

# ABIBISEM

JOURNAL OF AFRICAN CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

---

*A Publication of the Department of History  
University of Cape Coast, Ghana*

---



**VOL. 5, 2012 & 6 2013**

425.02

# ABIBISEM

JOURNAL OF AFRICAN CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

A Publication of the Department of History  
University of Cape Coast, Ghana



**Volume 5, 2012 and Volume 6, 2013**

© Department of History,  
University of Cape Coast, Ghana

# ***Prospective History Teachers' Perceptions of the History Syllabus of Senior High Schools in Ghana***

**Charles Adabo OPPONG**

## ***Abstract***

*Syllabus development and implementation have pre-occupied the minds of educationists since the global evolution of modern educational systems because it provides the basis for the content of the lessons, the balance of skills taught and the kinds of behavioural outcomes students are supposed to exhibit at the end of a particular course. The search for a defined perception of teachers in the successful implementation of history syllabus has been a central theme of research effort over the past several decades. This study, employing a phenomenological research strategy, is aimed at evaluating the perception of prospective history teachers of the History Syllabus in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The prospective history teacher population was made up of final year students from the University of Cape Coast in the Central Region and the study made use of the total number of that particular year group. The participants were engaged in focus group discussions. During the deliberations, the researcher took notes, and tape recorded the information which was later transcribed for discussion. From the findings, it is fair to say that the syllabus is a "balanced and progressive document" which allows students to develop equally both their expressive and receptive capabilities. The research also revealed that in the construction and reconstruction of a future history syllabus, the time available for the execution of the topics must be considered. This will ensure that teachers would be able to use the appropriate and recommended methods of teaching the subject because participants recognised that most history teachers do not use the right methods in teaching as a result of their attempt to finish topics in the syllabus.*

**Key words and phrases:** History syllabus, prospective History teachers

## **Introduction**

Syllabuses are meant to be used in the classroom by teachers, as students in school need to be well-equipped to be able to perform their roles and make meaningful contributions in their communities. Because teachers cannot teach in a vacuum, standard syllabuses are formulated and designed to serve as frameworks and guides for classroom decisions. These are made to provide performance expectations regarding knowledge, processes and attitudes essential for all students and further provide examples of classroom practice to guide teachers in designing instruction. The history syllabus is

prepared in a way that both the pre-engagement and engagement phases of teaching are made meaningful. In 2007, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports published the National Senior High School History Syllabus. The Syllabus stipulates that the subject is designed to equip students with skills, knowledge, attitudes and values that will enable them fit into the ever-changing global village. It is envisaged that the history programme will enhance the development of the spirit of patriotism, critical thinking and national awareness through appreciation of the past (Senior high school history syllabus, 2007). The subject is, therefore, designed to enable students study the past, use the knowledge acquired to appreciate the present, and by so doing, build a better future. Three distinct features including (i) the clustering of the subject matter, (ii) the conceptual and ringlet presentation of information, and (iii) the pattern of instructional organization distinguished the syllabus from the other traditional school subjects. Unlike the conventional schemes and syllabuses familiar to the teacher, the History syllabus has been carefully organized and the pattern of instruction subdivided into five main interrelated sections including rationale, aims and objectives, contents, profile dimensions and other related activities (Okobia, 2011).

The content of the History Syllabus comprises the Landmarks of African history up to 1800, Cultures and Civilizations of Ghana from Earliest Times to A.D. 1700 and History of Ghana and her relations with the wider world from A.D. 1500 to the present. Under the Landmarks of African History, the following topics are expected to be treated:

1. History as a Subject (Introduction to African History)
2. African Pre-History from the Earliest Times to 500 B.C.
3. Civilization of Pharaonic Egypt, from 3000 B.C.
4. Civilization of Axum and Ancient Ethiopia.
4. Civilization of North Africa.
5. Origin and Spread of Bantu Civilization.
6. Swahili Civilization of the East African Coast.
7. Civilization of the West African Sudan from 500 B.C.
8. Civilization and Cultures of the West African Forest and Coast.

Regarding the Cultures and Civilizations of Ghana from earliest times to A.D. 1700, the following topics have been outlined for study in year three:

1. Introduction to the History of Ghana
2. Pre-History of Ghana: 50,000B.C. to A.D. 700
3. The Peopling of Ghana
4. Social and Political Organisations
5. History of Medicine
6. History of the Economy of Ghana
7. Rise of States and Kingdoms
8. History of Art and Technology
9. The Coming of the Europeans.

