

Examining the Alignment of Social Studies Curriculum Contents and Objectives in the Colleges of Education

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ABSTRACT: - The purpose of this study was to evaluate how the contents of the Social Studies curriculum aligned with its objectives in Ghana's colleges of education. The study adopted the positivist paradigm, quantitative approach and cross-sectional descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all trainee teachers, tutors, and HoDs from the 10 selected CoEs running the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum. A census and proportionate stratified random sample techniques were used to select 360 teacher-trainees, 27 Social Studies tutors and 10 Social Studies department heads. The main instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. The data was analysed using frequency, percentages, mean, standard deviation, exploratory and complementary factor analysis, and structural equation modelling. The findings of the study revealed that the content of the B.Ed. Social Studies Curriculum has been carefully arranged to ensure that objectives are fully achieved in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. This implies that learners (teacher-trainees) may develop the skill of arranging contents from known to unknown in their field of work. i.e., the classroom. Therefore, the study recommended that Colleges of Education Social Studies tutors should continue to exemplify and ensure that all concepts and principles related to B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum objectives are faithfully inculcated in teacher trainees so that there is always an alignment between the selected content and objectives of the curriculum to build their professional competencies for the teaching career.

Keywords:- Social Studies, curriculum, objectives, colleges of education, alignment

I. INTRODUCTION

Effective implementation of the social studies curriculum is the key to creating a well-educated and well-balanced workforce that is ready to contribute to Ghana's progress by harnessing the potential of the growing youth population, considering the demographic transition the country is currently experiencing (Educational Strategic Plan [ESP] 2018-2030) (Tagoe, Addae, & Amuzu, 2022). Senior High School (hereafter SHS) curriculum aims to expand equitable, inclusive access to relevant education for all young people, including those in disadvantaged and underserved communities, those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented. SHS allows young people to develop further skills and competencies and progress in learning achievement, building from the foundation laid in Junior High School. This curriculum intends to meet the learning needs of all high school learners by acquiring 21st-century skills and competencies to prepare

them for further studies, the world of work and adult life. Changing global economic, social and technological context requires lifelong learning, unlearning, and continuous processes of reflection, anticipation and action (NaCCa, 2023).

The Junior High School (hereafter JHS) curriculum has been designed to ensure that learners are adequately equipped to transition seamlessly into SHS, where they will be equipped with the relevant knowledge, skills and competencies. The SHS curriculum emphasises character building, the acquisition of 21st-century skills and competencies, and the nurturing of core values within an environment of quality education to ensure the transition to further study, the world of work, and adult life. This requires the delivery of robust secondary education that meets the varied learning needs of the youth in Ghana. The SHS curriculum, therefore, seeks to develop learners to become technology-inclined, scientifically literate, good problem-solvers who can think critically and creatively and are equipped to communicate with fluency and possess the confidence and competence to participate fully in Ghanaian society as responsible local and global citizens (NaCCa, 2023). An adequate social studies teacher should assess his/her teaching and learning outcomes by considering the general aims of social studies in the school curriculum in Ghana. With this, Eshun, Bordoh, Bassaw, and Mensah (2014:47) emphasise that "effective formative assessor requires someone who has the necessary depth of content knowledge of the subject s/he is teaching". This implies that Social Studies can be taught and assessed best by a teacher who is highly abreast with the scope of content knowledge of the subject curriculum.

Education development could not be successful without looking at the teacher and the training to be acquired. This indicates that teacher training in Ghana should be given priority, and subjects like Social Studies taught in Colleges of Education should be geared towards nation-building (Quashigah, Dake, Bekoe, Eshun, & Bordoh, 2014). These institutions play a pivotal role in producing teachers for the basic level of education in the country (Bekoe, Eshun & Bordoh, 2013). Social Studies is an integrated discipline and replete with concepts, requiring a resourceful teacher to handle it. To prepare students to be concerned and participatory citizens willing to help solve personal and societal problems (Bordoh, Eshun, Brew, Osman, Kofie & Kwarteng, 2019). Most of the teachers who are the curriculum implementers have forgotten the subject's general objectives. Therefore, they teach the subject without considering attaining these objectives (Eshun, Bordoh, Opoku-Afriyie, 2024). The problem has been the inability of some teachers to properly assess all the domains of learning in students. (Bordoh, Bassaw, & Eshun, 2013). No matter how well articulated the philosophy and objectives of a curriculum are. How well the contents are selected and organised, if the implementation process is faulty and hard-hit with challenges, all the efforts may be a waste of time (Fwangle, 2015). Again, the extent to which a given programme is implemented will affect whether or not the programme's outcomes are successful, which also depends on evaluation (Ruiz-Primo & Brookhart, 2017). The purpose of this study was to evaluate how the contents of the Social Studies curriculum aligned with the curriculum's objectives in Ghana's colleges of education. The study sought to answer the research question - *How are the contents of the Social Studies curriculum aligned with the objectives of the curriculum?*

