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## Integrated Nature of Social Studies in Junior High Schools in Ghana: Pedagogical Implications

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### Abstract:

*The study investigated the pedagogical implications of the integrated nature of Social Studies in Junior High Schools (JHSs) in Ghana. Quantitative data collection and analyses procedures were used. All the 346 Social Studies teachers in JHSs in the Kumasi Metropolis during the 2017/2018 academic year were included (census) in the study. However, 341 teachers provided usable data for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data. Descriptive statistics with means and standard deviation were employed to analyse and present the data. In effect, Social Studies teachers do not possess the requisite competence that would enable them teach Social Studies in an integrated manner. This is due to the nature of the content and training provided them during their pre-service training. The implication is that they teach areas of the Social Studies curriculum they are abreast with while placing little or no emphasis on other relevant areas of the curriculum. It was recommended that there should be agreement as to the essential elements that should constitute the Social Studies curriculum at tertiary levels of education in Ghana. This will help provide a common content for the Social Studies curriculum for training Social Studies teachers in an integrated manner by teacher training tertiary institutions in Ghana. Also, courses in the Social Studies in the teacher training institutions in Ghana should acquaint Social Studies teachers with knowledge and experiences in integrated Social Studies and provide them with experiences in teaching Social Studies in an integrated manner. This will equip all Social Studies teachers to be better positioned to teach Social Studies in an integrated manner.*

**Keywords:** Academic qualification, curriculum, integration, instructional strategies, pedagogy

### 1. Introduction

Social Studies are the integrated study of the Social Sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school programme, Social Studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences (Aggarwal, 2000). The primary purpose of this integration is 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. In the Ghanaian education system, Social Studies is taught across the nation as a core subject. As a field of study, Social Studies may be more difficult to define than is a single discipline such as history or geography, precisely because it is multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary.

Two main characteristics, however, distinguish Social Studies as a field of study: it is designed to promote civic competence; and it is integrative, incorporating many fields of endeavor. At the primary level, children often learn Social Studies through learning opportunities that are highly integrated across several disciplines including citizenship education (Kwenin, 2010). This often takes the form of units constructed around themes. As students proceed to middle and higher levels, Social Studies programmes may continue to be highly integrated. The integrated nature of Social Studies is such that knowledge is perceived in a holistic manner and that all disciplines must promote man's understanding of issues and solutions to problems (Tamakloe, 1994). This presupposes that there are no rigid lines that separate one subject from the other and that all issues should be treated in an integrated way. The integrated nature of Social Studies requires that teachers who implement the curriculum should be trained in the integrated Social Studies approach. This means that teachers of Social Studies should have adequate knowledge in the Social Sciences and other related subjects which serve as foundation courses for Social Studies. Teachers should therefore possess the requisite academic qualification in Social Studies. It is believed that when a teacher possesses all these, he or she would be better positioned to teach Social Studies curriculum effectively. According to Agnes (2013), teachers with good academic qualification are more effective in their classrooms in terms of students' behavior, better understanding of concepts, and are able to choose appropriate pedagogies. In support of this, Stanley (1991) says that the effectiveness of the teacher depends on his knowledge of the subject matter. On the other hand, lack of adequate knowledge, skills and experiences in the combining subjects will make the teaching of Social Studies less effective. Similar assertion is made by Kwenin (2017) who indicated that due to the

integrated nature of Social Studies, its effective teaching is inextricably dependent on the quality of Social Studies teachers who are adequately informed about what to teach, how to teach, attitudes, values, and skills expected to be transmitted to the learner for the realization of the functional goals of Social Studies. Therefore, assigning teachers to teach Social Studies when they are not trained to teach it has negative pedagogical implications.

### 1.1. Problem Statement

The quality of Social Studies teachers and the effectiveness of their instructional strategies in the classroom are crucial in the effective teaching of Social Studies. According to Aggarwal (1982), Social Studies more than any other subject, demands well prepared conscientious teachers of sound knowledge. It demands that teachers be knowledgeable in the Social Studies components vis-à-vis economics, geography, history, sociology, and current affairs. Teachers must also be abreast with modern methods of instruction in Social Studies such as inquiry and discovery methods. The teacher of Social Studies must also possess a good academic qualification in Social Studies education (Aggarwal, 1982). Good academic qualification in Social Studies or related discipline positions the teacher to teach Social Studies well. It is against this background that Leming (1991) asserts that the characteristics of Social Studies teachers such as professional values and experience are potentially valuable for understanding the art of teaching and the influence of teachers. Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon and Birman (2002) support this view that professional development is essential to improving teacher quality and that changes in teaching practice will occur if teachers have a consistent and high-quality professional training. It is therefore imperative to know that the more Social Studies teachers are qualified and well trained, the greater the success in achieving the objectives of teaching Social Studies (Usman, 2002).

According to the Ghana Education Service (2001), Social Studies is integration of the Social Sciences and must be taught as such. However, there are a large number of teachers who have been assigned to teach for which their certification is irrelevant (Ingersoll, 2003). Ingersoll asserts that one of the least recognised undesirable practices is the phenomenon of out-of-field teaching. That is, teachers assigned to teach subject for which they have little training or education. The implication is that the Social Studies curriculum will not be effectively implemented since teachers without the requisite academic and professional qualification in integrated Social Studies will place much emphasis on their areas of orientation (geography, economics, history, sociology, anthropology, and civics) to the disadvantage of other areas where they have little or no knowledge. In support of this, Boadu and Kwenin (2010) indicated that most teachers tend to hammer particular aspects of the Social Studies curriculum while neglecting others due to the fact that they have little or no knowledge or experience in those areas they neglect. This phenomenon, should it continue, have serious negative pedagogical implications, hence, the focus of this research.

