

2014 REVISED SOCIAL STUDIES SYLLABUS FOR COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA-MATTERS ARISING

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Abstract

The study examines the 2014 Revised Social Studies Syllabus for Colleges of Education in Ghana. Twelve tutors were sampled from six Colleges of Education in the Western and Central Regions of Ghana using the purposive sampling technique. The main research instrument used was an interview guide. Data collected were transcribed and analyzed using qualitative procedures. The structure and contents of the syllabus were first discussed followed by the data collected from the respondents. The study confirmed the perception held by many that social studies offered in the Colleges of Education in Ghana is integrated, based on the social sciences. It was revealed that the content areas of the subject are based on disciplines such as Geography, Economics, History, Sociology and Government. More so, inspite of the few gaps found between the syllabus and the JHS Social Studies syllabus, to a very large extent, the Social Studies syllabus for the Colleges of Education is consistent with the JHS syllabus. Among the recommendations made was the need for tutors to adopt innovative approaches in teaching to enable them to complete the outline for each semester before End of Semester Examinations.

Key words: Integration, contents, methods, social science.

Introduction

The University of Cape Coast, which is the mentoring institution for all the Colleges of Education in Ghana undertook a comprehensive review of programmes of study and syllabuses of all courses in the Colleges of Education in Ghana in 2014. This was done to reflect the new five semester programme which has come to replace the In-In-Out programme. The rationale, according to the policy document, is geared towards the training of a generalist teacher who would be able

to teach at both primary and Junior High School (SHS) levels. This means that, in addition to courses in Education, practical activities and general studies, students are expected to take at least seven foundation subjects namely: English, Mathematics, Ghanaian Language and Culture, Integrated Science, Environmental and Social Studies, Pre-vocational Skills, and Religious and Moral Studies. As per the new regime, level 300 students are expected to spend their 4th semester on campus and use one semester for the out-segment.

Social Studies is one of the key foundational courses offered in the Colleges of Education. In the basic schools in Ghana, Social Studies is taught from pre-school level to the JHS level. At Kindergarten, it is taught as Environmental Studies, in the upper primary, it is taught as Citizenship Education while in the JHS it is taught as Social Studies (Adams, Andoh & Quarshie 2013; Revised Social studies syllabus, 2014). It is therefore expected that a social studies graduate from a College of Education in Ghana should be able to effectively teach the course at any of the basic education levels. This is reflected in the five-pronged general objectives of the syllabus which carefully touched on all the levels in basic education where Social Studies is taught. The syllabus is intended to help pupils to:

1. describe the structure of the Social Studies learning area of the basic school (kindergarten, primary, junior high) syllabuses.
2. explain the rationale for including Social Studies as a learning area in the basic school (kindergarten, primary, junior high) syllabuses.
3. state the general the aims for teaching Social Studies as a learning area in the basic school (kindergarten, primary, junior high) syllabuses.
4. outline the content of the Social Studies learning area of the basic school (kindergarten, primary, junior high) syllabuses.
5. design appropriate activities and materials for teaching each unit/topic in the Social Studies learning area of the basic school (kindergarten, primary, junior high) syllabuses.

The syllabus has been designed for four semesters covering two years. The first three semesters have been allocated for courses on content while the fourth semester is for topics in methodology. The first page of the syllabus has a brief introduction which highlights what the syllabus is about, after which, five general objectives were outlined for the entire syllabus. Each semester begins with the year

and the semester, course code, course title, credit hour and a brief description of what the semester's work contains. After that, there are general objectives for each semester before the tabular structure which shows the outline of units and topics. The table has three columns indicating Unit, Topics and Suggested duration.

Year One Semester One exposes students to the nature of Social Studies which expatiates on meaning, scope, attributes, purpose, goals and importance of Social Studies. It also deals with the environment and environmental problems of man. Among some of the key environmental issues include: air pollution, water pollution and land degradation. It covers the concept of the environment, specifying the physical, cultural and social environment of man. Another major topic meant to be treated in the semester is about the earth and its natural occurrences. Students will learn about the solar system, earth movements, continents and oceans, weather and climate, types of rainfall and major landforms. Students are prepared on the use of land. This entails the concept of layout, settlements, sites and situation, slums, natural disasters and ways of using the land. The next topic is Maps and mapping skills. In this context, learners are expected to grasp the concept of maps taking into account, types of maps, components and essentials of map as well as measurement of distance and area using the scale of a map. The last topic for semester one is Presentation of direction, position and features on maps. This topic takes into account sub-topics such as; Compass/cardinal points (including True, magnetic and Grid north). It also focuses on longitudes and latitudes, conventional signs, methods of showing relief and drainage patterns.

