



Senior High Students and Teachers' Attitudes towards Social Studies Subject: The Case of Nanumba North District of Northern Region, Ghana

Gilbert Naa Emmideme

E.P. College of Education, Bimbilla, Ghana

Email: emmideme83@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study adopted cross-sectional and descriptive designs to examine Social Studies students and teachers' attitudes towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies in the Senior High Schools (SHSs) in the Nanumba North District of the Northern Region of Ghana. A sample size of 46 SHS students and 10 Social Studies teachers were selected using a simple random sampling technique for the study. From the perspectives of the study participants, the study assessed their attitudes, the causes of the nature of their attitudes as well as the intervention measures for improving their attitudes towards the subject. Questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were the instruments used for data collection. The study revealed that unlike the teachers, the students had a negative attitude towards the subject. While students perceived Social Studies subject as one that is boring and irrelevant to their future career among others causes, the teachers, on the other hand, perceived Social Studies subject as one that can make students good citizens in future. The students, therefore, proposed that Social Studies teachers should adopt teaching methodologies that are learner-centred, interactive and practicable for improving students' attitudes towards the subject. From the teachers' viewpoint, Ghana Education Service (GES) should organize programmes to sensitize students on the roles that Social Studies can play in their lives. They further suggested that GES should organize national competitions on Social Studies as well as institute policies that bind teachers to adopt instructional methods that are learner-centred as a way of forcing Social Studies teachers to adopt instructional pedagogies that will involve the students during Social Studies lessons.

Subject Areas

Sociology

Keywords

Pedagogies, Intervention Measures, Learner-Centred Approach, Good Citizens, Social Studies

1. Introduction

Background to the Study

Social Studies is defined as the blending of ideas, theories, principles, generalization and knowledge from the Social Sciences and Humanities for the purpose of helping learners to fit well into society [1]. It is a subject that equips learners with the skills that are key to opening doors for a more diverse, competitive and responsible citizenry. Students use critical thinking, self-assessment, reasoning, problem-solving, collaboration, research and investigation to make connections in new and innovative ways as they progress through Social Studies education. These standards outline the knowledge and skills needed to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world [2].

Attitude is the expression of inner feelings indicating whether an individual is favorably or unfavorably predisposed to a particular object [3]. It also refers to a person's behavior or disposition toward another person or situation. It is a combination of a person's beliefs, personality, values, behavior and motivation. In their contributions, Crano and Prislin (2006) [4] define attitude as the cognitive/affective responses that are integrated and synchronized in evaluative decisions. Meyer *et al.* (2002) [5] defines attitude as "a favorable or negative evaluative reaction toward something or someone that is frequently rooted in one's beliefs and manifested through one's feelings and intended behaviors". This implies that an attitude may be either positive or negative.

Preparing students for the 21st century cannot be accomplished without a strong and sustaining emphasis on Social Studies [6]. Among the many agencies available for Social Studies education are the family, peer group, mass media, the church and the school [7]. Of all these, the school appears to be the most potent force in the Ghanaian society driving the course of Social Studies. In Ghana, Social Studies is taught at different levels of education, that is, Junior High School, Senior High School, Colleges of Education and in some Universities. Thus, Social Studies is a major part of the school's curriculum in Ghana.

There are four main categories of Social Studies objectives and these are knowledge, skills, values and participation [8]. These categories are also outlined in the objectives declared by Ghana Education Service in the year 2017 for both Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS). The subject is multi-

disciplinary in nature and takes its source from Geography, History, Economics, Civic Education, Sociology and Psychology. Social Studies as a subject, stands on its own and has the capacity to help students think in abstract ways in order to fit well in the society. It also guides students to meet the needs of the changing world. Thus, it explores morals and values as well as provides students with the ability to understand the values associated with being a good citizen [9].

Despite the importance of the subject for the socio-economic development of nations, the marginalization of social studies education in schools has been documented repeatedly. For instance, in the United States, [10] surveyed hundred tenth grade students and hundred twelfth grade students in order to determine their attitudes towards the various subject areas. In the study, English, mathematics and reading were ranked ahead of social studies. Participants described social studies as boring and far from anything they could relate to in their life. This situation could result in the poor performance of students in social studies. Due to the importance of education, the quality of students' academic performance remains a top priority for educators [11]. In this regard, educators, researchers and other stakeholders of education have long been interested in discovering the factors that influence the academic performance of students.