### 1.2. Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to explore the pedagogical implications of the integrated nature of Social Studies in basic schools in Ghana. Specifically, the study was designed to:

- Explore teachers' level of competence in integrated Social Studies.
- Identify the academic qualification of Social Studies teachers and its implications on the teaching of Social Studies in basic schools in Ghana.
- Identify challenges basic school Social Studies teachers encounter when teaching Social Studies in an integrated manner.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. The Nature of Social Studies

In Social Studies knowledge is perceived to be holistic in manner and that there are no rigid lines that separate knowledge and that all disciplines and societal issues are treated in an integrated manner. Integration in Social Studies is attained through the drawing of ideas, issues, concepts, themes, generalizations, theories from different areas of study or experiences. By nature, integration in Social Studies adheres to the tenets of the Gestalt psychology which views knowledge as a whole rather than as separate and disjointed entity (Grasha, 1985). In the view of the African Social and Environmental Studies Programme (ASESP, 1994), Social Studies is integrated for the purpose of promoting and practicing effective problem solving, promoting man's understanding of the physical and social environment. It is in line with the integrated nature of Social Studies that the Ghana Education Service (2010) defines Social Studies as "integrated bodies of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that help pupils develop a broader perspective of Ghana and the world" (p. iii). Similarly, the National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS] (2003) views the nature of Social Studies as integration of diverse experiences for solving social problems. In this regard, they defined Social Studies as the integrated study of the Social Sciences and humanities to promote civic competence within the school programme for the purpose of addressing societal problems. To the NCSS, because civic issues such as health care and crime are multi-disciplinary in nature, understanding these issues require multi-disciplinary education, which Social Studies provide.

Banks (1990) appears to have given an in-depth description of Social Studies in relation to its nature when he states that "the Social Studies is that part of the elementary and secondary school curriculum which has the primary responsibility of helping students to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to participate in the civic life of their local communities, the nation and the world" (p.3). What Banks (1990) means is that, learners need knowledge of the contemporary world in which they live and its historical antecedent which guide individual to develop well as good citizens. All these definitions point out one distinct characteristic of Social Studies – integration. This is an indication that

Social Studies draws knowledge, skills, values, experiences from many fields of study and through critical thinking, all these are integrated as a whole for students' learning.

## 2.2. Teachers' Level of Competence in Integrated Social Studies

For Social Studies teachers to be able to handle Social Studies in an integrated manner at the various levels of education in Ghana, they should possess sound academic and professional qualification in the various foundation courses of Social Studies. By sound academic and professional qualification, it means the teachers should possess either diploma in basic education, bachelor of education degree in Social Studies or any other related higher education degree in Social Studies. In all these situations, the qualification should relate more to integrated Social Studies. This qualification would help in equipping the teacher with an accumulated body of knowledge and requisite skills to perform well as a classroom teacher. This is because, a cursory look at the Social Studies curriculum at the junior high school level in Ghana reveals that Social Studies integrates both the physical and social environment. Therefore, for any teacher to effectively handle Social Studies at this level, the person must have gained much knowledge, experiences, skills and competencies in issues relating to both the physical and the social environment (Kwenin, 2010). In Ghana, the colleges of education and the universities train teachers for teaching Social Studies at various levels of education. In the case of the colleges of education, teachers are not specifically trained to teach Social Studies but rather they are trained to teach all subjects except in instances where teachers specialize in other fields such as science, mathematics, French, vocational skills, among others. This presupposes that although, teachers might have been trained to teach at the junior high school level, the level of training they gain is not adequate to meet the demand of the integrated nature of the Social Studies curriculum in junior high schools in Ghana. In the case of the universities, two categories of teachers are trained who may finally end up becoming Social Studies teachers.

One group are those who have received professional training in integrated Social Studies education from recognized universities and therefore have been awarded the requisite qualification in integrated Social Studies education whilst the other group are those who received training in the separate subjects of geography, economics, history, sociology, and other related disciplines and as such have with little or no knowledge in the integrated Social Studies education and yet teach Social Studies (Kankam, 2016). While the first group are likely to perceive Social Studies in an integrated manner, the second category of teachers are not likely to perceive Social Studies as integrated subject since they had not undergone any academic training in theory and the principles of integrated Social Studies as well as the methods and strategies of teaching Social Studies in an integrated manner. According to Tamakloe (1994), the integrated nature of Social Studies requires teachers who have acquired sound academic and professional knowledge in the foundation courses of Social Studies. This will enable them handle Social Studies effectively. Acquisition of sound academic and professional knowledge means that the teacher of Social Studies should not only be knowledgeable in geography, economics, history, sociology, etc. but should be competent in teaching these subjects in an integrated manner. The teacher should have sound knowledge about the nature of Social Studies and must be innovative in order to contribute to the development of the Social Studies programme. He or she should acquire the skills of selecting appropriate methods of teaching Social Studies as well as the foundation courses of Social Studies. Methods such as role play, dramatization, discussion, debating, among others should be effectively used in an integrated manner to promote learners' understanding in Social Studies.