Year One, Semester Two outlines eight topics for students to go through. The first is on geography and natural resources of Ghana. This topic examines the land area of Ghana, regions and capitals as well as relief and drainage of Ghana. It also emphasizes rainfall patterns, vegetation and mineral deposits. Topic two is on the people of Ghana. It encompasses the various ethnic groups and their migration. It deals with culture and some outmoded cultural practices such as FGM, Trokosi, Widowhood rites and Betrothal. The national symbols and ways of promoting national unity are also stressed. The next topic is Colonization in Ghana. This spans from the activities of the early Europeans in the Gold Coast through the process of colonization, effects and how to deal with the negative effects of

colonization. Pre-independence political developments in Ghana; the next topic, examines developments such as the Bond of 1844, the Poll Tax Ordinance of 1852, the Segranti War of 1874, the Lands Bill of 1897 and the Yaa Asantewa War of 1901. Other issues include Leadership under Sir Gordon Guggisberg, the activities of the UGCC and the activities of the CPP. Another topic for the semester is on Independence and Constitutional Governance. Sub-topics considered include: Meaning, Types and Forms of Constitutions, Features of 1960, 1969 and 1992 Constitutions of Ghana. Structures and Institutions of Governance such as Executive, Legislature, Judiciary, CHRAJ and NCCE are to be discussed with the students. The concepts of Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances as well as Rights and Responsibilities of citizens are discussed. The last but one topic is on Promoting Peaceful Co-Existence and Political Stability in Ghana. The important sub-topics for this include Maintaining Law and Order, Understanding Conflict and Managing Conflicts, Democracy as a System of Governance and other practices such as upholding good governance practices and defending the Constitution and rule of law. The last unit for Semester Two examines Ghana's relationship with international organizations such as ECOWAS, AU, Commonwealth of Nations and UNO.

Year Two, Semester One consists of seven units. Unit one is on production in Ghana. The unit takes into account the factors of production and various types of occupations. It also deals with promoting high productivity by demonstrating positive attitudes and values in the work place. The unit also looks at food security, post harvest losses and how to deal with it. Unit Two is on Technology and Work. Meaning, forms of technology and challenges facing the use of technology in Ghana are to be discussed. Unit Three is Entrepreneurship. Areas under the unit include: types of business enterprises such as sole proprietorship, partnership, joint stock companies, and cooperative societies. It also examines the relationships between State Enterprise and Private Enterprise. The major topic for Unit Four is Money and Financial Management. The Nature, and Characteristics of money and the Functions of money are to be discussed. Other areas include proper and improper ways of using money and ways of saving money for future security. The next unit deals with development and problems of development in Ghana. The concepts of growth and development as well as dimensions of

development will be examined. More so, ways of utilizing resources such as natural, cultural and human will also be learnt. The last issue under Unit Five is the problems of development. Unit Six is on Health, Tourism and Leisure which examines Adolescent reproductive Health, Responsible and irresponsible adolescent behaviours and the benefits of chastity. Other areas include the concept of tourism and leisure and ways of promoting tourism in Ghana. Unit Seven is the last unit for the semester. The Unit discusses the role of community institutions in socio-economic development of Ghana. The sub-topics include: the family, Religious organizations, Traditional Authorities, District Assemblies and national Government.

Year Two, Semester Two is mainly about methodology of teaching. The course title is "Principles and Methods of Teaching Social Studies". Eleven major units are spelt out for discussions. The first topic focuses on approaches for designing Social Studies programmes. The two main approaches outlined include the "Concentric" and "Spiral" approaches. Unit Two is based on the Analytical Study of the Basic School Social Studies Syllabuses. It emphasizes the Citizenship Education Syllabus and the JHS Social Studies Syllabus. Unit Three on the other hand deals with Teaching and Learning resources. Units Four to Nine focus mainly on the techniques of teaching Social Studies. The techniques are: field work, brainstorming, role playing, and simulation, debate, discussion and the use of resource persons. The last unit (Unit 11) focuses on planning and preparing instructional plans. This involves preparing scheme of work and lesson plan.

