Darling-Hammond (2017) emphasizes the relevance of professional development and argues that it's focus on creating a sense of awareness, purpose, and providing professionals with opportunities to improve, innovate, and make autonomous decisions helps students to better understand concepts and achieve successes.

Larson and Miller (2017) on their exploration of factors that contribute to exceptional achievement emphasizes the significance of deliberate practice and continuous learning. They highlight the essence for teachers to invest in deliberate practice and constant learning to improve their skills in teaching and learning to enhance the growth and improvement of their learners as well.

Stephen (2019) also encourages teachers to invest in their personal and professional developments to become more effective in their role as instructors or curriculum implementers.

However, teachers agree that the curriculum requires them to develop their own curriculum resources/improvisation (M=4.33, SD=0.55). They also agree that they collaborate or share resources with other teachers to enhance teaching and learning of the subject (M=3.26, SD=1.43). The overall mean of means (2.55) suggests that teachers, on average, disagree with the availability of TLRs for Social Studies teaching. The mean standard deviation of 1.08 indicates a moderate level of variability in teachers' responses across the different statements.

4.4.3 Managing Instructional Resources Scarcity

Managing instructional resource scarcity involves strategies and approaches educators and administrators use to cope with limited teaching materials and resources. This may include improvisation, sharing materials among colleagues and seeking external support. This is crucial to ensuring that educational standards are maintained. On probing to find out why these teachers share instructional resources these were some of the responses:

The absence of these instructional resources makes teaching and learning very abstract to the learners limiting their understanding of concepts hence the need to at times secure these instructional resources from other colleagues. (SST, 7).

The sharing of these resources among ourselves minimizes the lecturing technique of lesson deliveries and makes teaching and learning more interactive. (SST, 2).

It improves access to knowledge and information for both teachers and students which enhances the development of strong foundation in the subject. (SST, 1).

The inadequacy of instructional resources usually comes with inequalities and which particularly affects those of us in the rural areas so as teachers, we sometimes have to consult our colleagues in town which helps in our lesson deliveries. (SST, 6).

Kariuki (2014), proposed some solutions to instructional resources inadequacy, such as increasing funding to schools, promoting parents, community, and other stakeholders' participation to support government in providing and facilitating accessibility and usage of instructional resources in schools, the need to improving school facilities, and enhancing teacher training on instructional resources usage.

Nyasimi (2015), recommended that basic school teachers should be provided with adequate and appropriate teaching and learning resources by the government and all relevant stakeholders to cater for the diverse needs of learners.

The analysis of the means and standard deviations table suggests that teaching and learning resources are largely unavailable, inadequate, and in some cases, they are not ready to be used in schools that have them. Table 8 additionally highlights the lack of sufficient professional workshops to train teachers on the effective use of available resources. Table 8 indicates that instructional resources are not regularly updated, compelling teachers to share limited resources, which could hinder the quality of instruction and learning outcome. Many teachers also embark on improvisations to at least cater for the inadequacies.

Table 7: Lesson Observation: Use of instructional resources.

Statement	Poor		Average		Good		Very Good		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Teacher utilizes a variety of media (videos, interactive tools, online resources) to enhance learning.	46	76.7	14	23.3	-	-	-	-	60	100
Resource relevance and integration or alignment with curriculum	47	78.3	7	11.7	6	10	-	-	60	100

Table 6 indicates that 46 (76.7%) of the participants were found to be poor at utilizing a variety of media to enhance learning while 14 (23.3) were average at doing that. An evaluation of resource relevance and alignment with curriculum revealed the following were the results: poor 47 (78.3%), average 7 (11.7%), and good 6 (10%). This consistently supports the earlier findings, with patterns leaning towards usage of outdated practices, shared resources, and improvisations.

During these observations, efforts to create a more engaging and interactive learning experiences were impeded by the lack of diverse instructional resources that could cater for different learning styles. These resources limitations had a profound impact on the quality of instruction. Instruction became monotonous, teachers relied more on passive learning methods, affecting critical thinking, problem-solving, and knowledge application.

Table 6 corroborates the findings in Table 5 that teaching and learning resources are inadequate. Observations revealed instances where teachers struggled to effectively

engage students due to lack of necessary tools, confirming that scarcity of resources directly affect classroom practices.

Interviews with the Social Studies teachers provided qualitative validation of the quantitative data, as many alluded to the persistent inadequacies of teaching and learning resources, the need for updated resources, and the lack of professional development opportunities. Teachers expressed concerns about the impact of these deficiencies on their ability to deliver effective lessons. Table 6 confirms the issues in Table 5 by showing low counts of available teaching and learning resources across classrooms. This indicates that the majority of the teachers frequently encounter situations where teaching aids are missing or insufficient, reinforcing the quantitative data from the means and standard deviations analysis.

Findings from the questionnaire, observations, and interviews, all demonstrated that teaching and learning resources were very inadequate affecting an effective curriculum implementation. These included lack of access to textbooks, supplementary materials, poor telecommunication networks, technological resources, and manipulatives that hinder effective instruction and engagements. Ensuring the availability and readiness of appropriate teaching and learning resources is crucial to support teachers in delivering the curriculum effectively and enabling students to access diverse range of materials aligned with the curriculum expectations. Collaborative efforts among educational authorities, policy makers, parents and community are necessary gaps and promote equitable access to teaching and learning resources.