Adane (2013) [12] has opined that academic achievement in schools is the result of interplay of several factors. According to him, negative attitudes toward schooling in general significantly affect academic achievement negatively. In a study by Segkulu (2022) [13] on factors affecting students' academic performance in Social Studies subject in Selected SHSs in Sangnari District and Tamale Metropolis of Northern Ghana, it was revealed that some teacher factors that contribute to the low academic performance were incidences of lateness to school, absenteeism and classroom disturbance while student factors to low academic performance include students poor attitude such as inactiveness during towards Social Studies lessons. According to the study, most students perceive Social Studies lessons as dull, boring and irrelevant to their lives. Thus, if the Social Studies curriculum is to continue to have support from school administrators, politicians and the general public, it is desirable to have positive change in students' attitude towards the subject. It is against this background that this study examined SHS students and teachers' attitude to Social Studies subject in the Bimbilla, Nanyamba North of the Northern Region of Ghana so as to propose recommendations for improving their attitude towards the subject. Specifically, the study was to:

- 1) Assess SHS students and teachers' attitudes towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies subject.
- 2) To ascertain the causes of the nature of attitudes students and teachers exhibit towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies subject?
- 3) Identify intervention measures for improving the attitudes of SHS students and teachers towards the Social Studies subject.

The following research questions guided the study.

- 1) What are the attitudes of SHS students and teachers towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies subject?

2) What are the causes of the nature of the attitudes students and teachers exhibit towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies subject?

3) What are some intervention measures for improving the attitudes of SHS students and teachers towards the Social Studies subject?

2. Research Methodology

The study adopted a mixed methods approach based on naturalist theory. This approach is based on data collection and analysis methods aimed at revealing social relationships and describing reality. Cross-sectional and descriptive designs were used in the study. This has the advantage of drawing a wide range of responses from the respondents. The choice of the mixed method approach was because it increases the validity of the findings as the negative aspect of one method would be compensated by the positive aspect of the other method. The population for the study was made up of all SHS social studies students and teachers of the in the Nanumba North of the Northern Region of Ghana. The target population of the study comprised all Social Studies students from SHS 1, 2 & 3 and Social Studies teachers in the two SHSs (Bimbilla SHS Bimbilla and Holy Spirit SHS, Chamba) during the 2020 academic year during which the study was conducted. A total population of 120 students and teachers was estimated. The available population comprised 100 students and 10 teachers in the two SHSs. The researcher used year two and three SHS students because they study Social Studies as a subject and also have gone through the subject for at least one year and will be in a better position to provide the necessary information for the study. The social studies teachers were those at post within the District because they could give relevant information on the topic under study. The study focused on these students because they were perceived by the researcher to come from families with similar cultural and socio-economic backgrounds characteristics. They are also handled by teachers with similar training backgrounds (predominantly from University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba, both in Ghana).

A sample size of 46 SHS students and 10 Social studies teachers were selected giving a total sample frame of 56 study participants was used for the study. This selection is in line with the guideline provided by [14], which suggests that a minimum sample size of 46 must be selected from a population of 100 (which is the population figure closest to 100) while from population size of 10, the entire population should be considered as a sample size. Each study participant was selected on the basis of simple random sampling technique (lottery method) from each of the two selected SHS in the District. Questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion were the instruments used for data collection. Before data collection, the consent of the school authorities was obtained after which days for the data collection were arranged and the instruments administered to the study participants. The responses of the participants were collected from the respondents the same day to ensure a 100% return rate. The data collection was done within

three working weeks and processed with the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, v.25). Frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the questionnaires. The results were finally correlated according to the research questions.

3. Results and Discussion

The study was guided by the three specific objectives of the study namely, to assess SHS students and teachers' attitudes towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies subject; to ascertain the causes of the nature of attitudes students and teachers exhibit towards the teaching and learning of Social Studies subject and to identify intervention measures for improving the attitudes of SHS students and teachers towards the Social Studies subject. This section presents results from data collected, analyzed and interpreted in line with the specific objectives. The findings of the study are presented under the three research questions

3.1. Research Question One: What Are the Attitudes of SHS Students and Teachers towards the Teaching and Learning of Social Studies Subject?