Social Studies in Colleges of Education

Integrated Social Studies was first introduced in the then Teacher Training Colleges in 1940 when the Colleges were established. "At the time, Social Studies was taught in three colleges namely, Presbyterian Training College (PTC) at Akropong, Wesley Training College in Kumasi, and Achimota Training College in Accra" (Cobbold, 2013:1). However, the programme was short-lived because of a number of national challenges it encountered. Kankam Boadu and Oto (2014) identified some of the challenges as being lack of trained-personnel, fear of subject specialists losing their identity and a natural collapse resulting from the fact that some of the teachers retired and there was no replacement while others were transferred. Social Studies

education in Ghana and particularly in the training colleges resurrected after the Mombasa Conference in 1968. In 1978, the University of Cape Coast prepared an integrated Social Studies syllabus for the Three Year Post-Secondary Teacher Training Colleges in the country. This was reviewed in 1980 so that Social Studies remained examinable throughout the colleges.

In 1987, the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) administration introduced a new Educational Reforms programme which also re-introduced and revised the Social Studies syllabus in the Colleges. According to Cobbold (2013), the University of Cape Coast started a Bachelor of Education programme in Social Studies to train teachers for teaching the subject at the secondary and college levels. He further explained that in 1989 the then University College of Education, Winneba (UCEW) also began a diploma programme to train Social Studies teachers. Thus, by the close of the twentieth century Social Studies had been firmly established as a subject that is examined for certification at the basic, senior secondary and tertiary levels of education in Ghana (Cobbold, 2013:2)

Social Studies and Social Sciences

Social studies has been defined by many proponents of the subject in various ways. The National Council for Social Studies (1994) defined Social studies as the integrated study of the Social Sciences and the humanities to promote civic competence. On his part, Martorella (1994) seems to have a long definition of Social Studies. He explained Social Studies as the selected information and modes of investigation from the Social Sciences, selected information from any area that relates directly to an understanding of individuals, groups and societies, and application of the selected information to citizenship education. A third from Tabachnick (1991) considered Social Studies to be part of the school curriculum which deals with human relationships, and aims to contribute to the development of good citizenship. Kazi (1994) also defined Social Studies as Citizenship Education. In essence, it is the kind of education that is aimed at making a person a good citizen.

All the four definitions agree that Social Studies aims at producing good citizens by inculcating citizenship ideals in them. There is therefore a consensus in Social Studies literature based on the above and many more that the major goal of Social Studies is

citizenship education (Ajiboye, 2009; Adler & Sim, 2008; Ross, 2006; Hahn, 2001). According to the Ghana Teaching Syllabus for Social Studies in JHS (CRDD, 2007), the subject prepares the individuals by equipping them with knowledge about the culture and ways of life of their society, its problems, its values and its hopes for the future. These clearly show that it is accepted that the ultimate aim of Social Studies is seen as citizenship education.

In addition to the concept of citizenship education, most of the authors also agree that the subject is integrated in nature. In the view of Quashigah, Dake, Bekoe, Eshun, and Bordoh (2014:11) "Although, both the College of Education and the Junior High School Social Studies curricula see the subject as an integration of knowledge, the point of contention has been the nature and acceptable level of integration. Integration therefore becomes the pith and core of social studies as it selects ideas, concepts, principles, theories and generalizations from mainly the social sciences with the main aim of promoting citizenship education". However, Cobbold (2013:12) introduced a very relevant dimension in the explanation of Social Studies which is so vital to the meaning of what Social Studies is. He wrote that "the focus of Social Studies is the network of relationships that evolve among people as they try to co-exist in the various group settings that compete for their loyalties". Cobbold (2013:12) remarks that "Of all the attributes that distinguish humans from other creatures, the most remarkable is their abiding interest and earnest longing for association with others of their species". From Cobbold's explanations it is clear that Social Studies is indeed about man and how he/she relates with the physical, cultural and social environment. To ensure effective interaction of man with the environment, there is the need for man to exhibit certain right attitudes and values which Cobbold (2013:12) refers to as "individual qualities such as critical thinking, diligence, patriotism, obedience and honesty, as well as group ideals such as cooperation, tolerance, interdependence and any other socially desirable habits, ideals, attitudes and values"