## 2.3. The Implication of Teacher Qualification on Teaching Social Studies

The most important factor in improving students' achievement in Social Studies is by employing seasoned qualified teachers in all schools (Abe & Adu, 2013). For the Social Studies teacher to perform effectively in teaching Social Studies, he or she needs a sound academic and educational qualification in Social Studies. It is against this background that Leming (1991) asserts that the characteristics of Social Studies teachers such as professional values and experience are potentially valuable for understanding the art of teaching social studies and the influence of teachers on learners. Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon and Birman (2002) support the view that professional development is essential to improving teacher quality and those changes in teaching practice will occur if Social Studies teachers have a consistent and high-quality professional training. Wenglinsky (2002) showed that there exists a link between teacher quality and students' performance. Thus, it is his belief that teachers' inputs can influence student's performance. He noted further that, the greatest influence on students' achievement come from classroom practices and the professional development that supports them. Therefore, regardless of the level of preparation students bring into the classroom, decisions that teachers make about classroom practices can either greatly facilitate students' learning or serve as an obstacle to it. Wenglinsky's (2002) conclusion implies that good quality Social Studies teachers have impact on the performance of students of Social Studies in the classroom in terms of their achievement.

By implication, no matter how good or bad the student is, there is a great influence from the teacher's teaching practices in the classroom. In support of this view, Darling-Hammond (2000) asserts that assigning teachers to teach courses that they are not trained to teach has a negative effect on students' achievement. They claim further that teachers who are trained and teach in the area in which they are certified outperform teachers who have no certification or training in the areas they teach. Darling-Hammond meant is that, a teacher who was trained in a certain or specific field and is assigned to teach that field performs better than another teacher who was trained in a particular subject but is given different subject to teach. This is synonymous to the medical field where no professional can be expected to diagnose and administer treatment to patients better than the professional whose initial training was on providing medical care to patients. According to Agnes (2013) teachers with good professional competence and interpersonal skills are more effective in their classrooms in terms of students' behaviour, better understanding of concepts by students and disposition of positive and mental alertness by learners. Such teachers with good mastery of his subject matter and pedagogical skills

always command respect and gain students' attention during teaching and learning process (Aggarwal, 2001) and also continually monitor their students' progress. This means that the academic and professional qualification Social Studies teachers acquire in the field of teaching Social Studies is a very important variable that influences the attainment of higher academic performance by students of Social Studies.

#### 2.4. Challenges of Teaching Social Studies in an Integrated Manner

Social Studies education is closely bound to providing integrated skills, methods, knowledge and relevant teaching materials. In trying to impart this knowledge and skills to students of Social Studies, certain factors impede teachers' pedagogical practices. In the view of David (2013), Social Studies textbooks have been written by people with superficial knowledge of the subject, and hence sub-standard, a situation which seriously undermines the effective teaching of Social Studies. This situation may emanate from the fact that most authors lack adequate knowledge in integrated Social Studies. When this happens, teachers are unlikely to teach Social Studies in an integrated manner. Similar to this problem is the fact that many teachers have limited experience in integration. This makes their teaching very boring to students. Lawson (2003) opines that many students see Social Studies as boring and far from anything they could relate to their life. They found the subject very bring, not interesting and an avenue for them to sleep and relax as a result of methods used by the most teachers.

One other problem of teaching integrated Social Studies is the confusion over the definition and scope of Social Studies. Owen (1997) conducted a study on the definition of Social Studies. Participants were required to consider whether or not it was difficult to define Social Studies. Fifty-eight percent did not think it was, and 9.6 percent were undecided. Less than a third of the participants perceived the definition of Social Studies as being elusive, even though the literature is saturated with debates over the definition of Social Studies and discussions about how its definition influences the choice of content. Also, on the content of Social Studies, participants had to determine if the term "Social Studies" really means a combination of History and Geography. Thirty-two percent agreed with the statement, 52.5 percent disagreed with the statement, and 15 percent were undecided. Almost three-fourths of the participants either believed that Social Studies was one of the Social Sciences or remained undecided, what did that indicate about their understanding of the nature of the academic disciplines in the Social Sciences and how these disciplines differ from Social Studies? Second, how can pre-service elementary teachers adequately understand the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of Social Studies if they believe Social Studies is one of the academic disciplines in the Social Sciences? If a majority of the participants did not perceive Social Studies as being difficult to define, how do they explain the fact that experts in the field have found the opposite to be true? Why such a large percentage (47.5%) of the participant was unconvinced that Social Studies was something other than merely a combination of history and geography?