The History of Ghana and her relation with the wider world from A.D. 1500 to the present also deals with the following topics:

1. Social and Political Developments: 1500-1900.
2. Social, Economic and Political Developments in Ghana: A.D. 1900 – 1957
3. Independence and After: the Nkrumah Era.
4. Ghana after the Nkrumah Era 1966 – 1991.
5. Ghana in the Comity of Nations.

The syllabus broadly covers a lot of Ancient, National and World history at each stage of the course. One can obviously see that there is no connecting thread to link one period with another, and in reality the chronological principle is by no means strictly observed. The Landmarks of African History are kept in isolation from the Cultures and Civilizations of Ghana from the Earliest Times. It is at least clear that the outcomes approach is not suited to a subject such as History. It leaves little scope for the inspirational teacher who possesses the gift of making the past come to life for students. History depends for its interest and its coherence on showing how events are connected, how change and continuity work over time, and how the people of the past responded to the challenges they faced. Thus an arrangement which breaks up the flow of history into isolated, measurable statements of facts would definitely affect the logic of the subject. Such an arrangement makes sense in the manufacture of *widgits*; it is not so obvious that they make sense in the education of the young, especially in a subject such as History. It is possible, for example, for a student to master a whole list of outcomes describing the 1948 riot, but still

have no real understanding of that riot as a historical phenomenon. It is far from obvious that the experience of going “over the top” can be reduced to a so-called learning outcome. At the best of times, History can too easily become a deadening recital of “one damned thing after another,” and the isolation of topics making it even more so (Osborne, 2004).

The entire content of the History Syllabus speak of values, attitudes, and dispositions, which are meant for students to acquire both indirectly and through direct instruction. The content is also important for teaching students to respect such democratic principles as tolerance, commitment to human rights, respect for diversity, fairness, equity, and social justice because of the inclusion of the different histories of different people. In short, teachers see History as important for developing in students the values and principles that are central to democratic citizenship. The content also portrays History as essential for teaching students how to explore such issues in the past so that they will learn valuable lessons when faced with issues in the present and the future. To put it another way, educationists see the History Syllabus as important for teaching students to think about public issues generally. In this regard, the History Syllabus speaks particularly of citizenship and identity. This aspect is highly embedded in the foundational principles of the social studies syllabus of which history is a component subject (Harris-Hart, n.d.). Though definitions of citizenship have changed over the years, and the concept is subject to considerable and continuing debate, in a school setting it commonly includes a sense of national identity; an awareness of heritage; an entitlement to rights; the fulfilment of duties and responsibilities; a sense of political efficacy; and a commitment to democratic principles and procedures (Osborne, 2004), and the history syllabus is seen as contributing to all of these.

Again, the History Syllabus rarely speaks overtly about patriotism or national pride, preferring instead to speak in terms of informed understanding through the study of historical happenings. The idea of citizenship that pervades history curriculum is not the flag-waving patriot, but the informed, active, and democratically responsible participant in public debate. At the same time, the very fact of teaching more African History, rather than, say, American or European, obviously makes a statement about the importance of Africa to curriculum designers and policy makers. The Syllabus makes clear to students that the history of Africa, in general, and Ghana, in particular, is not simply an abstract study or an intellectual exercise, but is their history also, an introduction to the unique nature of Africa and its land, history, complexities and current issues. In this spirit, for example, the Syllabus aims to teach students implicitly to honour and value the traditions, concepts and symbols that are the expression of the African identity. In actual sense, the content of the syllabus is to instill in students a sense of Ghanaian identity, which all ethnic and religious

groupings can subscribe to because it is based on respect for diversity, pluralism, and democracy. Again, the content of the Syllabus is intended to help students learn about the history of Ghana, Africa and the World, which is an important step in building national and patriotic feelings that will enable learners to use the lessons of History in planning for the present and the future of the country (Oppong, 2010).

As professionals, History teachers today have more operational autonomy. They have more freedom and flexibility to decide how to teach their students and not perhaps, what should actually be taught (Smith & Lovat, 1990). Thus, they are quite free to integrate skills-based learning into essentially knowledge-based syllabuses (Calleja, 2004). This should ideally be done through an emphasis on key historical concepts which help students to organise knowledge and ideas about history, make generalisations, recognise similarities and differences, find patterns and establish connections.