4.5 Assessments Methods Used by Social Studies Teachers

How learners are assessed play a key role in the educational process, serving not only to evaluate student learning but also to determine instructional strategies and modifications. Understanding these practices requires a comprehensive analysis of various assessment methods employed by instructors., which can vary significantly across different educational settings. Table 8 presents findings related to the means and standard deviations of assessment methods to gain insight into the overall effectiveness and reliability of the study's sample population.

Table 8 below presents a frequency distribution of teachers' assessment methods, providing a detailed overview of how various techniques are utilized across the sample population, enhancing the understanding of the landscape of teaching assessment by the teachers.

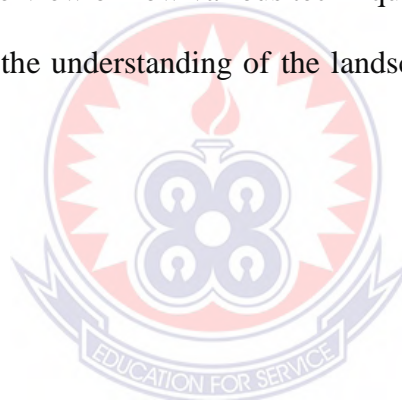


Table 8: Assessment Methods in the Social Studies Classroom.

Statement	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Written Assignments	-	-	9	6.8	-	-	52	39.1	72	54.1	133	100
Online assessments	68	51.1	52	39.1	-	-	13	9.8	-	-	133	100
Written tests/Quizzes and Exams	-	-	-	-	-	-	61	45.9	72	54.1	133	100
Projects (Individual and Group)	73	54.9	52	39.1	-	-	4	3	4	3	133	100
Debates	61	45.9	28	21.1	-	-	20	15	24	18	133	100
Presentations	25	18.8	23	17.3	4	3	61	45.9	20	15	133	100
Discussions	25	18.8	23	17.3			24	18	61	45.9	133	100
My assessment objectives align with the learning goals in the curriculum	36	27	13	9.8			44	33.1	40	30.1	133	100
I incorporate different assessment methods such as performance based or authentic assessments in the curriculum	48	36.1	21	15.8	8	6	24	18	32	24.1	133	100
I provide feedback to students after assessing them to help them understand their strengths and areas of growth.	8	6	16	12	-	-	44	33.1	65	48.9	33	100
I differentiate assessments to accommodate the diverse needs of your learners	20	15	28	21.1	-	-	45	33.8	40	30.1	33	100
I incorporate the use of technology in assessments to enhance learner's learning and engagement	76	57.1	28	21.1	4	3	16	12	9	6.8	133	100
I often administer formative assessments to track learner's performances	-	-	-	-	32	24.1	53	39.8	48	36.1	133	100

Source: Field Data (2023)

Table 7 reveals that while 72 (54.1%) strongly agreed and 52 (39.1%) agreed that written assignments (home works) are common assessment methods in the Social Studies classroom, 9 (6.8%) disagreed. It was also identified that while 68 (51.1%) strongly disagreed and 52 (39.1%) disagreed with the view that online platforms are means of assessment methods in the Social Studies classroom, 13 (9.8%) agreed.

Obviously, it can be seen from Table 7 that, teachers predominantly assigned written tasks over online assessments. It also shows that 76 (57.1%) strongly disagreed and 28 (21.1%) disagreed to confirm that in the Social Studies classroom, teachers scarcely incorporate technology in assessments to enhance learners' learning and engagement, while 16 (12%) and 9 (6.8 %) agreed and strongly agreed accordingly. This could suggest a preference for traditional assessments methods and limitations to digital platforms adaptations. This could mainly be attributed to limited access to technology or internet by both teachers and students and lack of ICT tools. This could make teachers rely more on traditional methods. Some teachers might also be more comfortable to design and grade written assignments as compared to online assessments.

It also appears from Table 7 that limitation of resources basically technology might have hindered the utilization of project-based assessments as well as debates since it might require research and information access and real-world scenarios. This is because, regarding individual and group project, 72 (54.1%) strongly disagreed, 52 (39.1) disagreed, and 4 (3%) agreed and strongly agreed, respectively. Similarly, with debates 61 (45.9%) strongly disagreed, 28 (21.1%) disagreed with 20 (15%) who strongly agreed and 24 (18%) agreed.

Table 7 according to the Social Studies teachers in the Nkoranza South Municipality, Discussion technique is one of the most appropriate and common techniques used in delivering the curriculum. 61 (45.9%) strongly agreed and 24 (18%) agreed, with 25 (18.8%) who strongly disagreed and 23 (17.3%) who also disagreed. On presentation, 25 (18.8%) strongly disagreed while 23 (17.3%) disagreed. 20 (15%) strongly agreed with 61 (45.9%) agreeing. With 4 (3%) remained undecided. This could mean that teachers prioritized students' ability to effectively communicate ideas, clarity of expression and also, presentations seem to be a more manageable, simpler and structured assessment method especially for relatively large class size.

With teachers' differentiating assessment to accommodate the diverse needs of learners, 20 (15%) strongly disagreed, 28 (21.1%) disagreed, 45 (33.8%) agreed, and 40 (30.1%) who strongly agreed. The results especially on the disagreements could be attributed to resource constraints and time needed for evaluating differentiated assessments, varied teachers' philosophies, inadequate training and awareness about effective strategies for differentiated assessments which all could lead to skepticisms.