Moreover, the confusion about the scope of Social Studies emanates from the fact that the scope of Social Studies varies from one writer to another and from one country to another. Aggarwal (1982) says the scope of Social Studies is very vast, wide and in fact, as the whole world itself and as lengthy as history of man. This has made many writers present variety of scope of Social Studies. The educationist who met to discuss social education in Africa at the Endicott Summer House at Massachusetts in 1961 considered Social Studies to be the integration of history and civics. Banks (1990) rather proceeds that at the lower grades the scope of Social Studies is based on institutions and communities such as the home, the family, the school, the neighborhood and the community. He points further that at the higher level's variety of elective courses such as sociology, psychology and the problems of democracy are offered. Martorella (2001) writes that most educators would agree that Social Studies gains some of its identity from the Social Sciences such as sociology, history, geography, economics and psychology. In defining the scope of Social Studies, the Ghana Education Service [GES] (1990) stresses that Social Studies integrates History, Geography, Civics and elements of Economics, government and Sociology. It is also held that the scope of Social Studies extends beyond the Social Sciences. Hence, Shiandu (1988) describes that the scope of Social Studies has an infinite limit and therefore cut across all existing disciplines and new social issues yet to unfold. As a result of the fact the scope of Social Studies has no definite limit, Beard (1963) says that the scope of Social Studies is "a seamless web too large for any human eye". (p. 1). Barr, Barth and Shermis (1977) also describe the scope of Social Studies as "a schizophrenic bastard child" (p.1). Mehlinger and Daves (1981) believe that the broad field of Social Studies has accredited social importance but stresses that the subject lacks consistently discernible heart. They add that the field provides fertile grounds for unbound advocacy. It can be said from the various ideas expressed that the scope of Social Studies has not got a well-defined limit and that it integrates vital ideas which could help learner to fit into the society in which they find themselves. In sum it can be said that the scope of Social Studies appears to know no bounds because skills, knowledge and values in any subject areas can be used to explain issues and phenomena and to solve problems which mankind faces.

Another problem that affects effective teaching of Social Studies in an integrated manner is the pedagogy used in teaching the integrated Social Studies. The integrated nature of Social Studies connotes that it consists of unification of ideas, theories, principles, knowledge, skills, experiences as well as resources drawn from different subject areas. By implication, the methods and resources of teaching knowledge of the individual subject should also be blended in order to ensure effective transmission of knowledge and skills. However, since many teachers of Social Studies do not possess adequate knowledge in the combining subjects, they hardly employ the integrated pedagogy for imparting knowledge in Social Studies (Kwenin, 2017).



### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Design

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The relevance of the descriptive approach to research in the field of education has been addressed by scholars such as Frankel and Wallen (2003) who agree that descriptive survey produces a good number of responses from numerous people at a time, provides a meaningful picture of events and seeks to explain people's perception and behavior on the basis of information obtained at a point in time. To them, descriptive survey designs could be used with greater confidence with regards to particular questions which are of special interest and value to researchers. The researcher therefore used this design to determine the pedagogical implications of the integrated nature of Social Studies as it exists at the time of the study.

#### 3.2. Population

The population for the study consisted of all 346 Junior High School Social Studies Teachers in all the 186 Junior High Schools in the Kumasi Metropolis in the 2017/2018 academic year. However, 341 (98.6%) Social Studies Teachers provided usable data for the study. The rationale for choosing JHSs in the Kumasi Metropolis was due to the fact that majority of the teachers though have obtained the requisite qualification (diploma in basic education and bachelor's degree), the qualification varies from one teacher to another in terms of scope of content of their qualifications. All the teachers were however included (census) in the study to respond to the questionnaire due to their small size.

#### 3.3. Instrument for Data Collection

A self-developed questionnaire was used. A 3-point Likert-type scale was used: 1 = agree, 2 = uncertain, 3 = disagree. Items were structured along the lines of the Likert scale because it enabled the respondents to indicate the degree of their acceptance to a given statement. It was also easy to construct, administer, and score (Kimmon, 1990). The aim was generally to collect systematically a body of quantifiable data in respect of a number of variables which could be examined to discern pattern (Bryman, 2004). The use of questionnaire was also preferred because it ensured a wider coverage of respondents and enabled me to approach the respondents easily. It also enabled the respondents to respond quickly to the items.

#### 3.4. Validity of the Instruments

This study incorporated the procedures of content validity. The claim for content validity was based on the examination of the survey instruments by educational professionals. The design of the questionnaire was influenced by the literature reviewed in my study to ensure that the questionnaire reflects the representative themes. The questionnaire was initially revised by experts in item construction who commented on the layout of the questionnaire, the wording and possibilities of similar statement. The aim was to reveal any ambiguity, threatening questions and other problems which needed to be sorted before trying out the questionnaire.

Researchers (Best & Kahn, 1998; Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996) advocated pilot-testing the survey instruments prior to its delivery to the participants. In this regard, the instrument was pilot-tested in the Cape Coast Metropolis with 50 JHS Social Studies teachers. This was because the Kumasi and Cape Coast Metropolis bear similar characteristics in terms of teacher characteristics (academic and professional qualification) in the teaching of Social Studies. Pilot-testing the instrument aimed at ensuring that the questionnaire was suitable to elicit the responses from the Social Studies teachers on the pedagogical implications of the teaching of Social Studies, to check the clarity of the items and to identify, restructure and re-phrase any ambiguities that existed. It was also meant to ensure that administration procedures were effective. The outcome of the pilot-test provided very beneficial feedback before the actual data collection exercise. Besides, the layout of the questionnaire needed to be revised in terms of ensuring the consistency of font size and line spacing. This made the planning for the actual field work less stressful and less difficult. More importantly, the pilot-testing of the instrument enabled the researcher to establish the internal consistency and reliability of the instrument.