What are the Social Sciences? This question is relevant to this discussion because of the fact that Social Studies derives its content areas mainly from the Social Sciences. It is a common knowledge that Social Studies gains its identity from Social Science subjects such as History, Political Science, Economics, Sociology and Psychology. Starting with Beard (1934), the Social Sciences have been explained

as being primarily concerned with those manifestations of human activities and those occurring within the society that involve social consequence and relations. Martorella (1985) agrees with Beard but goes further to explain that the Social Sciences employ the scientific methods that focus on understanding and explaining human behavior and employ systematic approach in the collection and application of data. Again, the Social Sciences forecast trends (patterns) and behavior, a concern for verification, a desire for objectivity and interest in furthering knowledge and standards for scholarship. Throwing more light on the scientific method as mentioned by Martorella, eight attributes of the scientific method as applied in social studies have been identified by Cobbold (2013: 66) as:

1. Conceiving a problem
2. Formulating an informed guess (hypothesis)
3. Systematically collecting and analyzing data
4. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods in the collection and analysis of data
5. Interpreting and applying data
6. Predicting patterns of behavior
7. Having a concern for verification of data
8. Approaching data collection, analysis and interpretation with objectivity

Based on the philosophies of the two subjects, Social Studies and Social Science, a number of differences can be identified between the two. First, Social Studies is integrated in nature, while Social Science consists of distinct subject areas. Secondly, while, Social Science deals with the production, organization and dissemination of knowledge in Economics, Geography, History, Sociology, etc, Social Studies focuses on the production, organization and dissemination of knowledge about people and their environment. Thirdly, social scientists give inadequate attention to the feeling, humanistic elements of citizenship and to the needs of ethical decision-making that go beyond scientific empiricism (Shaver, 1967). But Social Studies attaches much importance to values. Fourthly, in the field of school curriculum, Social Studies ante-dates Social Science which means the Social Sciences came first before Social Studies emerged.

The purpose of this study was three-fold: first, to examine the content areas semester by semester and find out the core issues involved in the Five-semester Social Studies programme in the

Colleges of Education. Second, to ascertain how the Social Science disciplines influence the Social Studies Curriculum. Third, to suggest ways by which both tutors and students can immensely benefit from the syllabus.

Research questions

The study was guided by these research questions:

1. What are the core issues involved in the Five-semester Social Studies programme in the Colleges of Education?
2. To what extent do the Social Science disciplines influence the Social Studies curriculum?
3. What are the views of Social Studies tutors about the Revised Syllabus?

Methodology

Qualitative content analysis and descriptive research method were used. In all, there are four courses run over the four semesters. The analysis was done on semester basis. Each semester's contents were examined. Units were assessed with regard to the number of sub-topics and duration for teaching it. The topics were also investigated to find which of the Social Science subjects lend themselves to the topics for the semester. The population consisted of Social Studies tutors from six Colleges of Education in Central and Western Regions of Ghana. Sample consisted of 12 tutors (2 from each College). Structured-interview schedules were used to solicit information from the respondents

Results and discussions

Research question 1:

What are the core issues involved in the Five Semester Social Studies Programme in Colleges of Education?

Research question one seeks to ascertain semester by semester the dominant units tutors and students have to contend with. A critical analysis of the course outline for each semester was done to identify the dominant units, number of sub-topics under each unit, the social science-based discipline which the sub-topics conform to and the number of weeks delineated to cover each unit. Table 1 indicates the breakdown of the course structure for Year One, Semester One.