With regards to regular administration of formative assessments to track learners' performances, 53 teachers (39.8%) agreed, 48 of them (36.1%) strongly agreed, with 32 teachers (24.1%) remaining undecided. Data also revealed that 44 (33.1%) and 65 (48.9%) of the teachers gave their students feedbacks after assessments with 8 (6%) and 16 (12%) who strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. Teachers prioritizing both formative and summative assessments, along with regular provision of feedbacks align with student-centered approach by adopting and adapting strategies which aim to support continuous improvement of learners.

Table 7 presented frequency of certain assessment methods employed by teachers such as formative, summative, peer, and self. It corroborates with Tables 5 and 6, as well as interviews conducted suggesting a strong preference and consistent use of these assessment methods among teachers which are seen as the most appropriate for the implementation of the new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. The data suggest areas where professional development could be beneficial.

These results necessitated qualitative study. Three themes were derived from participants through interviews: Kinds of Assessment given to learners, Regular Assessments, and Assessment Feedbacks.

4.5.1 Kinds of Assessment Given

Assessment is a critical component of the teaching and learning process, providing insights into students' understanding, progress, and mastery of the subject matter. There are various kinds of assessment serving various purposes. These include formative assessments to monitor students learning and provide feedback, summative assessments to evaluate student learning at the end of instruction, diagnostic assessments to identify students' strengths and weaknesses among others. These are essential for teachers to effectively measure and support students' learning.

I primarily use a mix of formative and summative assessments in my classes. I use quizzes and class discussions for my formative which help to gauge whether students understand the key concepts taught. I also give tests and projects for my summative. (SST, 1)

I use formative assessments at early stages of the term and summative at the end of the term. (SST, 3).

As teachers, we assess them but sometimes, they find it difficult doing home works but we still discuss in class. SST 4.

We usually give them home works and classroom exercises. SST 2.

We assess them both in class and take-home assignments. SST 9.

4.5.2 Regular Assessments

Regular assessment refers to the systematic, frequent evaluation of students' learning throughout the instructional period. They provide timely support for teachers. Regular assessment assessments can include quizzes, classwork, homework among others. On asking whether the teachers assessed their learners, and how often, the following were their responses:

We do assess them most often, just that the assessments with regards to this curriculum is quite complex unlike the old one which appeared to be very straight forward. After every lesson, you have to assess them. We do both the summative and formative. Sometimes we assess them orally. It is not all the time that we do written assessments. (SST, 7).

As teachers, we assess them regularly but sometimes, they find it difficult doing home works. Some of them would prefer staying at home rather than doing their home works. Assessment is relatively difficult here, looking at the environment. They just copy among themselves. (SST, 9).

My students are able to embark on research and present. We assess them very often formatively and also have summative assessments for them. (SST, 10).

Yes, we assess them but regarding my learners, apart from the notes I give them, they cannot embark on any research. They don't even have textbooks to refer to let alone having access to the internet. They would rather stay at home than to be in school when you give them home works that demands further reading or research except those who have relatives who are quite inclined that assist them. (SST, 6).

We usually assess them. All these happen during classroom activities and our interaction with them to see if they are in line with what we teach them. We go

by formative and summative assessments. We give them class exercises, mid-term class tests and end of term or year examinations. (SST, 4).

We assess them both in class and take-home assignments. It's just that online assessment seems impossible for now since the school as well in their various homes, they do not have access to computers, quality networks and even smartphones with the exception of very few. Even with the very few, their parents do not allow them to have access to their forms. (SST, 2).

These confirm that majority of the teachers were giving assessments frequently or regularly to enhance students' performances.

4.5.3 Assessment Feedbacks

Assessment feedback is a vital component of the assessment process, providing students with information about their performance and guidance on how to improve. Effective feedback is specific, timely, and constructive, helping students understand their strengths and weaknesses. For teachers, providing meaningful feedback is an opportunity to reinforce learning objectives and support students' growth. Concerning feedbacks, the teachers added that

We give them feedbacks from the assessments we give them and I've seen that they are gradually improving but at a very slow pace. (SST, 7).

Exactly, we have been giving feedbacks and how they coping with the outcomes of their performances. Some are improving from that exercise. (SST, 4).

We most often discuss whatever we do including their performances. We give them feedbacks on all these and we are pushing them. It is really helping (SST, 10).

Yes! For feedbacks we do give them a lot and they are always attentive when it's time for us to go through what they have done. They work with them and they are improving. (SST, 1).

Yes! We give them the feedback after assessing them. If performances are poor, we ask them why? Is it the teaching that didn't go well or the line of questioning or language barrier or they couldn't reason enough? We usually do this with the L1. This helps them to improve. (SST, 8).

Feedbacks are given and the few serious students are acknowledging and working on their weaknesses. (SST, 9).

Both the quantitative and qualitative data for this research revealed that most of the teachers employed effective and variety of assessments for the betterment of learners. Teachers' assessment methods were also in harmony with the curriculum requirements. Findings implied that teachers employed formative assessment methods including ongoing feedbacks, self-assessments, and peer assessments, with all contributing to students' academic improvements. Summative assessments such as end-of-unit tests, mid-semester exams, and end of semester exams were all utilized effectively. This means that teachers adopted a balanced approach to assessments, enhancing students' continuous improvement in the classrooms.

However, the qualitative findings revealed that some of the learners struggled to present home works or assignments and projects due to factors such as lack of access to stable networks, ICT gadgets, and textbooks for references.

Wiggins (2015) argues that the aim or purpose of assessment is primarily to educate and improve student performance, not to audit it. NaCCA (2020) explains Assessment to be a process of collecting and evaluating information about learners and using the information to make decisions to improve their learning. Assessment may be formative, summative, diagnostic, or evaluative depending on its purpose. It is integral to the teaching-learning process, promotes student learning and improves instruction.