The study investigated the study participants' attitudes towards Social Studies subject in the two SHSs within the District. Five variables were used to ascertain how they feel about the subject. These were: Inner-motivation, regularity to Social Studies lessons, punctuality to Social Studies lessons, activeness during Social Studies lessons and interest in Social Studies lessons.

3.1.1. Senior High Students' Attitudes towards Social Studies Subject

The responses of the SHS students are summarized in **Table 1** below.

Out of the total number of 46 students, an overwhelming majority of 41 (89%) of them indicated that they do not have inner motivation for social studies subject. Only 5 (11%) of them indicated that they have inner motivation for the subject. When asked how regular they were in attending social studies lessons, as

Table 1. SHS students' attitude towards social studies lessons.

S/N	Perception	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I have inner motivation to learn Social studies subject.	20 (43.0%)	21 (46.0%)	3 (6.5%)	2 (4.4%)
2.	I attend Social Studies lessons regularly	17 (37.0%)	19 (41.0%)	6 (13.0%)	4 (8.8%)
3.	I am punctual at Social Studies lessons	18 (39.0%)	16 (35.1%)	10 (21.7%)	2 (4.4%)
4.	I actively participate in Social Studies lessons	20 (43.0%)	20 (43.0%)	4 (8.8%)	2 (4.4%)
5.	I am interested in Social Studies lessons	15 (33.0%)	15 (33.0%)	8 (17.2%)	8 (17.2%)

Source: Field Data 2020.

many as 36 (78%) of them indicated they do not attend lessons regularly with only 4 (22%) indicating they attend Social Studies lessons regularly.

Their responses on punctuality to Social Studies lessons indicate that as many as 18(39.0%) strongly disagreed while 16(35.1%) of them disagreed that they are punctual to the lessons. Only 10(21.7%) agreed and another 2(4.4%) strongly agreed that they are punctual to Social Studies lessons.

When asked if they actively participate in Social Studies lessons, as many as 20(43.0%) of them strongly disagreed that they actively participate in the lessons. Another 20(43.0%) disagreed that they actively participate in the lessons. Out of the remaining 6, only 4(8.8%) agreed while 2(4.4%) strongly agreed that they participate in Social Studies lessons actively.

On whether they had interest in the Social Studies subject, as many as 30 (66%) of them indicated that they are not interested in the subject. Only 16 (34%) of them indicated that they had interest in the subject.

Generally, the students had negative attitude toward the Social Studies subject (**Table 1**). This observation is in line with reports by the [15] when they reported that students show less interest in studying Social Studies. The observation supports the views of [16] as well as Knowles (2015) that teachers must generate an open and participatory classroom with experimental, collaborative, intercultural, active and contextualized learning [17]. The findings corroborate the views of [13] that there appear to be a lot of weaknesses in the use of teaching and learning materials among social studies teachers that must be addressed to ensure effective lesson delivery during social studies lessons.

3.1.2. Social Studies Teachers' Attitudes towards Social Studies Subject

The responses of the teachers are summarized in **Table 2** below.

Out of the 10 Social Studies teachers that were surveyed, an overwhelming majority of 9 (90%) of them indicated they have inner motivation for social studies subject. Only 1 (10%) of them indicated otherwise. When asked how regular

Table 2. Social Studies teachers' attitude towards social studies lessons.

S/N	Perception	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I have inner motivation for teaching Social Studies	1 (10.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (30.0%)	6 (60.0%)
2.	I honour Social Studies lessons regularly	2 (20.0%)	1 (10.0%)	2 (20.0%)	5 (50.0%)
3.	I am punctual for Social Studies lessons	0 (0.0%)	1 (10.0%)	3 (30.0%)	6 (60.0%)
4.	I teach actively during Social Studies lessons	1 (10.0%)	1 (10.0%)	3 (30.0%)	5 (50.0%)
5.	I am interested in teaching Social Studies	1 (10.0%)	2 (20.0%)	2 (20.0%)	5 (50.0%)

Source: Field Data 2020.

they were in honouring Social Studies lessons, as many as 7 (70%) of them indicated they honour their lessons regularly with only 3 (30%) indicating they do not honour Social Studies lessons regularly.

Talking about punctuality to Social Studies lessons, an overwhelming majority of 9 (90%) of them indicated that they are punctual to Social Studies lessons with only 1 (10%) indicating otherwise. When asked if they teach Social Studies actively, 8 (80.0%) of them indicated that they teach the subject actively. Only 2 (20%) of them indicated that they do not teach the subject actively.