#### 3.5. Reliability of the Questionnaire

The development of multi-item rating scale required evaluation of the scale for reliability. According to Greenleaf (1992), a multi-item scale should be evaluated for accuracy and applicability. In relation to this study, this involved testing for internal consistency among the items measuring each construct. In order to determine whether the items succeeded in testing the constructs they sought to test the individual items were tested for reliability. This was compiled by computing the Cronbach's alpha coefficient which indicated the degree of item-total correlation. It varies from 0 to 1 and a value of 0.6 or less generally indicates unsatisfactory internal-consistency reliability and therefore helps in deciding whether to delete an item from the list and whether the elimination improves the corresponding alpha values (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

I used the Cronbach's alpha against the background that its values tend to increase with an increase in the number of items in a scale. Individual items with corrected item-to-total correlation below 0.6 were eliminated. In all, the total number of items eliminated was 14. The items under each construct therefore possessed item-total-correlation coefficients. Although Malhotra and Birks (2000) state that the coefficient alpha is artificially and inappropriately inflated by including several redundant scale items, it was favoured against others because of its popularity among social science researchers.

### 3.6. Data Collection Procedure

Each JHS was contacted separately to schedule an appropriate time to administer the questionnaire to the Social Studies teachers. In each school, a briefing section was organised to brief respondents on the study. This was done to a) explain the goals of the study; b) direct respondents' attention to their rights during the course of the study; c) clarify the instructions for responding to the items; and d) obtain a good return rate and more accurate data. The respondents were also assured of confidentiality of their responses. To facilitate the administration of the questionnaire, letter of introduction which was obtained from the Department of Business and Social Sciences Education, University of Cape Coast was shown to the Social Studies teachers of the respective schools. The questionnaires were then distributed personally to the participants between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 when permission was granted.

### 3.7. Ethical Consideration

Ethically, it was prudent to seek the consent of respondents before instruments were administered. The respondents were given autonomy, that is, they had the right to be informed about the nature and the consequences of the research in which they were involved. Proper respect for human freedom was ensured by giving the teachers the opportunity to agree voluntarily to participate – that is, without physical or psychological coercion and also their agreement were based on full and open information the research gave them. Deliberate misrepresentation is forbidden in research. The straightforward application of this principle suggests that researchers conduct data gathering free from active deception. Teachers were given adequate knowledge of the study being conducted and no vital information concerning their involvement was hidden. They were made to understand that data that were gathered were used for the purpose for which they were gathered, that is academic and not anything else. The researcher explained the purpose and gave the teachers the opportunity to ask questions about methods and procedures pertaining to the research. Information offered by the respondents was therefore used only for the purpose of the study.

Ethics in research also insist on safeguards to protect participants' identities. Confidentiality must be assured as the primary safeguard against unwanted exposure. All personal data ought to be secured or concealed and made public only behind a shield of anonymity. In the case of this study, respondents were asked not to give personal private information. Copies of the questionnaire were given to the teachers for their personal perusal in order to make sure that the data collection process and the information required would not infringe on the rights of the teachers, and also create ethical problems to the schools. After they had gone through, they offered their acceptance to offer the requisite information for the study.

### 3.8. Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaire were organised into three sections based on the objectives of the study. Prior to coding and tabulating the items on the questionnaires for analysis, all the items were checked. This helped the researcher to check to see if instructions had been followed uniformly and whether all items had been responded to. The responses to the questionnaires were then coded by assigning numbers to the various categories of responses for the purposes of analyses. That is, "agree" was scored 1, "disagree" was scored 2, "undecided" was scored 0. After checking incomplete and inaccurate questionnaire, the items on the questionnaires were transferred to a spreadsheet (Statistical Product and Service Solutions, version 22.0). The data were then cleaned by examining them for any errors and were finally analysed using the SPSS. All the research questions were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

## 4. Discussion of Findings

This chapter presents the results and discussion. The presentation of results covered issues such as: teachers' level of competence in integrated Social Studies, academic qualification of Social Studies teachers in basic schools and its implications on the teaching of Social Studies, and the challenges Social Studies teachers encounter when teaching Social Studies in an integrated manner.

The items were tested on 1 to 3 Likert-type scale (1 = agree, 2 = uncertain, 3 = disagree). The weights were added to get the average for the acceptable mean value ( $1+2+3 = 16$ ;  $6 / 3 = 2$ ). Therefore, mean value of 2 meant that the respondents were uncertain with the items or statement and a mean value greater than 1.0 to 1.9 meant the respondents were in agreement while a mean value of 2.1 to 3.0 meant that respondents were in disagreement.