Table 1: Social Studies and Human-Land Issues

Unit	Number of topics	Social science based-discipline	Number of weeks
The nature of social studies	5	Philosophy	2
The environment and environmental problems	4	Geography	2
The earth and its natural occurrences	7	Geography	3
The use of land	6	Geography	2
Mapping	7	Geography	2
Presentation of Direction and features on maps	5	Geography	
Total	34	Geography: 5	13

(Source: Revised 2014 Social Studies syllabus for CoE)

Table 1 indicates the breakdown of the course outline for Year One Semester One (FDC 118). The Course title is Social Studies and Human-Land Issues. Six major units are listed to be taught which have been sub-divided into 34 topics for 13 weeks. Unit 1 is based on the Philosophy of Social Studies which deals with the meaning, scope, attributes, purpose, goals and importance of Social Studies. Units 3 and 4 have the highest number of sub-topics (7 each) followed by unit 1 and 6 (5 each) and then Unit 2 with 4 topics. However, apart from Unit 3 which has a duration of 3 weeks, all the others have 2 weeks. It is therefore obvious that judging by the number of sub-topics, and subsequently the duration, Unit 3 can be said to be the major unit for Semester One. All the others have a teaching duration of 2 weeks, in spite of the number of topics. Unit 2 has the least number of topics (4) but it equally has a duration of 2 weeks.

Out of the 6 major topics, 5 of them in Units 2 to 6 are Geography-based topics meant to be taught within a duration of 11 weeks. Out of the 34 topics, a whopping 29 of them are Geography-based. From this, it is clear that Year One Semester One Social Studies course syllabus is Geography-biased. One needs therefore to keep abreast of the requisite Geographical concepts to be able to teach effectively.

Table 2: Ghana as a Nation

Unit	Number of topics	Social science based- discipline	Number of weeks
Geography and natural Resources of Ghana	6	Geography	2
The people of Ghana	7	History, Sociology	2
Colonization in Ghana	5	History	1
Pre-independence political development in Ghana	8	History	2
Independence and Constitutional Governance	7	Government	2
Promoting peaceful co-existence and political stability in Ghana	5	Government	2
Ghana's relationship with international organizations	4	Government	2
Total 7 Units	42	Geography: 1 History: 3 Government: 2 Sociology: 1	13

(Source: Revised 2014 Social studies syllabus for CoE)

Year One, Semester Two (FDC 128) breakdown of the syllabus is represented in Table 2. In all, 7 major units are to be covered; sub-divided into 42 areas to be taught within the duration of 13 weeks. Unit 4 has the highest number of topics (8). This is followed by Units 2 and 5 with 7 sub-topics apiece. Unit 1 has 6 topics while Units 3 and 6 have 5 topics each with Unit 7 has the least number of topics (4). Apart from unit 3, which has a suggested duration of 1 week, the rest of the units have 2 weeks duration each. The 7 major units and 42 topics can be grouped under 3 main Social Science disciplines namely: History, Geography and Government. Unit 1 is the only one with Geography topic. Unit 2 is a blend of history and Geography while units 3 and 4 are solely History topics. Unit 5, 6 and 7 are also Government topics. The semester is therefore dominated by History and Government topics.

Table 3: Socio-Economic Development in Ghana

Unit	Number of topics	Social science based- discipline	Number of weeks
Production in Ghana	7	Economics	2
Technology and work	5	Economics	2
Entrepreneurship	6	Economics	2
Money and Financial Management	5	Economics	1
Development and problems of development in Ghana	4	Economics	2
Health, Tourism and Leisure	6	Economics	2
The role of Community institutions in socio-economic development	5	Sociology	2
Total 7 Units	38	Economics: 6 Sociology: 1	13

(Source: Revised 2014 Social Studies syllabus for CoE)

Table 3 shows the breakdown of Year Two Semester One course structure (FDC 218). It has seven major units and 38 topics which have been spread over a period of 13 weeks. Unit 1 has 7 topics, units 3 and 6 have 6 topics each, while units 4 and 7 also have 5 topics each. The least number of topics are 4 which come under unit 5. Unit 4 has the least number of weeks to cover (1 week). The suggested duration for the other units are 2 weeks each. The semester is dominated mainly by Economics topics apart from unit 7 which is a Sociology topic. The implication is that one needs to be well versed in the principles in Economics before teaching the course. A tutor who does not have the relevant subject matter on Economics is likely to scratch the surfaces of the topics and not delve into details. If that happens, students are likely to suffer not only during the End of Semester Examination, but also in the field of work after school since such a teacher cannot teach Social Studies well in the basic school.