### **Problem Statement**

How History teachers and prospective History teachers individually and collectively perceive the History Syllabus prior to classroom implementation is of interest for a number of reasons. First, the 2007 syllabus has the potential to impact upon the ways in which History is taught, learnt and assessed in Senior High Schools. This, in turn, may have implications for the ways in which History teachers and prospective History teachers perceive themselves in terms of what they would teach (Harris-Hart, n.d.). This is important because, as Hall (1997) has previously argued, the ways in which teachers view syllabus and the impetus underlying them shapes their practices in the classroom. This view point has been re-echoed by various curriculum experts and researchers in both developed and developing countries over the past decades. Armstrong (1989) opined that a curriculum can remain just a plan if classroom teachers do not understand its goals, content and methods.

Additionally, a number of studies have shown that teachers' views of syllabuses shape their initial responses to the document (Hall, 1997; Reynolds, 2001). A number of casual interactions by the researcher with History teachers and prospective History teachers in some Senior High Schools in Ghana also suggest that the ways in which History teachers and prospective History teachers will implement this Syllabus may be strongly influenced by their perceptions of the formal Syllabus. In addition, data is unavailable on how History teachers and prospective History teachers perceive the content and theme of the Ghanaian Senior High School History Syllabus. That is, what is largely absent from existing research is an investigation into how History teachers and prospective History teachers perceive the content and theme of the Senior High School History syllabus.

These issues raised provide a context within which to conduct this study. The study therefore seeks to determine how prospective History teachers in the Cape Coast University perceive the History Syllabus. The main area of focus is on the content, aims and objectives, developmental nature, and profile dimensions of the syllabus.

### **Research Methodology**

This phenomenological research study was designed to inquire into the perception of prospective History teachers about Senior High School History Syllabus. The prospective History teacher population was made up of final year students from the University of Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana and the study made use of all the 14 prospective History teachers. These were teacher-trainees who had returned from a teaching practice exercise organised by the Faculty of Education as part of the requirement for the award of their certificate. The data was collected from focus group discussions that involved the target. In the discussion, the researchers took careful notes, and tape recorded the discussion to ensure accuracy, and later transcribed them for further discussion.

### **Results and Discussion**

The discussion in this section is done according to the themes in the History syllabus. These, as indicated earlier, would be on the Content, Aims and Objectives, Developmental Nature, and Profile dimensions of the Syllabus. Fourteen prospective History teachers took part in the study from the University of Cape Coast. Since the study was a qualitative case study, focus group discussion was used.

### **Content of the History Syllabus**

Respondents were asked of their view regarding the content of the History syllabus, and they unanimously indicated that the content of the History syllabus is geared towards the development of analytical thinking in students. However, they were of the view that to achieve this aspect, it depended largely on the History teacher's pedagogical content knowledge. As summarized by one discussant: "... it is how a teacher prepares and delivers the content of the syllabus that actually helps students develop critical thinking abilities". Students are not able to develop this capability most of the time because most History teachers do not use the appropriate methods that will enable them effectively teach the content of the History syllabus to activate students' critical thinking abilities (Cobbold & Adabo, 2010). Respondents were, therefore, of the view that students' inability to think critically in recent times after studying History is as a result of History teachers' inability to use the necessary skills needed to teach the subject and the content of the syllabus. They opined that, for example, a prospective



historical actors managed to co-exist in their time. This will invariably influence students' attitude towards people looking at how their fore bearers lived.

Finally, most of the participants used for the study indicated that the History syllabus does not contain a lot of themes on the history of women. To these participants, the syllabus is written along patriarchal lines. Of the personalities mentioned in the syllabus as an example for students to emulate, only one is a female. No mention is made of the contributions of women towards the socio economic development of the nation. "...all that we know in the syllabus is Yaa Asantewaa of the Asante Kingdom," the participants indicated. Inherent in this response is the belief that more traditional recordings of history in Ghana in particular and the world in general have minimized or ignored the contributions of women and the effect that historical events have had on women as a whole. They, however, laid the blame on the curriculum developers claiming that in developing the syllabus mention should have been made of women whose lives have impacted positively on the society.