On whether they had interest in the Social Studies subject, 7 (70%) of them indicated that they have interest in the subject. Only 3 (30%) of them indicated that they do not have interest in the subject.

It can be observed from their responses that while the students generally had negative attitude toward the Social Studies subject, the teachers had positive attitude towards the subject (**Table 2**).

3.2. Research Question Two: What Are the Causes of the Nature of the Attitudes Students and Teachers Exhibit towards the Teaching and Learning of Social Studies Subject?

Based on the variables used in assessing the nature of participants' attitude toward the teaching and learning of Social Studies subject, the participants were requested to share their views on the causes of the nature of their attitudes. Their responses are as follows.

3.2.1. Causes of Social Studies Students' Attitude to Social Studies Subject

Inner motivation for Social Studies lessons

As indicated earlier, the students' responses showed that they lacked inner motivation for the subject (**Table 1**). An overwhelming majority 9 (90%) of them indicated that they do not have inner motivation for social studies subject. In their view, the subject is boring, irrelevant and less significant to their future career development. Among the majority who indicated that they do not have inner motivation for the subject, one of them had this to say:

Social Studies is not relevant to my future career like other subjects such as Mathematics, Science and English Language. The subject has less influence regarding my future career.

This observation is in line with report by Dundar and Rapoport (2014) [18] who indicated that upper students demonstrated more negative attitudes toward Social Studies than toward Mathematics or Science. They consider Social Studies as less valuable, and less useful than Mathematics and Science to them.

Regular attendance of Social Studies lessons

Majority 36 (78%) of the students indicated they do not attend Social Studies lessons regularly with only 4 (22%) indicating they attend Social studies lessons regularly (**Table 1**). Explaining why they do not attend Social Studies lessons regularly, they stated that they can easily pass Social Studies examination with-

out learning. One of them was of the view that,

Social Studies is not any difficult subject like Maths, English and Science. So I do not need to attend lessons regularly in order to pass it.

His view was shared by other students who indicated they do not attend Social Studies lessons regularly. This means that students do not see any level of difficulty in passing the Social Studies examination that warrants regular attendance to Social Studies lessons. According to another student,

I really don't see Social Studies subject as having any significant meaning to my future career. This is because I am a science student hoping to do medicine in the university some day. So I pay more attention to subjects like Maths, English and Science rather than Social Studies. That's why I don't honour Social Studies lessons regularly.

His viewpoint was shared by the other students that were surveyed. This observation corroborates reports by Shaughnessy and Haladyna (1985) [19] whose study revealed that, students regard Social Studies subject as having little meaning to their future career as compared to other subjects like English, Science and Mathematics.

Punctuality to Social Studies lessons

As with the case of regularity to Social Studies lessons, the students' response to punctuality to Social Studies lessons indicate that they are not punctual to the lessons (Table 1). Their reasons for not being punctual are same as those offered for not being regular. This means that students generally do not see any level of difficulty in passing Social Studies examination that calls for regularity and punctuality in attending Social Studies lessons. Thus, students regard Social Studies subject as having little meaning to their future career as compared to other subjects like English, Science and Mathematics. This is in line with the views of [19] whose study revealed that, students regard Social Studies subject as having little meaning to their future career.

Active participation in Social Studies lessons

From their responses, the students generally do not participate actively during Social Studies lessons (Table 1). According to them, they find the lessons boring. One of them stated that:

I feel bored during Social Studies lessons, especially when the lesson does not involve the use of teaching and learning materials.

This observation is consistent with the views of [19] who reported that most students perceive Social Studies education as boring and irrelevant. According to Segkulu *et al.* (2022) [20], the use of instructional materials is one of the most significant strategies for encouraging active student participation in the social studies teaching and learning process. Students learn through their senses which create impressions on their minds by arousing and stimulating attention. Consequently, Fokuo (1994) [21] emphasised the use of instructional materials when

he stated that the insatiable quest for social studies scholars to collect data to test hypotheses, answer questions and solve problems that have arisen in individual and group inquiry necessitates the use of many and varied teaching resources.

Literature indicates that the availability of teaching and learning resources and the professional manner in which the teacher uses these teaching and learning resources is indispensable in the delivery of social studies lessons [22]. Thus, the active participation of students in social studies lessons is likely to be influenced by the teaching and learning resources made available and the appropriate manner in which these resources are used by teachers and utilized by learners [23].