Table 4: Principles and Methods of Teaching Social Studies

Unit	Number of topics	Number of weeks
Approaches for designing Social studies programmes	3	1
Analytical study of the Basic school Social studies syllabus	2	2
Teaching and Learning Resources	7	2
Field work Technique	8	1
Brainstorming Technique	4	1
Role playing Technique	4	1
Simulation Technique	4	1
Debate Technique	4	1
Discussion technique	4	1
Use of Resource persons	4	1
Planning and preparing instructional plans	6	1
Total 11 Units	46	14

(Source: Revised 2014 Social studies syllabus for CoE)

Table 4 illustrates the scope of contents to be covered for Year Semesters Two (PFC228). Eleven major units are outlined for the semester. They have been sub-divided into 46 areas meant to be taught within a duration of 14 weeks. There are 7 topics under Unit 3, 6 under Unit 11, 3 under Units 1 and 2. Units 3 to 10 have 4 topics each. In terms of the duration, apart from Units 2, 3 and 4 which have 3 weeks to cover, the rest of the units have 1 week each. This implies that Units 2, 3, and 4 have broader content areas which need more attention and time by the tutor.

The major issues identified from each semester include 'the earth and its natural occurrences' in Year One, Semester One, Unit 3. It has seven topics and an instructional duration of three weeks. This is followed by 'Mapping' in Year One, Unit 5. Mapping has seven topics and an instructional duration of two weeks. The First Semester's units are dominated by Geography topics. Ghana as a

Nation (Unit 4) is the first major unit for Year One, Semester Two. It has 8 topics and an instructional duration of two weeks. Independence and Constitutional Governance (Unit 5), is the next major unit for Year One Semester Two. It has seven topics and an instructional duration of two weeks. Year One, Semester Two is dominated by History and Government topics. Two major issues were identified from Year Two, Semester One. First, is Production in Ghana in Unit 1 and it has 7 topics to be treated within two weeks. This unit is followed by Entrepreneurship (Unit 3). The unit comprised six topics to be taught within two weeks. The major issues identified from Year Two, Semester Two include Teaching and Learning Resources and, Planning and Preparing Instructional plans in Unit 3. The duration for the two units is two weeks per unit.

What are the implications? These major units identified have each a number of topics under them, which cannot be brushed aside by tutors. As a result of the broad nature of such units, tutors are more likely to ignore some of the topics in order to complete the course outline early. This will be disingenuous and can negatively affect the students.

Research question 2:

To what extent do the Social Science disciplines influence the Social Studies curriculum for Colleges of Education?

Social Studies as an integrated study of the Social Sciences and the humanities is purported to derive its content areas from mainly the Social Science subjects. However, the extent to which the Social Sciences influence the scope of Social Studies has been argued merely on perceptions. It is against this background that research question two seeks to find out how the Social Sciences dictate the contents of Social Studies.

Table 5: Influence of Social Sciences on Social Studies Syllabus for Colleges of Education in Ghana

Social science elements	Number of occurrences			Total	Percentage (%)
	Year 1 Sem 1	Year 1 Sem 2	Year 2 Sem 1		
Philosophy	1	0	0	1	5
Geography	5	1	0	6	30
Economics	0	0	6	6	30
History	0	3	0	3	15
Government	0	2	0	2	10
Sociology	0	1	1	2	10
Total	6	7	7	20	100

(Source: Revised 2014 Social Studies syllabus for CoE)

The Social Studies syllabus is divided into four semesters of content work with one semester for out-segement where students do practicum teaching. Twenty topics are taught over three of the four semesters. Year Two Semester Two was not factored into this discussion because it focuses only on Methodology. This discussion is intended to unearth the Social Science elements in the content areas of the programme. Table 5 explains that Geography and Economic-related topics occurred six times, denoting 30 percent each of the total number of occurrences of the Social Science elements. History registered 15 percent of occurrence, while Government and Sociology accounted for 10 percent each. There is only one major topic on Philosophy which focused on the meaning and nature of Social Studies which constituted 5 percent of the total number of occurrences. The statistics clearly explains that there are more Geography and Economic topics than any of the Social Science elements.