When a follow-up question was asked as to what could be the possible reason why curriculum developers do not include topical issues on women. The others were of the view that the syllabus does not entail a lot of women's history because history is about important and significance events and to them women of the past centuries did not play relatively any role that was worthy as a topical issue to be included in the syllabus. The understanding could also come from the fact that in the olden days, women were not allowed to participate in issues concerning society hence their absence from most historical events. The syllabus, therefore, is based on pre-historic views of history and on the gender insensitivity of traditional historiography. It is overly national in approach and suffers the most insidious forms of bias of omission in relation to women and cultural history. The content taught fails to give a learner a clear perspective of world, continental and a balanced view of male and female roles in history or human development. Similarly, the syllabus objectives perpetuate the same views of male-dominated approach to historiographic content.

### **The Aims and Objectives**

Obviously, aims and objectives are the foundation stone on which the edifice of any subject is constructed. In this paper, aims are conceptualised as broad statements identifying the general educational outcomes that learners should be able to display, while objectives are the concrete measures by which these will be realized, and are usually expressed as relationships between specific concepts (The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, 2005).

Findings from the discussions revealed that respondents were of the view that the aims and objectives of the history syllabus were achievable because they fall in line with the various topics outlined in the history syllabus. For instance, they think the aim of acquiring a more detailed study of the history of the people of Ghana from ancient times to date is appropriate because this aim is in line with topics such as: Introduction to the History of Ghana, Pre- history of Ghana: 50,000 B.C. to A.D. 700, The Peopling of Ghana, among others. The discussants pointed out that the aims, and objectives are such that the teacher can identify the themes embedded in them. One respondent said “Appreciating the culture of Ghana, that is, the traditions and culture of Ghana can be seen in the teaching of history of the various ethnic groups in Ghana.” This response indicates that history teachers believe that all the aims and objectives stated in the history syllabus are catered for under the various topics in the history syllabus. The syllabus ideally strives for a mix of qualitative and quantitative aims that incorporate objectives which tap into a variety of topics outlined in the syllabus (The Harriet W. Sheridan center for Teaching and Learning, 2005). Such a position represents a very positive perception on the part of the respondents with regard to the aims and objectives in the syllabus. The effect would be that teachers are likely to implement what has been stated in the syllabus especially within the framework of the fidelity approach of implementation (Kwarteng, 2010).

### **Developmental Nature of the History Syllabus**

The nature of the History syllabus should be such that it moves from the known to the unknown, simple to complex and concrete to abstract as the advocates of the lines of development type of History syllabus articulate (Burston, 1972). The results of the study showed otherwise. The respondents dispute the claim that the topics in the History syllabus are not arranged along the lines of development pattern. The statement of a participant summarises the position of the participants:

How the themes have been organised in the syllabus is not in line with the lines of development because it moves from the unknown to the known. I would prefer sources of Ghanaian history, then the history of Ghana up to the point where students are okay with, before we go to the “Zimbabwes” and other African countries.

This implies that the arrangement of the themes in the syllabus ignores the concentric approach, which concentrates on the immediate environment of the learner. Participants believe that Section Two of the SHS syllabus should rather have been section one. One participant echoed “I think the best thing to have been done was to arrange the topics in the syllabus from

the issues in Ghana to other countries and not the other way round.” They stressed that moving from the known to the unknown, Section Two should have been Section One and Section Three Section Two followed by Section One as Section Three instead of the current arrangement. To some participants, the current arrangement is supposedly based on the understanding that students already have an idea about the topics in Section Two and Three as they formed part of the Social Studies Syllabus of the Junior High School. Social Studies at the Junior High School is concerned with equipping the pupils with an integrated body of knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help the pupil develop a broader perspective of Ghana and the world, and History happens to be central to the Social Studies Syllabus (Oppong, 2012). This implies that students might have been exposed to a bit of history therefore, the current arrangement of the topics should not be a problem.

The above indicates that students, before entering the Senior High School already have an idea about the topics in Sections Two and Three of the Senior High School History syllabus. As such, it will be easy for students to grasp and relate to the topics and also maintain their interest in the subject instead of starting with topics that are alien to them and which probably might make some students loose interest in the subject before they get to year two. However, the syllabus' framework is such that it is chronological in presentation, spanning from prehistoric times to the present. They believe that this allows students to develop an understanding of a series of concepts, both procedural and substantive. Indeed, if the rearrangement of topics as suggested by the respondents is put in place, this will defeat the principle of chronology. That is, the topics will not follow each other in time sequence. With the suggested arrangement by participants, the pre-history of Ghana: 50,000 B.C. – 700 A.D., will come before African Pre-history from the earliest time to 500 B.C. To other discussants, History deals with the concept of chronology. The principle of chronology dictates that the arrangement of historical content should be organized in time sequence. This means events that happened earlier are supposed to be taught first and therefore it will be impossible to teach the history of Ghana first in year one before treating the Egyptian civilization which was in place about 500 centuries before Ghana. Though the arrangement of topics is very critical, it cannot determine the success of an instructional period. In the candid opinion of the researchers, the most important thing to ensure effective delivery of the topics depends much on the approaches a History teacher adopts.