Interest in Social Studies lessons

The students generally do not have interest in studying Social Studies in the selected SHSs (Table 1). According to them, even though they find Social Studies to be an important subject for their future lives, they do not find it critical for their future career. One of them was of the opinion that,

Even though Social Studies subject is good, I don't think it is so much relevant to my future career and that is why I do not have much interest in it.

Other students shared similar views, adding that the subject is easy to learn. Their views confirm reports by [15] that students show less interest in studying Social Studies because they perceive the subject as being easy and therefore do not see the need to study it. In a study by [24] on the research topic 'High School Students Perception of Social Studies' in USA, the findings revealed that students did not deem Social Studies to be an important subject to them. These results are consistent with those of [25] [26] that students show less favourable attitudes toward Social Studies than toward other subjects.

3.2.2. Causes of Social Studies Teachers' Attitude to Social Studies Subject Inner motivation for teaching Social Studies lessons

Contrary to the views of the students, the responses of the Social Studies teachers generally indicated they had inner motivation for the subject (Table 2). From their perspectives, Social Studies subject is the most important subject that can make students good citizens hence, the inner motivation to teach the subject. Some of them also explained their inner motivation from the viewpoint of the words of compliments received from their supervisors and words of motivation from other staff. On the other hand, the few who indicated that they do not have inner motivation offered reasons that bother on lack of recognition of their services, lack of adequate motivation on the job and lack of compliments from supervisors/superiors for work done.

From the above, it can be observed that teacher apathy and lack of effort are often caused by the existence of associated service acknowledgement as a result of management style and organizational policies, rather than by individual laziness. Since committed teachers are passionate about their work, they understand the value of their contribution to the students' success in life.

Regular honouring of Social Studies lessons

Generally, the Social Studies teachers indicated they honour their lessons regularly (**Table 2**). They explained that Social Studies subject is an important subject that can make students good citizens hence, the need to honour lessons regularly. One teacher asserted that,

In terms of choosing a subject that will help the students achieve their future ambitions, Social Studies will be considered.

His viewpoint was supported by other teachers who offered reasons that were in line with this assertion. Thus, from the majority standpoint the relevance of the subject to the future wellbeing of the students is the motivation for honouring lessons regularly. They seemed to be concerned about the negative effect of absenteeism on the upbringing of the students as well as the unfairness of being paid for work that is not done. One teacher mentioned that:

Once I don't come to work, I feel I don't deserve to be paid because I feel I am causing financial loss to the state when I get paid for work I have not done. If absenteeism continues to go unpunished, there is no way productivity can be achieved in the schools.

Another mentioned that:

It amounts to irresponsibility to be paid for work not done. And why would anyone decide to absent oneself from work and expect to be paid? What will I be doing without coming to work when I know that is where I make my income for my family upkeep?

Other reasons by the teachers for being regular include: To avoid being queried/sanctioned by school authorities and recognition of job performance. On the other hand, some reasons offered by the teachers for not being regular include; poor work condition, lack of career progression, poor remuneration and attending to private matters. This supports [27] conclusion that high employee engagement not only improves focus and performance, but also lowers absenteeism rates.

Punctuality to Social Studies lessons

The teachers' responses indicate that they are generally punctual to Social Studies lessons (**Table 2**). Their reasons for being punctual are similar to those offered for honouring their lessons regularly. According to them, Social Studies subject is critical in the social upbringing of the students hence, the need to be punctual to Social Studies lessons. One teacher stated that,

By my nature, I am punctual to gatherings in general. Since I am paid for the job, I think I should be regular and punctual to class to honour my lessons in order to justify my salary.

His viewpoint was supported by other teachers who offered reasons that were in line with this statement. Thus, from the majority standpoint the relevance of the subject to the future wellbeing of the students as well as the need

to justify their salary is the motivation for honouring lessons punctually. The respondents' understanding of the impact of absenteeism and lateness seems to be at variance with the view of [28] that employee absenteeism is a poorly understood organizational phenomenon. Their responses suggest they had a very good appreciation of the impact of teacher absenteeism and lateness to the students' academic performance and social upbringing. The teachers' appreciation of the impact of absenteeism and lateness however affirms the authors' view that the economic effect of absenteeism and lateness is immense and that a greater understanding of the factors that contribute to absenteeism can be beneficial for policymakers.