Eshun (2013), opines that assessment is central to teaching and learning because assessment information is needed to make informed decisions regarding students' learning abilities, their placement in appropriate levels and their achievements. Panadero and Brookhart (2018) corroborate these by stating that teachers use of formative assessments can enhance students' academic improvements and foster students self-regulated learning skills, such as goal setting, monitoring, reflection, and strategy use.



Table 9: Lesson Observation: Assessment Methods of Teachers

Statement	Poor		Average		Good		Very Good		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Resource Utilization										
Varied Assessment Types/Techniques										
Written	-	-	-	-	47	78.3	13	21.7	60	100
Project-Based	20	33.3	13	21.7	20	33.3	7	11.7	60	100
Presentations	13	21.7	7	11.7	40	66.7	-	-	60	100
Learner engagements	6	10	7	11.7	40	66.7	7	11.7	60	100
Learners' prior notice to assessments	7	11.7	7	11.7	39	65	7	11.7	60	100
Question quality (clear and unambiguous, achievable by learners, thought provoking...)	-	-	20	33.3	40	66.7	-	-	60	100
Technology integration or use in assessments	46	76.7	7	11.7	7	11.7	7	-	60	100
Assessment alignment with different learning styles and abilities of students	-	-	7	11.7	53	88.3	-	-	60	100
Assessment objectives alignment with the curriculum (purpose of the assignments. E.g., For feedback, learning levels, areas of improvement, or grading...)	-	-	7	11.7	40	66.7	13	21.7	60	100
Teacher usage of ongoing assessments to monitor learner progress and adjust instruction	-	-	7	11.7	53	88.3	-	-	60	100
Provision of assessment feedbacks and opportunities for improvement	7	11.7	-	-	47	78.3	6	10	60	100
Consistency in assessment methods	7	11.7	6	10	40	66.7	7	11.7	60	100
Teaching for learner's demonstration of deeper understanding rather than just memorization.	7	11.7	-	-	53	88.3	-	-	60	100

Regarding written assessment in Table 8, 47 (78.3%) were good, while 13 (21.7%) were very good. From table 7, it also revealed that while 72 (54.1%) strongly agreed and 52

(39.1%) agreed that written assignments (home works) are common assessment methods in the Social Studies classroom, 9 (6.8%) disagreed. With regards to regular administration of formative assessments to track learners' performances, Table 7 indicates that 53 teachers (39.8%) agreed, 48 of them (36.1) strongly agreed, with 32 teachers (24.1%) remaining undecided. From Table 8, it was also observed that 40 (66.7%) teachers were good at assessing their learners consistently, 7 (11.7%) were very good, 6 (10%) were average, and 7 (11.7) were also poor. While almost all of the participants, 47 (78.8%) were good at providing assessment feedback and opportunities for improvement, 7 (11.7%) were observed to be very good and average respectively. The quantitative data from Table 8 also revealed that 44 (33.1) and 65 (48.9%) of the teachers gave their students feedbacks after assessments with 8 (6%) and 16 (12%) who strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. In relation to that from Table 7, it was also observed that teachers' usage of ongoing assessments to monitor learner progress and adjust instructions were positive, 53 (88.3%) were good, whereas 7 (11.7%) was average. Notwithstanding, Table 7 shows that most teachers differentiate assessment to accommodate the diverse needs of learners. Twenty (15%) strongly disagreed, 28 (21.1%) disagreed, 45 (33.8%) agreed, and 40 (30.1%) who strongly agreed. Table 8 also shows that 53 (88.3%) were good at aligning assessment with the learning styles and abilities of students whereas 7 (11.7%) was an average. Regarding teaching for learner's demonstration of deeper understanding rather than just memorization, 53 (88.3%) were good while the remaining 7 (11.7%) were poor. This means that teachers laid much emphasis on learners understanding of concepts.

Concerning learner engagement during assessment, 40 (66.7%) good, 7 (11.7 %) very good, 7 (11.7%) average, and 6 (10%) poor were recorded. It was also discovered that 40 (66.7%) were good at assessing students through presentations, 8 (11.7%) was

average, and 13 (21.7%) were poor. On presentation from Table 7, 25 (18.8%) strongly disagreed while 23 (17.3%) disagreed. 20 (15%) strongly agreed with 61 (45.9%) agreeing. With 4 (3%) remained undecided. Table 8 also shows that while 64 (66.7%) of the participants were good at asking quality questions, 20 (33.3%) were average. This indicates instructors' usage of requisite techniques that enhance students' active participation. With regards to the observation from Table 8, project-based assessments were not encouraging since 20 (33.3%) were poor, 13 (21.7%) were average, 20 (33.3%) were good, and 7 (11.7%) were very good. This was in line with the data from Table 7, regarding individual and group project, 72 (54.1%) strongly disagreed, 52 (39.1%) disagreed, and 4 (3%) agreed and strongly agreed, respectively. This means that most of Social Studies teachers at the Nkoranza South municipality were not giving project-based assessments. Again, from Table 8, it was observed that 46 (76.7%) were poor at using technology in assessment while 7 (11.7%) were very good and average, respectively. From Table 7, it also shows that 76 (57.1%) strongly disagreed and 28 (21.1%) disagreed with the usage or incorporation of ICT into lessons. This confirms that in the Social Studies classroom, teachers do not incorporate technology in assessments to enhance learners' learning and engagement, while 16 (12%) and 9 (6.8%) agreed and strongly agreed accordingly. These were mainly due to inadequate training, infrastructure challenges, and limited access to technology such as inadequate computers, internet access, and other ICT tools.