It is also important to note that the syllabus caters for broad issues in Ghana, Africa and the World, so chronological arrangement would also make the strands appear as discrete areas of learning, as they overlap and interact to form a holistic learning experience for learners (Department of

Education and Science (DES), 1999). Beyond the syllabus introduction and the consistency of implementation across syllabus content, there is little evidence of syllabus integration in theory, yet it is repeatedly advocated in practice. It is clear that the design of the History syllabus is a series of separate topics, and the subsequent operationalisation of the topics has overshadowed the notion of the syllabus as a holistic construct. As Pitt Corder points out, items listed in the History syllabus suggest a linear progression. This does not reflect the way topics are organized, where no aspect or item is either totally dependent or independent of another item, but are networks of interrelated parts. It also does not reflect the way learning takes place. This latter problem, however, can be overcome to some extent by using a cyclical or spiral syllabus structure where the syllabus keeps returning to items but in greater depth. Clearly the task of sequencing raises many questions about the process of learning and tends to reflect the syllabus designers' views on how people learn. The outcome of this contrasts the principle of contrastive difficulty in content organisation which suggests that there should be greater difficulty with those aspects that senior students learn. The obvious goal in content organisation is to progressively increase the degree of difficulty, and to ensure that different topics have a natural affinity and articulation with one another (The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, 2005).

### **Profile Dimensions of the History Syllabus**

Profile dimensions describe the underlying behaviours or abilities students are expected to acquire as a result of having gone through a period of instruction. The Senior High School History syllabus gives these dimensions as cognitive (knowledge and understanding), affective (attitude and values) and psychomotor (use of knowledge). Each dimension has been given a percentage which is the weight each domain carries in the teaching, learning and evaluation processes. These weights are:

- Knowledge and Understanding            30%
- Use of Knowledge                            40%
- Attitudes and Values                        30%

Regarding this thematic issue, participants indicated that these dimensions and their weights are in a positive direction because they believe combining the three dimensions in the teaching, learning and assessment process ensures that History is taught, studied and assessed not only at the cognitive level but also should lead to the acquisition of important attitudes and values on the part of students. It also ensures that students are able to develop and demonstrate good thinking skills and the capacity for excellent performance in examination and in practical life. However, the respondents

held the position that how the teaching and assessment is done in actual practice by most history teachers are geared mainly towards the cognitive than the affective and psychomotor domains. One respondent confirms this "...the teaching and assessment by history teachers over the years mainly cater for the cognitive". Such a practice is often criticized for focusing on the disconnectedness between the limited range of skills taught in the classroom and what the student will face in the 'real world' and that the way teachers evaluate students is open to criticism on these grounds, as lacking validity and reliability (Oppong, 2010). In effect, students are not able to demonstrate their learning in practical life (Heywood, 2000), which should not be the case as far as History is concerned.

Again, teachers' pedagogical practices in the classroom can also be attributed to the emphasis placed on the cognitive domain. Most of the time, History teachers employ teaching methods that do not engage students' affective and psychomotor domains as reported elsewhere in this paper. This response confirms this "No, it's more of knowing the stories and reproducing the stories. For instance, reasons for the happening and the effects of the happening on the people and the wider community are left out, which I think could influence students' attitude". This practice, according to Shemilt (2000), stems from the belief that, most teachers think that History is all about knowing and memorising of dates and narrating stories. As such, the teachers ignore the essence of knowing the causes and effects of historical events which could bring out the deeds and misdeeds of historical actors, thereby imbibing in the students good values. Participants were also of the view that assessing the affective and psychomotor domains is through monitoring, and this takes place over a period of time, but the syllabus does not make provisions for that. As summarized:

When you look at the cognitive, teachers do it when they give some exercises because students will do some recall for them. The affective and the psychomotor are by monitoring, and that takes a period of time. So per the syllabus, assessment caters for the cognitive domain.

They emphasised that assessment tools, such as class exercises and tests, are provided for the assessment of the cognitive but assessment instruments are not provided for the affective and psychomotor in the Senior High School syllabus. This creates opportunities for teachers to pay attention to only the cognitive aspect of the profile dimensions.