Active teaching of Social Studies lessons

Generally, the teachers indicated that they teach the subject actively (**Table 2**). Reasons offered for teaching actively bothered on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. One teacher stated that:

Remuneration is a source of motivation which keeps me going, and so whether salary is ready or not I feel motivated to work.

Some of the reasons offered by those not teaching actively were; poor extrinsic motivation and favoritism by school authorities and unfairness in the disbursement of remuneration by authorities. Some of them lamented that they never had any meaningful remuneration for a long while. According to them, their supervisors assumed any extra work carried out was part of their duties hence denied them of any form of remuneration. Thus, their responses indicate that remuneration is a very critical expectation that motivates teachers for active teaching. This is in line with [29], who contend that interactions inherent in the job itself are more motivating to staff than the atmosphere alone. Furthermore, where the job is challenging, employees have high expectations in terms of reward and if these expectations are not met, workers are more likely to develop a negative attitude about their work.

Interest in teaching Social Studies lessons

Generally, the teachers' responses showed that they had interest in teaching the subject (**Table 2**). As indicated earlier for teaching actively, the majority of them stated that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are the reasons for their interest in teaching the subject. One of them had this to say:

I feel happy teaching the subject. This is because I am able to learn what I previously do not know and I become more curious about the past. In terms of historical consciousness, I am able to gain historical information, develop local awareness, and consciousness about the world and the people around the world. I am also able to comprehend the importance and value of historical and cultural values. As a result, I gain consciousness on protecting the historical and cultural artefacts, as well as transferring them to the next generations.

From the above views of teachers, it can be concluded that Social Studies

teachers, unlike the students, have positive attitude towards the subject.

3.3. Research Question Three: What Are the Intervention Measures for Improving SHS Students' Attitudes towards the Social Studies Lessons?

Based on the reasons for the nature of attitudes exhibited by the study participants towards Social Studies, research question three sought to find out from the respondents their views on intervention measures for improving their attitudes towards Social Studies subject. Their responses are as follows.

3.3.1. Social Studies Students' Proposed Intervention Measures for Improving Their Attitudes to Social Studies Subject

Inner motivation for Social Studies lessons

Among the reasons offered by the majority for not having inner motivation for the subject was the perception that Social Studies is boring and not relevant like subjects such as Mathematics, Science and English Language in influencing their future life. They were also of the view that when Social Studies teachers give lots of notes, it makes teaching and learning of Social Studies boring. Based on this, some intervention measures proposed by the students include changing the curriculum to reduce the volume of notes given to students. Some of them were of the view that:

Students have much inner motivation for Social Studies when teachers use methods such as role play, drama, field trip and discussion. I enjoy Social Studies class when teaching and learning materials are used effectively.

This also means that students prefer Social Studies lessons with variety of teaching learning materials than those without these teaching and learning materials. Thus, students' inner motivation in the lesson is sustained when teachers employ the use of drama, role play and the field trip methods to teach Social Studies. This confirms the views of [30] and [31] that the methods the teacher adopts when teaching Social Studies has a unique influence on the students' inner motivation.

Regular attendance of Social Studies lessons

From the majority standpoint, Social Studies is not any difficult subject like Maths, English and Science and hence, no need to attend lessons regularly in order to pass it. Some indicated they do not see Social Studies subject as having any significant meaning to their future career. This means that students do not see any motivation for attending Social Studies lessons regularly. According to one of them:

Some intervention measures to improve regularity of attendance include the institution of award-winning packages and sanctions by the school authorities will be appropriate.

Some of them also mentioned learner-centred approach could encourage regular attendance by the students.

Punctuality to Social Studies lessons

The students' reasons for not being punctual are similar to those offered for not being regular. Some indicated they do not see Social Studies subject as having any significant meaning to their future career. This means that students do not see any motivation for attending Social Studies lessons punctually. According to one of them,

Some intervention measures to improve punctuality include the institution of award-winning packages and sanctions by the school authorities.

Another student was of the view that:

Teachers should make the class practicable with field trips or excursions and other out-of-door activities to improve punctuality. They should show good exemplary lifestyle by being punctual, demonstrating good subject mastery and adopting learner-centred approach in teaching to make lessons interactive. This is one intervention measure for improving punctuality and regularity among students.