I Have Acquired	A		U		D		Mean	Std. Dev.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Pedagogical content knowledge in Social Studies	34	10.0	5	1.5	302	88.5	2.79	0.61
Knowledge of philosophical bases for teaching Social Studies	19	5.6	45	13.2	277	81.2	2.76	0.54
Skills in teaching Social Studies in an integrated manner	45	13.2	10	2.9	286	83.9	2.71	0.69
Knowledge about the nature of Social Studies	39	11.4	21	6.2	281	82.4	2.71	0.66
Knowledge about the scope of Social Studies	35	10.3	33	9.7	273	80.0	2.70	0.65
Knowledge of the goals and objectives of teaching Social Studies	103	30.2	15	4.4	223	65.4	2.35	0.92
Content knowledge in Social Studies	118	34.6	12	3.5	211	61.9	2.27	0.95
General technological, pedagogical and content knowledge	253	74.2	0	0.0	88	25.8	1.52	0.88
General pedagogical knowledge in teaching	311	91.2	2	0.6	28	8.2	1.17	0.55

*Table 1: Teachers' Level of Competence in Integrated Social Studies*

*Source: Field Data, 2019*

Results from Table 1 indicate that majority of the teachers ( $n = 341$ ,  $M = 2.79$ ,  $SD = 0.61$ ) indicated that they lack the pedagogical content knowledge to teach social studies in an integrated manner. Another majority ( $n = 341$ ,  $M = 2.76$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ) of the teachers have not acquired knowledge about the philosophical bases of teaching Social Studies. It is further revealed that majority of the teachers do not have the skills in teaching social studies in an integrated nature ( $n = 341$ ,  $M = 2.71$ ,  $SD = 0.69$ ), and knowledge about the nature of Social Studies ( $n = 341$ ,  $M = 2.71$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ). On the contrary, majority of the teachers have acquired competence in general pedagogical knowledge in teaching ( $n = 341$ ,  $M = 1.52$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ). This is not surprising since this forms part of the training of teachers in general across all the teacher training institutions in Ghana.

It could be deduced from the results that since most of the teachers were not trained in the integrated Social Studies, they do not possess most requisite competencies in teaching the subject in an integrated manner. Competencies such as pedagogical content knowledge, content knowledge, knowledge about the curriculum as well as technological pedagogical content knowledge in Social Studies are taught through teacher preparatory programmes of the various institutions that train teachers to teach Social Studies at various levels of education in Ghana. However, at the College of Education level in Ghana which trains teachers to teach at the basic level of education, much emphasis is not laid on such competence. Rather, emphasis is laid on general pedagogical content knowledge. At the university level, for instance, the University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba, where teachers are trained, development of teacher competence in content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of philosophical bases of Social Studies is a key component of the training programme. Notwithstanding, variation exists in terms of course courses and course content between the Colleges of Education and the Universities that produce teachers in Social Studies. The characteristics of Social Studies teachers such as knowledge about the nature of Social Studies and skills in teaching Social Studies in an integrated manner are potentially valuable for understanding the art of teaching the subject. This influences teachers' professional development that improves teacher quality and his or her teaching practices. According to Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon and Birman (2002), teachers who are competent in the Social Sciences are more effective in their classrooms in terms of students' behavior, better understanding of concepts by students and disposition of positive and mental alertness by learners. Such teachers always command respect and gains students' attention during teaching and learning process. Besides, teacher's content knowledge or pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of the learner, knowledge of the curriculum and knowledge of the context is automatically transferred into teacher practice and are relevant to teaching.

#### *4.1. Highest Educational Qualification of Teachers*

This section was meant to obtain information on the highest educational qualifications of the Social Studies teachers in terms of degrees and diploma that in Social Studies or related disciplines. In this regard, I considered the number of teachers who hold specific educational qualification in Social Studies, those who hold related educational qualification in Social Studies, and those whose educational qualifications do not related to Social Studies and yet teach Social Studies. This was done due to the fact that the educational qualifications of Social Studies teachers in junior high schools may vary considerably from one teacher to another due to the variations in preparatory programmes offer by the teacher training institutions in Ghana.

#### *4.2. Academic Qualification of Social Studies Teachers*

The pattern of teacher qualification in Ghana differs from one level of education to another, but normally three years of college of education training is required before teaching at the basic level of education whilst four years or more of first degree and other higher degrees is required to teach Social Studies at the second cycle or tertiary level of education.

In some situations, a Master's degree in one of the Social Sciences (geography, economics, history or sociology) subjects is required to teach Social Studies at the pre-tertiary levels of education in Ghana. Thus, the minimum qualification of teachers teaching the content courses in Social Studies at the basic level of education is diploma whilst that of the second cycle level is first degree and above.

<b>I Have Acquired</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Diploma in Basic Education	286	83.9
Bachelor of Education Degree in Social Studies	18	5.3
Post Graduate Diploma in Education in Social Studies	16	4.7
Bachelor of Education Degree in Social Sciences	9	2.6
Postgraduate Degree in other subject areas	7	2.1
Bachelor of Arts in History	3	0.9
Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences	2	0.6
Total	341	100.0