The use of ICT for teaching and learning is important since it guarantees unrestricted access to relevant information and development in subject areas as well as the provision of efficient and effective tools to take care of students' individual differences including people with special needs (Bede, Termit, & Fong 2015; Kwache 2007).

Learners need to be exposed to various ICT tools around them including calculators, radios, cameras, phones, television sets and computers and related software like Microsoft Office packages - Word, PowerPoint and Excel - as teaching and learning tools. The exposure that learners are given from JHS 1 – 3 (Basic Year 7 to 9), to use ICT in exploiting learning, will build their confidence and increase their motivation to apply ICT use in later years, both within and outside of education. ICT use for teaching and learning is expected to enhance the quality and competence level of learners (NaCCA, 2020).

This section presents a comprehensive summary of the findings on teachers' assessment methods based on the quantitative data from the tables and the qualitative insights from interviews and lesson observations. Formative assessments are the frequently and consistently used practices, indicating teachers' strong preference for continuous feedback and monitoring of student progress. Alternative assessments such as peer and self-assessments were less common, suggesting a potential area for development in diversifying assessment methods. By addressing the challenges identified through interviews and observations, such as class size, time constraints, and resource limitations, schools can support teachers in diversifying their assessment methods, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter constitutes the summary of the study, the conclusions drawn, stated recommendations as well as the suggestions for further studies.

5.1. Summary

The purpose of this study was to Assess the Implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools at the Nkoranza South Municipality.

The research questions that guided the study were:

1. How do the JHS teachers of the Nkoranza South Municipality perceive the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum?
2. What teaching techniques are adopted by the teachers in implementing the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the Nkoranza South Municipality?
3. To what extent are instructional resources available for teaching the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the Nkoranza South municipality?
4. What assessment methods are adopted by Social Studies teachers in evaluating students under the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the Nkoranza South Municipality?

Philosophically, the study was rooted in Pragmatism which supports the use of both quantitative and qualitative data in same study, rejects incompatibility stance and uses multiple methods. In assessing the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum at the Nkoranza South Municipality, a mixed methods approach was adopted. This approach combines the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation process

specifically targeting teachers involved in the implementation. The study employed explanatory sequential research design which started with quantitative data collection and analysis and then followed up with qualitative data collection and analysis, which led to interpretation. This helped determine what quantitative results needed further explanation that's the researcher followed up on a specific quantitative finding and explains it with the qualitative data. This research was conducted within the Nkoranza South Municipality, focusing on the on the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies curriculum in Junior High Schools. The study encompassed all Social Studies teachers from 60 public Junior High Schools within the Nkoranza South municipality. Census sampling was used for 133 Social Studies teachers through questionnaire distributions (quantitative study) while purposive and convenient sampling were used for interviewing 10 Social Studies teachers and for observing 60 Social Studies teachers respectively (qualitative study). In this study data were collected by using questionnaires, observation (Participant) and interview (Semi-Structured). The requisite steps were taken that ensured the legitimization of the instruments. All related ethical issues to this study were observed.

Key Findings:

5.1.1 JHS Social Studies Teachers' Perception of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum

The study revealed the following:

The study revealed that Social Studies teachers perceived the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum to be relevant and valuable. The teachers appreciated the curriculum's emphasis on critical thinking and skill development, collaboration and communication, and deep understanding of Social Studies concepts as well as their ability to also adapt certain aspects of the curriculum to suit their learning environment. However, few

found it a bit challenging to implement due to its complexity resulting from their inability to effectively interpret and align to local contexts.

Inadequate teacher training and professional development during and prior to the implementation of the new 2021 Social Studies Curriculum programme. The research revealed that majority of the Social Studies teachers in the Junior High Schools within the Nkoranza South Municipality admitted that they were not adequately prepared prior to the implementation of the curriculum and they are still not receiving adequate and effective regular training since its implementation. This inadequate and ineffective preparations are hindering the quality of instruction and may definitely limit student's learning outcomes.

Teachers perceived uneven implementation across schools. The research uncovered disparities in the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum across Junior High Schools in the Nkoranza South municipality. A few schools that were equipped with the requisite teaching and learning resources were believed to be having better instructional and assessment methods, while many others without these resources were seen to be struggling with consistent and effective implementation, resulting in inequitable educational experiences for learners.

Inadequate support and collaboration among stakeholders primarily administrators and parents, limiting the successful implementation of the curriculum. Teachers perceived the curriculum to be aligning with the needs of 21st century learners, their teaching objectives, providing them with clear learning outcomes, and guiding their instruction.

5.1.2 Social Studies Teachers' Teaching Techniques

Findings indicated that:

Majority of the teachers employed more learner-centred approaches to teaching and learning and used a combination of various teaching techniques predominantly the question and answer, discussions, group work, and role play.

The exploration also uncovered that some Social Studies teachers in the Nkoranza South Municipality utilized a mix of traditional based and learner-centred teaching techniques, with the lecture-style including reading, and giving out of notes dominating classroom lesson deliveries, attributing that to the absence of adequate instructional resources. Some few teachers with the requisite resources and parental support incorporated inquiry-based (online research) approaches and cooperate learning.