The responses of the students indicate that Social Studies teachers have a role to play when it comes to improving students' punctuality to Social Studies lessons. Teachers should exhibit good attitude towards the subject, have mastery over content, involve the students when teaching and employ various methodologies that make Social Studies lessons appealing to the students.

Active participation in Social Studies lessons

Similar to the students' views on intervention measures for improving punctuality, they were of the view that the subject is boring, especially when the lesson does not involve the use of teaching and learning materials. One student was of the view that,

The subject is boring and so teachers should ensure effective use of learner-centred approaches that afford students the opportunity to use their hands, legs, and other parts of the body. In addition, field trips or excursions and other out-of-door activities could be effective in improving active participation among students. The use of teaching -learning materials are also very critical in improving student participation during Social Studies lessons.

Students learn through their senses which create impressions on their minds to sustain their attention. Consequently, Fokuo (1994) [21] emphasized the use of instructional materials when he stated that the insatiable quest for social studies scholars to collect data to test hypotheses, answer questions and solve problems that have arisen in individual and group inquiry necessitates the use of teaching and learning resources. Thus, the active participation of students in social studies lessons is likely to be influenced by the effective use of teaching and learning resources [23].

Interest in Social Studies lessons

From the students' responses, it can be observed that the students want their

social studies lessons to be activity-oriented and not limited to the classroom only. In proposing intervention measures for improving students' interest in Social Studies subject, one student stated that,

The use of teaching and learning materials could make Social Studies lessons interactive and interesting. Social Studies teachers should make use of out-of-door activities as well audio-visual aids and a variety of teaching approaches which have the potency to sustain the interest of learners.

The study participants shared similar views which are in line with report by [33] that the use of out-of-door activities and other forms of learner-centred teaching approaches promotes effective teaching and learning of Social Studies.

3.3.2. Social Studies Teachers' Proposed Intervention Measures for Improving Their Attitudes to Social Studies Subject

The teachers' proposed measures to improve their attitudes toward Social Studies Subject include better conditions of service, recognition of service, opportunity for further studies, institution of award scheme, availability of resources/logistics for engaging students in out-of-door activities, teaching learning materials, maps, globes, as well as effective supervision. Some teachers also suggested that,

There should be programmes to sensitize students on the roles that Social Studies can play in their lives. This will inform the students the reasons they should adopt positive attitudes towards Social Studies lessons. There should also be national competition on Social Studies in terms of current affairs, history, and many others to create awareness on the importance of the subject. The Ghana Education Service (GES) should institute policies that compel teachers to adopt instructional methods that are learner-centred. This will force the teachers to adopt instructional pedagogies that will involve the students in the lesson.

Thus, for the attitude of both students and teachers to improve towards the subject, teachers should adopt the use of different teaching and learning materials in their Social Studies classes. One reason cited by teachers for lateness was lack of job satisfaction among the teachers. This is in line with the views of [13] who reported that factors that influence job satisfaction such as sufficient and equitable compensation; secure and stable working conditions should be given attention in the Ghana Education Service so as to ensure a quality of work environment that enhances positive attitude of teachers. Newstrom and Davis (2001) [33] also opined that when employees are not satisfied, they may develop negative attitudes like lateness, absenteeism, tardiness, laziness, rudeness, mongering among others which could retard the overall progress, goals and objectives of the organization.

4. Conclusion

The study revealed that unlike the Social Studies teachers, SHS students within

the Nanumba North District have negative attitude towards Social Studies subject. While the students perceive Social Studies subject as one that is boring, irrelevant to their future career among others causes, the teachers, on the other hand, perceive Social Studies subject as one that can make students good citizens in future. The students therefore proposed that teachers should employ teaching methodologies that are learner-centred, interactive and practicable in order to improve their attitudes towards the subject. They further proposed intervention measures such as the use of teaching learning materials, out-of-door activities, audio-visual aids among others for improving students' attitude towards the subject. From the teachers' viewpoint, Ghana Education Service (GES) should organize programmes to sensitize students on the role that Social Studies can play in their lives. This could inform the students on the reasons why they should develop positive attitude toward Social Studies subject. They further suggested that GES should organize national competition on Social Studies in terms of currents affairs, history, and many others to create awareness on the importance of the subject. GES should institute policies that compel teachers to adopt instructional methods that are learner-centred. This could encourage the teachers to adopt instructional pedagogies that involve the students during the lesson.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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