### **Other Findings: Overcrowded Nature of the History Syllabus**

A syllabus is said to be overcrowded if the stated learning experiences are not completed due to time, age and ability of learners. Most History teachers mainly consider time. This is because most teachers, over the years, report that they do not have sufficient time to fully implement curriculum subjects of which History is one or to address all of the objectives within each of the subjects (NCCA, 2005; 2008a). For example, they explained that “it can be difficult to plan for so much in so short a time scale” (NCCA, 2005, p. 122). Time is, therefore, an important determinant of an overcrowded syllabus. For some time, History teachers have been concerned with the seemingly crowded syllabus that they teach. As each topic in the syllabus has been implemented, teachers have found themselves under pressure to teach all the outcomes and required content in the syllabuses.

The respondents were unanimous that the time allocated for the teaching of History in schools, where they did their teaching practice, was not enough, considering what they were expected to cover, and this situation forces most History teachers to do selective teaching. The following comment reflects this: “now efforts are being made to remove some of the topics due to the time available.” This response implies that as a result of time some topics in the syllabus are being removed and they cited the removal of a topic like 'Nilotic Sudan' from the examination syllabus. This is because the number of periods allocated for History is not enough so the topics provided in the syllabus become too many. The Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools (1966) explains this when they concluded that “the educational traffic-jam results from too many subjects chasing too few periods in the weekly timetable.” (p. 11). What is inherent in the Association's explanation is that, overcrowded syllabus is caused by important subjects competing for space with one another and also competing with what some consider to be less important subjects (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2010).

Teachers in their haste to complete the issues in the syllabus, therefore, resort to inappropriate methodologies in teaching the subject. One of such responses corroborates this, “...because of the packed nature of the syllabus and the very short period that we have, we just go to class to talk. So I give notes and use the lecture method.” This finding confirms the research finding concerning the lack of space for reflective and interactive classroom pedagogy in the context of a syllabus that is simply too broad (Cambridge Primary Review, 2009a). Therefore, teachers resort to bad methods of teaching such as the lecture and note taking methods which Crookall (1975) identified as bad ways of teaching History. It has also been observed that by not focusing on the syllabus demands and the dimensions

of quality teaching some teachers can waste time and, therefore, contribute to overcrowding.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

It is fair to say that the syllabus is a “balanced and progressive document” in which students have enough opportunities to develop equally both their expressive and receptive capabilities. However, it is recommended that the revision of the present History syllabus should reflect the emphasis and findings of General History of Africa Series and gender as a new dimension of teaching and writing History. As researcher, it is my conviction that future endeavours in handling new syllabus would not be judged by the society from the test scores of students as has been the case. The reason for this position came through the study as respondents were mostly in 'love' with the issues in the syllabus but the way the issues have been delivered over the years has been marred with inappropriate curricular practices as a result of societal pressure in regard to students passing final examination. I think that the quality of education does not depend on the test scores as assumed by our society and that it is important to point out that test score is not the ultimate parameter for measuring the quality of education. We need to appreciate a vibrant History Syllabus that can offer progressive knowledge to our students and not only what students score on test.

We also need to appreciate and recognize in the construction and reconstruction of future History Syllabus the time available for the execution of the topics, so that teachers would be able to use the appropriate and recommended methods of teaching the subject. This is because participants recognised that most History teachers do not use the right methods in teaching as a result of their attempt to finish all topics in the syllabus. In the context of time regarding the issue of over-crowding of the syllabus, we share the view of the Cambridge Primary Review (2009b) which has advocated teaching all subjects in equal balance in order to preserve the breadth and richness of all subjects in the school curriculum. The review has argued that “education for the 21st century requires that all subject areas be given the equal status they deserve and that the curriculum be grounded in different ways of knowing and understanding through which humans make sense of themselves and the world” (p.49).

I see this piece of work as a form of public service that has vital social value, especially in the area of History education, and I believe that teaching is more than a job and more than merely doing routine work in which we are summoned, because we have something worthy and important to contribute to the world as teachers. It is in the light of this that I call on History teachers to do their work by going an extra mile in the implementation of the History Syllabus by adopting the appropriate

curricular practices that would ensure the achievement of the objectives for which History has been included in the school curriculum.