5.1.3 Availability of Teaching and Learning Resources

Findings revealed that:

there were inadequacies or scarcities of teaching and learning resources aligned with the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum, such as textbooks, supplementary materials, and technological resources in almost all the Junior High Schools district-wide. The absence of these resources in certain cases have led to teacher-centred approaches in delivering the new curriculum which hinders students' ability to actively engage with the content, defeating the purpose for the implementation of the curriculum in basic schools at the Nkoranza South Municipality. The insufficiency availability of instructional materials and resources are negatively impacting the effective implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum at the Nkoranza South Municipality.

5.1.4 Social Studies Teachers' Assessment Methods

The study highlighted the following:

Social Studies teachers primarily employed both summative assessments and formative assessments which helped improve their performances. These methods also enhance the concepts of Assessment of learning, Assessment for Learning, and Assessment as Learning, leading to improvement in students' learning.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the research, the following conclusions have been reached:

The 2021 Social Studies Curriculum is seen by Junior High School Social Studies teachers in the Nkoranza South Municipality to be very relevant, better than the old (objective-based) curriculum, and it meets the demands of the modern world. Nevertheless, teachers expressed concerns about its demands (workload), the need for professional development, effective continuous training and support from stakeholders to enhance its effective implementation.

The curriculum is learner-centred and requires that the teacher who acts as a facilitator adopts and adapts variety of teaching techniques or instructional practices for its effective delivery. These instructional techniques include inquiry-based instructions, project-based learning, very engaging discussions, and usage of ICT to enhance deeper understanding, appreciation, and application of Social Studies concepts.

There are crucial issues of unavailability, unreadiness, and inaccessibility to technological aids and other teaching and learning resources as well as poor school infrastructure in almost all Junior High Schools in the Nkoranza South Municipality, putting teachers under undue pressure to always improvise, thereby hampering the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Social Studies teachers at the Nkoranza South Municipality use varying assessment methods, both traditional (tests, quizzes, essays) and modern (self-assessments, peer assessments, performance-based assessments among others) approaches to evaluate pupils' learning. Teachers recognize the need for monitoring learner's progress through feedbacks to appropriately adjust instructional practices.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, conclusions and the literature review, the following recommendations have been made to policy makers and practitioners:

There is the need for the Municipal Director of Education, together with the School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) and Headteachers, to provide targeted professional development opportunities to Social Studies teachers, focusing on enhancing their content knowledge, pedagogical techniques, and digital literacy. These may include regular workshops, mentoring programmes, and collaborative learning communities that can support teachers' implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum. SISOs must ensure continuous monitoring and support for teachers for effective implementation of the curriculum. The MoE, GES, and NaCCA must reach the curriculum implementers and consider feedbacks from these educators as well as parents and students to inform them of future updates and revisions of the curriculum.

Teachers need to continuously explore and employ variety of innovative teaching techniques, including inquiry-based learning, cooperative learning, project-based learning, and ICT integration to promote learner's engagement and deeper understanding of concepts in Social Studies. Professional development programmes and training should be also be a priority to teachers to deepen their understanding and sharpen their skill-set for effective curriculum delivery or implementation.

The need for the Director of Education within the Nkoranza South Municipality to bring on board all other key stakeholders to help accelerate the allocation of adequate funding, to ensure the availability of instructional resources, technological tools, and proper school infrastructure needed for effective teaching and learning (implementation) of the curriculum. Instructors must constantly advocate for sufficient instructional resources and support from their Headteachers or school administrators, education authorities within their municipality, and policy makers (The Central Government or the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service) to ensure access to quality and ready teaching and learning resources, technological tools, and advocacy for professional development avenues. Instructors must also collaborate among themselves within and also across schools to share best practices and insights, resources, assessment methods on effective implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum.

It is highly recommended to instructors to continuously employ proper instructional and assessment methods such as differentiated strategies to address diverse learning styles and abilities among students. Teachers must employ regular assessment methods (formative and summative) and ongoing feedbacks for continuous improvement in learners' performances.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

These were conditions beyond the control of the researcher which potentially could place a restriction on the conclusions of the study and its application. "Hawthorne effect" came to play, thus, leading to altered behaviour by the participants during the study. The teachers knowing that they were participating in the study appeared to have been more conscious of their actions which had the tendency of the study results not

accurately reflecting their natural behaviour or actual practices in the classroom. Another limitation was some participants providing answers they believed were expected of them both on the questionnaire and during the interview section, rather than providing honest experiences. They felt the need to present themselves in a positive light by aligning their responses with what they perceived as desired by the researcher. Some participants were also not readily available at the time scheduled for observation and interviews to be conducted. Finally, some of the participants seemed unwilling and not comfortable to be observed during their lessons. This was a hindrance to the observation, hence the limited number of participants observed.

5.5 Areas Suggested for Further Research

This study was conducted in Junior High Schools within the Nkoranza South Municipality in the Bono East Region of Ghana. It would have been much more useful if the study had been done to cover the whole country to lead to generalization of its findings the whole country. It is therefore recommended that a further nation-wide study be conducted by any interested organizations or individuals on the assessment of the 2021 Standards-Based Curriculum Implementation in Ghana.

A study could also be conducted on the role of parental involvement and community engagement in the implementation of the standards-based curriculum.