Breaking the composition of Social Science further down, it can be stated that Year One, Semester One is Geography-biased; Year One, Semester Two is History-dominated while Year Two, Semester One is Economic-dominated, History and Government topics are found mainly in Year One, Semester Two while, Sociology topics can be found in Year One, Semester Two and Year Two Semester One. Economics topics are found in only Year Two, Semester Two, while Geography topics cut across two semesters: Year One, Semester One and Year One, Semester Two.

There is no denying the fact that, Social Studies as a discipline is heavily dependent on the Social Sciences. It can therefore be said that without the Social Sciences there can be no Social Studies. This assertion is proven based on the grounds that it is through the integration of relevant ideas, concepts, principles and theories that Social Studies gets its content areas (Adams, et al., 2013). Integration is therefore the backbone of Social Studies. It can also be said to be the nature of Social Studies. The elements of the Social Sciences that form the basis for the Social Studies are the single Social Science subject areas such as Economics, Geography, History, Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology and Psychology (Kazi, 1994). Social Studies therefore selects relevant concepts from these subjects and integrate them in a manner devoid of subject area distinctions to form a holistic source of knowledge.

Research question 3:

What are the views of Social Studies tutors about the Revised Syllabus?

The respondents expressed their opinions on the Revised Social Studies Syllabus and for the purpose of this discussion the focus is on respondents' demographic characteristics, content coverage of the syllabus, and methodology coverage of the syllabus.

Table 6: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

pseudonym	Gender	Age	No of years spent in teaching Social Studies	Highest academic
Nyanzu	M	38	6	M.Ed Teacher Education (Social Studies)
Nancy	F	48	7	M.Phil Social Studies
Amachie	M	54	10	M.Phil Curriculum Studies
Aquah	M	47	10	M.Ed Environmental Management & Policy
Mabel	F	38	11	M.Ed Teacher Education (Social Studies)
Vesta	F	36	3	M.Ed Environmental

Christopher	M	40	5	Management & Policy M.Ed. Teacher Education
Kojo	M	41	5	M.Ed. Environmental Management & Policy
Laurence	M	42	5	M.Ed Teacher Education (Social Studies)
Isaac	M	47	7	M.Phil Curriculum Studies
Christy	F	44	8	M.Ed. Teacher Education (Social Studies)
Philip	M	43	9	M.Phil Curriculum Studies

(Source: Field Survey, 2015)

The 12 respondents who granted interview to the researcher are tutors who teach in some of the Colleges of Education in Ghana. In terms of gender, four of them are females, while eight are males. Five of them are aged between 36 and 41. Four are in the age range 42-47, while the ages of the three are in the range of 48 and 54 years. Number of years spent in teaching Social Studies in the college was also solicited from the respondents. With the exception of one person who has taught for a period of 3 years, all the respondents have taught Social Studies between five and eleven years in the College of Education. Respondents gave their highest academic qualification as follows: M.Phil (Curriculum Studies): 3; M.Ed (Teacher Education in Social Studies): 5; M.Phil (Social Studies): 1; M.Ed (Environmental Management and Policy): 3.

The basic characteristics of the respondents as indicated in Table 6 speak volumes of what they can do as far as teaching Social Studies at the college level is concerned. In terms of age, the majority of them are aged above 41 years (7 of them). It is believed that most of the respondents are matured enough to teach the course in the College of Education. It is interesting to note that all the respondents have gained a lot of experiences in teaching the subject. This is because 11 out of the 12 have taught Social Studies between 5 and 11 years in the College of Education. Concerning highest academic qualification, all the respondents have their second degrees and their areas of specialization are also related to Social Studies directly or

indirectly. Based on their qualification (masters degree), one can infer that all things being equal, the tutors are better placed to teach Social Studies as compared to having only first degrees.

Content coverage

Many of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the structure of the syllabus in terms of the three semesters allotted for contents and one semester for methodology. Isaac explained that "the trainee needs more content areas than methods so as to become an authority of the subject". He indicated that "If one knows all the techniques of teaching Social Studies but little content, he/she cannot deliver to expectation". On his part, Vesta compared the topics in the revised syllabus to the topics in the JHS Social Studies syllabus and assessed that there are few gaps between the CoE Syllabus and the JHS syllabus. According to Vesta, even though most of the topics in the JHS syllabus duly reflect the CoE syllabus, there are still a few things that can be done to align the two syllabuses. She suggested that Year One, Semester One topics should cover all the topics in Section One of the JHS Syllabus, Year One Semester Two should cover all the topics of Section Two of the JHS Syllabus while Year Two Semester One should also fully cover all the topics in Section Three of the JHS Syllabus.