## References

- Armstrong, D.U. (1989). *Developing and documenting the curriculum*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools (1965). *The Teaching of History in Secondary Schools*. Third Edition. Cambridge University Press.
- Burston, W. H. (1972). *Principles of History Teaching*. London: Methuen Education.
- Calleja, C. (2002). *Let me learn*. Italy: Key and Key Communication.
- Cambridge Primary Review (2009a). *Towards a New Primary Curriculum*. Part 1: Past and Present. The University of Cambridge. Retrieved July 29, 2010, from [http://www.primaryreview.org.uk/Downloads/Curriculum\\_report/CPR\\_Curric\\_rep\\_Pt\\_1\\_Past\\_Present.pdf](http://www.primaryreview.org.uk/Downloads/Curriculum_report/CPR_Curric_rep_Pt_1_Past_Present.pdf).
- Cambridge Primary Review (2009b). *Towards a new Primary Curriculum*. Part 2: The Future. The University of Cambridge. Retrieved July 29, 2010, from [http://www.primaryreview.org.uk/Downloads/Curriculum\\_report/CPR\\_Curric\\_rep\\_Pt\\_2\\_Future.pdf](http://www.primaryreview.org.uk/Downloads/Curriculum_report/CPR_Curric_rep_Pt_2_Future.pdf).
- Cobbold, C. and Adabo, C.O. (2010). Re-echoing the Place of History in the School Curriculum. *International Journal of Educational Leadership* 3(3).
- Crookall, R.E. (1975). *Handbook for history teachers in Africa*. London: Evans.
- Department of Education and Science (DES) (1999). *Primary School Curriculum*. Dublin: Government Publications.
- Harris-Hart, C. n. d. *History Teachers and Syllabus Change: Examining the Middle Ground of Curriculum*
- Heywood, J. (2000). *Assessment in Higher Education: Student Learning, Teaching, Programs and Institutions*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Holt, T. (1990). *Thinking Historically: Narrative, Imagination, and Understanding*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board.
- Kwarteng, T. J. (2010). *A Fidelity Implementation of the Accounting Curriculum in Senior High Schools in Ghana*. Unpublished Masters' Thesis: University of Cape Coast, Ghana.
- Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (2007). *The history syllabus*. Accra: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2005). *Primary Curriculum Review: Phase 1 (English, Visual Arts, Mathematics)*. <http://www.nca.ie/uploadedfiles/Publications/Primary/CurriculumReview.pdf>. Retrieved on July 29, 2012.



- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2008a). *Primary Curriculum Review: Phase 2* (Gaeilge, Science, SPHE). [http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum\\_and\\_Assessment/Earlt\\_Childhood\\_and\\_Primary\\_Education/Primary\\_School\\_Curriculum/Primary\\_Curriculum\\_Review\\_PCR/Phase\\_2\\_Gaeilge\\_Science\\_and\\_SPHE/PCR2\\_finalreport.pdf](http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Earlt_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Primary_School_Curriculum/Primary_Curriculum_Review_PCR/Phase_2_Gaeilge_Science_and_SPHE/PCR2_finalreport.pdf). Retrieved on April 24, 2009.
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2010). *Curriculum Overload in Primary Schools: An overview of national and International Experiences*.
- Okobia, E.O. (2011). Social Studies Teachers' Perception of the Junior Secondary School Social Studies Curriculum in Edo State. *European Journal of Educational Studies* 3(2), 303-309.
- Opong, C.A. (2010). *An Evaluation of the Teaching and Learning of History in the Senior High Schools of the Central Region of Ghana*. Unpublished Masters' Thesis: University of Cape Coast, Ghana.
- Opong, C.A. (2012). Exploring Pupils' Historical Knowledge within the Junior High Social Studies Course. Under Review. *Science Direct*.
- Osborne, K. (2004). *Canadian History in the Schools*. Toronto: The Historica Foundation.
- Reynolds, R.M. (2001). A Framework for Searching Syllabus Development and Curriculum Change. *Curriculum Perspective*. 21(3), 1-11.
- Shemilt, D. (2000). The Caliph's Coin: The Currency of Narrative Frameworks in History Teaching. In P.N. Stearns, P. Seixas, & S. Wineburg (Eds.). *Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History: National and International Perspectives*. New York: New York University Press. pp. 83-101.
- Smith, D.L. & Lovat, T.J. (1990). *Taxonomy and the Learning Experiences: Curriculum Action on Relection Based on Habermas's Ways of Knowing*. Austria: Social Science Press.