A study on the evaluation or assessment of the availability, adequacy, and readiness of teaching and learning resources specific to the 2021 Standards-Based Curriculum implementation.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

 UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION
P.O. Box 23, Winneba, Ghana
Tel: 031 2091 844/109

Our Ref.: SSE/SM.1/VOL.1/284

Date: 16th August, 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: CHRISTIAN KWATENG MENSAH OPPONG

We write to introduce Mr. Christian Kwateng Mensah Oppong to your outfit. He is an MPhil Social Studies student with registration number 8230430022 from the above named Department.

As part the requirement for the award of MPhil degree, he is undertaking a research on the topic *"Assessing the implementation of the common core Social Studies curriculum in Junior High Schools at the Nkoranza South Municipality"*. We will be most grateful if you could grant him permission to undertake the study including collecting data.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,


Faustina Oduro Amissah (Mrs.)
for: Ag. Head of Department

 www.uew.edu.gh

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION**

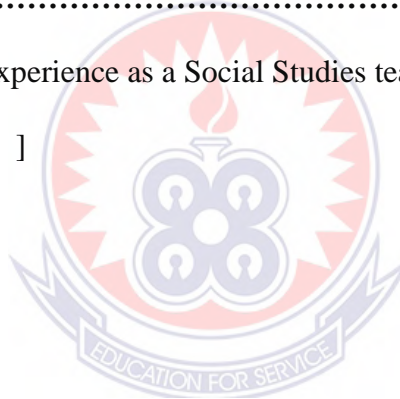
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

I am a student of the University of Education, Winneba, pursuing Master of Philosophy in Social Studies at the Department of Social Studies Education. I am conducting research into “Assessing the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in Junior High Schools at the Nkoranza-South Municipality”.

This questionnaire is aimed at eliciting responses from Social Studies teachers on the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the classroom. You are kindly requested to genuinely answer the questions and to the best of your knowledge. The information you supply will be given the utmost confidentiality. You are therefore not to write your name anywhere in the questionnaire. Please supply the correct information by ticking (✓) where there is a column []: fill in the blanks where necessary. This exercise may not take more than 10 minutes. Thank you.

SECTION A
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Name of school:
2. Sex Male [] Female []
3. Highest academic qualification.
 - a. Diploma []
 - b. First degree []
 - c. Master degree []
4. What programme did you pursue at the College or University?
.....
.....
5. Years of working experience as a Social Studies teacher:
Below **four** years [] **Four** years and above []



SECTION B**TEACHER'S PERCEPTION OF THE 2021 SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM**

This section seeks to gather your views on the new Social Studies curriculum. Your feedback will help understand how well the curriculum meets educational goals and addresses the needs of learners and teachers.

For each statement provided in these sections: B, C, D, and E, please rate your level of agreement using the following scale: 1 – Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 – Disagree (D), 3 – Undecided (U), 4 – Agree (A), and 5 – Strongly Agree (SA).

	Perception	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
6.	Teachers had adequate information and training that enhanced their understanding of the curriculum prior to its implementation.					
7.	The 2021 Social Studies curriculum covers all the necessary topics, skills and needs of learners that equip learners for active citizenship.					
8.	The 2021 Social Studies curriculum purposefully allows teachers to make their own inputs to suit their learners or local context where necessary.					
9.	It employs appropriate teaching techniques that promote student's active classroom participation					
10.	Assessment methods help measure learner's understanding and mastery of Social Studies concepts.					
11.	It emphasizes the usage of TLRs including ICT that align with topics to be taught					
12.	The Social Studies curriculum effectively promote learner's acquisition of 21 st century skills, contemporary issues and active citizenship participation.					

13. Are there any other comments? Please indicate

.....

SECTION C

TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING CONCEPTS IN SOCIAL STUDIES

This section seeks your opinion on the appropriateness of some teaching techniques for delivering the new 2021 Social Studies curriculum. Please indicate your level of agreement with each technique by ticking (✓) the option that best represents your view, using the scale below: 1 – Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 – Disagree (D), 3 – Undecided (U), 4 – Agree (A), and 5 – Strongly Agree (SA).

	Teaching Techniques	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
14.	Discussion					
15.	Lecture					
16.	Question and answer					
17.	Brainstorming					
18.	Dictation of notes					
19.	Presentations (Individual or Group)					
20.	Dramatization/Simulation/ Role play					
21.	Online teaching					
22.	Field trip					
23.	Projects (Individual or Group)					
24.	Guided debates					
25.	Team teaching					

26. Others, please specify

.....

.....

.....

SECTION D

AVAILABILITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

This section focuses on the availability and adequacy of instructional resources. Your input will be instrumental in indicating resource gaps and enhancing resource allocations. For each statement provided in these sections: B, C, D, and E, please rate your level of agreement using the following scale: 1 – Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 – Disagree (D), 3 – Undecided (U), 4 – Agree (A), and 5 – Strongly Agree (SA).

	Teaching and Learning Resources (TLRs)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
27.	There are enough TLRs in the form of print, non-print or community resources available and ready for implementing the Social Studies curriculum.					
28.	The curriculum requires teachers to develop their own curriculum resources.					
29.	There are specific textbooks or reference materials provided for Social Studies teaching					
30.	There are professionally organised workshops for effective resource utilization					
31.	There online platforms or digital resources to support Social Studies instruction.					
32.	There are available TLRs regularly updated or revised to align with best practices and standards in Social Studies education.					

33. Are there any other comments with regards to the TLRs? Please specify

.....

SECTION E**ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM**

This section seeks to find out the assessment methods used in the Social Studies curriculum. This will help to gain insights into the effectiveness of current assessment practices that may identify opportunities for improvements.