Nyanzu specifically identified "Statistical maps and diagrams" as a missing topic in the syllabus which ought to be added. According to him, even though the topic is not found in the 1987 JHS syllabus, it exposes the learner to mapping skills which are essential for his everyday life. Philip also explained that the syllabus is a very useful material. He, however, was of the view that the topic "Layout" should be replaced with "Mapping". Nancy agreed with the first two contributors but sharply disagreed with Vesta that everything in the CoE syllabus should reflect the JHS Syllabus. She stated "Even though the Colleges train teachers for the basic schools, including the JHS level, it does not mean that every topic in our course outline should also be found in the JHS syllabus". Explaining further, Nancy said the Colleges are higher than the JHS and therefore can do things differently from the JHS. The rest of the respondents; James, Amachie, Aquah, Christopher, Mabel, Kojo and Laurence commended the content of the revised syllabus saying it is "well

stuffed” with relevant materials needed to make good Social Studies teachers for the basic schools.

Methodology coverage

Topics under methodology are captured in the second year second semester course. The course covered the Approaches to designing Social Studies programme, viz: Concentric and spiral approaches, the critical study of the citizenship education syllabus as well as the JHS syllabus. It finally deals with the techniques of teaching Social Studies and planning instructions in Social Studies.

Most of the respondents expressed their absolute faith in the Methodology aspects of the syllabus. According to them, the syllabus touches on every relevant method and technique needed to make a good teacher. They, however, opined that a lot will depend on the teacher implementing the syllabus. James for example specifically commented that “Teachers who do not possess good pedagogical skills will just brush over the topics and cause the students to cram them without practically demonstrating what it means”. This assertion is supported by Cobbold (2010) who stated that: “the nature and philosophy of Social Studies imply that the teacher who handles the subject at any level should adequately exemplify scholarly and professional competence. Given appropriate resources and adequate time, the teacher should be able to concoct a special mix of content and pedagogy to achieve desired objectives with learners possessing the requisite background knowledge, skills and experiences” (p. 67).

Adams et al. (2013:23) buttressed the discussion. A good Social Studies teacher, according to them should be able to select the appropriate techniques and strategies to use in teaching a particular topic in class. This is because some topics are suitable for some techniques while others are not. For example, a topic like; ‘Knowing myself’ will not lend itself to the use of ‘Lecture’ or ‘Debate’. Instead it will be more appropriate to use, ‘Discussion’, or even ‘Story telling’.

Conclusion and recommendations

Based on the findings, it is concluded that: First, the Revised Social Studies Syllabus for Colleges of Education was designed based on the concept of integration of the Social Sciences. Predominant Social Science elements used were; Geography, Economics, History,

Government and Sociology. There are however, more Geography and Economics topics than other Social Sciences disciplines. Secondly, the content areas of the syllabus are largely based on the JHS syllabus. The content areas for the various units are very much loaded since each unit has many more sub-topics to be treated (Average of 6 topics). Thirdly, the methodology aspects of the syllabus are well tailored to meet the professional needs of students. Subject tutors from the target institutions are largely qualified and highly experienced who are better placed to teach the course and their professional and academic qualifications could have positive impact on their teaching and on their students.

It is recommended for Social Studies tutors to use the problem-solving techniques more frequently in order to make lessons more realistic and meaningful to students. This will help the tutors to cover topics within time. To address the problem of inadequate duration for the topics as enshrined in the syllabus, it is recommended that tutors should adopt the use of innovative techniques such as a Jigsaw which could allow students to quickly learn topics and then pass on the information to other members of the group within a relatively short time. Finally, it is recommended to the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, that any subsequent review of the Social Studies Syllabus should consider either replacing topics or removing topics but not adding topics to the existing ones. Further addition of topics will make the syllabus very difficult to be implemented by tutors because it is just a one credit course. However, if it becomes necessary for topic(s) to be added then the credit hours should as well be revised upwards.

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