*Table 2: Academic Qualification of Social Studies Teachers  
Field Data, 2019*

Result from Table 2 shows that 286 (83.9%) who teach Social Studies in basic schools in the Kumasi Metropolis hold Diploma in Basic Education. This is followed by holders of Bachelor of Education Degree in Social Studies 18 (5.3%) and Post Graduate Diploma in Education in Social Studies, 16 (4.7%). By implication, since the colleges of education in Ghana do not provide specialized content knowledge in the integrated Social Studies, majority of the teachers who possess diploma may lack adequate content knowledge in the integrated Social Studies which is prerequisite to effective teaching of Social Studies in an integrated manner. Their knowledge and experiences may also not reflect the true nature of integrated Social Studies at the basic level of education in Ghana. In the case of teachers who hold Bachelor of Education Degree in Social Studies 18 (5.3%), the content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge may vary across the different universities in Ghana. This is because there are variations in content and pedagogies in teaching Social Studies across the Universities in Ghana that train Social Studies teachers, especially the varying nature of the content of the programme. At the basic education level in Ghana, two categories of teachers handle social. One group of teachers majored in one foundation course (geography, economics, or history) in Social Studies and then minor in other courses which also relate to Social Studies during the university education. This reflects the multidisciplinary approach to Social Studies. The second category of teachers acquires integrated knowledge of the Social Sciences in the form of interdisciplinary integration. Although Social Studies at the JHS level is multidisciplinary in nature (GES, 2010), teachers who are trained in the multidiscipline approach are unable to teach it effectively. This is due to the fact that they did not receive adequate training in all the foundation courses in Social Studies unlike those teachers trained in the interdisciplinary approach. By implication, they (those with multidisciplinary orientation) put much emphasis on areas of the Social Studies curriculum that matches their background education and little or no emphasis on other equally relevant areas of the curriculum when teaching Social Studies. This is not the case of teachers with integrated approach background training in Social Studies. In the view of Tamakloe (1991), Social Studies teachers must be well grounded in a variety of teaching methods and also possess adequate knowledge in several disciplines.

In relation to this outcome, Buddin (2012) discovered that there are large differences in teacher qualification across many school districts in the world, and concluded that these differences explain differences in students' academic performance. Davies, Gregory, and Riley (1999) make similar assertion that the need for Social Studies teachers to have academic background that puts them in a particularly good position to approach Social Studies education confidently and skillfully. Similarly, Aggarwal (2001), asserts that Social Studies more than any other subject, requires well prepared, conscientious men and women of sound knowledge and training whose personalities rank high among men and women.

<b>Statements on the Challenges of Teaching Social Studies</b>	<b>A</b>		<b>U</b>		<b>D</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>		
Teachers have been assigned to teach Social Studies for which they have little training or education.	241	70.7	0	0.0	100	29.3	1.59	0.91
Difficulty over the teaching of Social Studies in an integrated manner.	284	83.3	0	0.0	57	16.7	1.33	0.75
The perception that anybody without the requisite qualification in Social Studies can teach Social Studies	299	87.7	4	1.2	38	11.1	1.23	0.64
Limited skills in integrated Social Studies.	326	95.6	2	0.6	13	3.8	1.08	0.39
Lack of adequate knowledge about the nature of integrated Social Studies	338	99.1	0	0.0	3	0.9	1.02	0.19
Difficulty in choosing appropriate pedagogy to teach Social Studies in an integrated manner	337	98.8	0	0.0	4	1.2	1.02	0.11
The confusion over the nature of Social Studies.	121	35.5	0	0.0	220	64.5	2.29	0.96

*Table 3: Challenges That Confront the Teaching of Social Studies  
Source: Field Data, 2019*



Results from Table 3 indicates that majority of the teachers ( $n = 341$ ,  $M = 1.59$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ ) indicated that many teachers have been assigned to teach Social Studies for which they have little training or education. This is a confirmation of the outcome from Table 1 which revealed that greater number of teachers hold educational qualifications which are not related to Social Studies. Teachers also indicated that they find it more difficult to teach Social Studies through the integrated approach ( $n = 341$ ,  $M = 1.33$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ). This is so because to be able to teach Social Studies which is integrated in nature, one must acquire adequate content knowledge as well as pedagogical content knowledge in the Social Sciences which serve as the foundation of the Social Studies programme. Lack of these therefore makes teaching Social Studies a difficult task. Thus, acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills, and experiences in the integrated Social Studies is paramount to effective Social Studies teaching. For example, according to Kwenin (2017), Social Studies involves the integration of the Social Sciences. Therefore, to teach it, one must arm himself or herself with knowledge in geography, economics, history, and sociology as well as the pedagogy of teaching these social science disciplines. It is therefore not surprising that these percentages (83.3%) of teachers find it difficult to teach Social Studies in an integrated manner, since they might have not acquired adequate training and knowledge in the integrated Social Studies.

Another major challenge concerning the teaching of Social Studies in an integrated manner is the perception that anybody without the requisite qualification in Social Studies can teach Social Studies ( $n = 341$ ,  $M = 1.23$ ,  $SD = 0.64$ ). This perception has led many head teachers in various basic schools as well as senior high schools in Ghana to employ teachers with varying educational qualifications other than in Social Studies or those that relate to Social Studies to teach Social Studies. The implication is that such teachers tend to put more emphasis on their area of orientation to the disadvantage of other areas of the curriculum where they have limited knowledge and experiences. It must be noted that a teacher who was trained in certain or specific field and is assigned to teach that field performs better than another teacher who was trained in a particular subject but is given different subject to teach. In Ghana, not all certified teachers are assigned to teach in the areas for which they had been trained. A large number of teachers are assigned duties for which their certification is unrelated. In schools in Ghana teachers assigned to teach subject for which they have little training or education is common.