For each statement provided in these sections: B, C, D, and E, please rate your level of agreement using the following scale: 1 – Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 – Disagree (D), 3 – Undecided (U), 4 – Agree (A), and 5 – Strongly Agree (SA).

	Assessment practices	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
34.	Written Assignments					
35.	Online Assessments					
36.	Tests/Quizzes and Exams					
37.	Projects (Individual and Group)					
38.	Presentations					
39.	Debates					
40.	Discussions					
41.	Teacher assessment objectives align with the learning goals in the curriculum					
42.	Teacher incorporates different assessment methods such as performance based or authentic assessments in the curriculum					
43.	Teacher provides feedback to students after assessing them to help them understand their strengths and areas of growth.					
44.	Teacher differentiates assessments to accommodate the diverse needs of your learners					
45.	Teacher incorporates the use technology in assessments to enhance learner's learning and engagement					

46. Others, please indicate.....

APPENDIX C

LESSON OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

District _____

School: _____

Teacher _____

Level _____

Date: _____

Key

1. Poor (Does Not Meet Expectations) 2. Average (In between poor and good)
 3. Good (Meets Expectations) 4. Very good (Exceeds Expectations)

Main Teaching Aspects	Specific Teaching Aspects	1	2	3	4
	Engagement and Interaction				
Teaching techniques	Teacher's usage of appropriate warm-up techniques or activities that stimulate and engage learners at the beginning of the lesson				
	Promotion of student's active participation in discussions and activities				
	Teacher usage of questioning techniques to promote critical thinking and class engagements.				
	Promotion of group activities fostering collaboration and communication among students				
	Using appropriate teaching techniques to accomplish the lesson (Variation of techniques where necessary)				
	Differentiation				
	Teacher flexibility and adaptation of instruction to meet diverse needs of learners				
	Strategies to catering for both struggling and advanced learners (e.g., pacing).				
	Inquiry-Based Learning				
	Motivating or encouraging students to ask questions and explore topics being taught				
Opportunities for learners to conduct research and present their findings					
	Problem solving assignments				

Use of instructional resources	Resource Utilization (Multimedia Integration) Teacher utilizes a variety of media (videos, interactive tools, online resources) to enhance learning.				
	Resource relevance and integration or alignment with curriculum				
Assessment practices of teachers	Varied Assessment Types/Techniques				
	Written				
	Project-Based				
	Presentations				
	Learner engagements				
	Learners' prior notice to assessments				
	Question quality (clear and unambiguous, achievable by learners, thought provoking...)				
	Technology integration or use in assessments				
	Assessment alignment with different learning styles and abilities of students				
	Assessment objectives alignment with the curriculum (purpose of the assignments. E.g., For feedback, learning levels, areas of improvement, or grading...)				
	Formative Assessments				
	Teacher usage of ongoing assessments to monitor learner progress and adjust instruction				
	Provision of assessment feedbacks and opportunities for improvement				
	Consistency in assessment practices				
Authentic Assessment					
Teaching for learner's demonstration of deeper understanding rather than just memorization.					

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW GUIDE
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

This interview is aimed at eliciting responses from Social Studies teachers on the implementation of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum in the classroom. You are kindly requested to genuinely answer the questions and to the best of your knowledge. The information you supply will be given the utmost confidentiality. Thank you.

❖ **Opening**

1. Establish Rapport: familiarize yourself with the respondent
2. Purpose: inform respondent about the purpose of the interview
3. Motivation: establish confidentiality for the interview
4. Time Line: state the maximum duration for the interview

A. Teacher's Perception of the 2021 Social Studies Curriculum

- i. How do you see the introduction of the 2021 Social Studies curriculum?
- ii. Were you given adequate preparation or training prior to the implementation of this curriculum?
- iii. How familiar are you with the 2021 Social Studies curriculum?
- iv. Do you believe this curriculum aligns with the needs of Ghanaian students?
- v. Does the curriculum purposefully allow teachers to adapt or make personal inputs to suit your students? Have you done any personal inputs or adaptations?
- vi. What level of support do you feel you need to effectively implement the curriculum?

B. Teacher's Teaching Techniques

- vii. How do you currently approach teaching the 2021 Social Studies curriculum?
- viii. What teaching techniques do you usually use in teaching concepts in the 2021 Social Studies curriculum?
- ix. How do you incorporate ICT and real-world examples into your teaching methods?
- x. What adjustments have you made to your teaching techniques to address different learning styles and abilities?
- xi. Do you encourage the learning of 21st century skills (critical thinking, collaboration, communication etc.) in your lessons? Yes = How do you encourage that? No = why?

C. Availability and Readiness of Teaching and Learning Resources

- xii. What TLRs do you currently have access to for implementing the 2021 curriculum?
- xiii. Are there any gaps or challenges you face in accessing materials or technology for teaching?
- xiv. How do you make the best use of available TLRs to enhance your teaching?
- xv. Have you found any external materials, such as online resources or community partnerships that support the curriculum?
- xvi. What suggestions do you have for improving the availability and quality of teaching resources?

D. Assessment Practices of the Teacher

- xvii. How do you assess your student's understanding of Social Studies concepts within the new 2021 curriculum?
- xviii. What types of assessments do you use to measure both knowledge and skills?
- xix. How do you ensure your assessments are fair and unbiased for all learners?
- xx. Have you observed any changes in your learner's learning outcomes since the implementation of the curriculum?
- xxi. How do you provide feedback to students based on assessment results?

❖ **Appreciation/End of Interview**