The respondents ( $n = 341$ ,  $M = 2.29$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ) however, disagreed that confusion over the nature of Social Studies affects its effective teaching. This contradicts the views of authors such as Banks (1990) and Martorella (2001). For example, Martorella has indicated that one basic challenge of teaching Social Studies is the divergent nature of Social Studies at the various levels of education. The nature of Social Studies varies from being interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, to trans-disciplinary. These varieties however have implications on the selection and implementation of content in Social Studies. It must be pointed out that the nature of Social Studies education in teacher training institutions in Ghana varies from one institution to the other. The implication is that teachers may come to conceptualize the subject differently based on how they were trained. This has serious pedagogical implications since the numerous tasks of teaching such as selecting worthwhile teaching and learning activities, giving meaningful explanations, asking productive questions, and evaluating students' learning depend on the teachers' understanding of the content knowledge.

## 5. Conclusions

It can be concluded that majority of teachers who teach Social Studies at the JHS level in Ghana were not strictly trained with the integrated approach. They therefore lack the requisite skills and competencies in teaching Social Studies in an integrated manner. Although they offered Social Studies at various levels of teacher preparatory institutions, the knowledge and experiences gained do not match the expectations of the subject they teach at the basic level of education. This is because Social Studies education at the basic level of education is integrated in nature, therefore, to be able to teach the subject effectively, one needs to acquire adequate training and preparation in the integrated approach. However, few teachers hold educational qualification which relates to the integrated Social Studies. Even with the few teachers who hold the requisite qualification in Social Studies, there is variation in the courses and the content of the courses provided them while in their training institutions. Darling-Hammond, Berry and Thoreson (2001) assert that teachers' who are trained and teach in the area in which they are certified outperform teachers who have no certification.

Majority of the teachers do not possess the requisite educational qualification for teaching Social Studies, where they possess, variations in qualification exist. It can be concluded that teachers lack the requisite competencies such as adequate content knowledge, pedagogical content, and knowledge of the philosophical bases of teaching Social Studies in an integrated manner which are required components of teacher preparatory programmes in integrated Social Studies. At best, they possess general pedagogical knowledge of teaching Social Studies.

## 6. Pedagogical Implications of the study

In reality, what is pertaining in the various Junior High Schools in Ghana and in the Kumasi Metropolis in particular, is that majority of the teachers of the Social Studies do not have the necessary skills, knowledge, ability and the requisite academic qualification to effectively teach the subject. In support of this view, Nworgu (2007) and Ibiem (2007) posit that most Social Studies teachers are not sufficiently trained in the meaning, nature, content, the scope, pedagogy as well as the philosophy that underpin effective teaching of Social Studies. This anomaly is likely to affect the potency, worth, and relevance of instruction delivered to learners of Social Studies.

At the moment, there are two distinct groups of teachers of Social Studies in the Junior High Schools in Ghana. One group are those who have received professional training in integrated Social Studies education from recognised tertiary institutions and therefore have been awarded the requisite qualification in integrated Social Studies education. This group of teachers is likely to perceive Social Studies as integrated subject and therefore, teach it as prescribed by the Ghana

Education Service. The second group of teachers are those who received training in the separate subjects of geography, economics, history, sociology, and other related disciplines (Boadu & Kwenin, 2010) with little or no knowledge in the integrated Social Studies education and yet teach Social Studies. These categories of teachers are not likely to perceive Social Studies as integrated subject since they had not undergone any academic training in theory and principles of integrated Social Studies as well as the methods and strategies of teaching the integrated Social Studies. The second group of teachers who do not possess the requisite academic qualification in Social Studies to teach the subject at the various levels of education, especially, at the basic and second cycle levels has become a common practice in Ghana. It is believed that this has come about as a result of the misconception that anybody without the requisite academic qualification in Social Studies can teach Social Studies (Tamakloe, 1994). It is also as a result of inadequate supply of teachers who have acquired the requisite academic qualification to teach Social Studies at those levels of education. It is therefore instructive that Social Studies teachers should be adequately trained by in the integrated approaches to be able to handle the subject effectively.

## 7. Recommendations for Practice

It is recommended that in training and preparing Social Studies teachers, the training institutions must give priority to a thorough grounding in the subject matter of Social Studies in its integrated manner and the related Social Sciences which constitute the foundation of Social Studies, the pedagogies of Social Studies and the related Social Sciences, as well as the knowledge in the selection of appropriate teaching and learning resources since what teachers need to know about the subject matter they teach extends beyond the specific topics in the Social Studies curriculum. Unless the teacher training institutions take the initiative in this matter, the teaching of the Social Studies in the schools will continue to be the compartmentalized, routine, learning-by-rote business that it is today in many Ghanaian basic schools.

The variety of the content courses offered in the different teacher training tertiary institutions and universities in Ghana is so bewildering that one wonders not so much whether any approximation to uniformity of content can be achieved. Thus, there should be agreement as to the essential elements that should constitute the Social Studies curriculum at various levels of education in Ghana. Curriculum makers and teacher educators need to exercise the greatest care in selecting the elements that will constitute the Social Studies curriculum for their teachers.

One problem about the teaching of the Social Studies in basic schools in Ghana is the difficulty of finding teachers who have studied more than one of the Social Sciences. The most that can be expected of a teacher is that he has majored in one social science and minored in another; but even such persons are very hard to come by. Geography is the commonest subject of specialization in the University of Cape Coast, after which come economics and sociology as minor. This is different from that University of Education, Winneba, which is another teacher education institution. There is a dearth of teachers with qualifications in integrated Social Studies. This difficulty can be solved best through courses in in-service training, workshops, seminars, etc in areas of deficiency at the national, regional, and district levels.

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