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for implementing the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum in the colleges of education in Ghana. The researcher designed the secondary information framework based on the reviewed literature. Figure 2 will clarify how the variables of interest in this study relate to applying the social studies curriculum in education schools. The framework explains the important factors influencing the implementation of the Social Studies program.



Figure 1: Framework of Effective Implementation of Social Studies Curriculum

Source: Authors' Construct

Figure 1 is a conceptual framework explaining the interactions among the study variables. The successful implementation of the College of Education's Social Studies curriculum is a multifaceted process that depends on the interaction of various factors. This framework has five independent variables that contribute to effectively implementing the Social Studies curriculum. These variables are content alignment with curriculum, ways of curriculum implementation, integration of NTS in curriculum, pedagogical approaches used, and required resources for implementation. According to the framework, when these variables are correctly instituted, it leads to the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum.

Ensuring classroom content aligns with the curriculum standards is crucial for effective implementation. This alignment guarantees that students receive the intended knowledge and skills specified in the curriculum guidelines. The methods and other activities employed to implement the curriculum significantly affect its effectiveness. These include the instructional approaches, assessment methods, and the overall delivery of curriculum content. Also, effective implementation requires a structured approach that integrates innovative teaching methods, continuous assessment, and feedback mechanisms to adapt to the learning needs of students. The choice of pedagogical approaches significantly influences the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. Again, diverse and student-centred teaching methods such as inquiry-based, project-based, think-pair-share, and collaborative learning can enhance student engagement and understanding. Furthermore, using an effective pedagogical strategy is key to effective curriculum implementation. This involves adapting teaching styles to meet the diverse learning needs of students, thereby promoting inclusive education. Moreover, the significance of teaching resources cannot be underscored in curriculum implementation. The availability and adequacy of resources are fundamental to successfully implementing the curriculum. These resources include teaching materials, technological tools, funding, and professional development opportunities for educators. Ensuring that schools are well-equipped with these resources supports tutors in delivering the curriculum effectively and fosters a conducive learning environment for students.

Implementing the social studies curriculum would not be complete when teaching and learning are not aligned with the National Teachers Standards (NTS). This ensures that Social Studies teachers possess the required professional knowledge, professional skills, professional attitude, and ethics to make them successful in their professional journey. The National Teachers Standards should be integrated into all social studies instruction. Overall, when content is well-aligned, curriculum implementation strategies are robust, NTS are integrated, pedagogical approaches are practical, resources are adequately provided, and the overall curriculum delivery is optimised. This leads to improved student outcomes, higher levels of engagement, the achievement of educational objectives and effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum for Colleges of Education in Ghana.

Objectives of Social Studies Curriculum of the Colleges of Education

Social Studies is a multi-disciplinary subject that aims to equip learners with knowledge, attitudes, values and skills that will enable them to become active, informed, innovative and responsible citizens. Social Studies addresses the challenges or problems that confront and threaten the survival of Ghanaian society. It allows the learner to apply concepts, theories, and generalisations from various relevant disciplines to analyse, investigate, and develop appropriate solutions to personal and societal problems. It allows learners to explore their immediate environment and the world further. Therefore, Social Studies focuses explicitly on developing the learner's curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving skills and competencies for personal development and leadership. Besides, it seeks to enhance communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, digital literacy, cultural identity and global citizenship. The inclusion of Social Studies in the Common Core Programme of the Pre-tertiary Education Curriculum is intended to enable learners to acquire relevant tools to become effective, active and patriotic citizens (NaCCa, 2020). Because of this, the goals of the Social Studies curriculum for Colleges of Education place a special emphasis on helping students develop their curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and leadership capabilities.

Positively, this will influence their Teaching Philosophy; the Social Studies curriculum will enable learners to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies through a combination of social constructivism and social realism. These theories emphasise learning as an active process where the learner constructs knowledge rather than acquiring it. The curriculum allows learners to expand, change, enhance and modify their worldview. Teachers will adopt thematic and creative pedagogical approaches that engage learners in a rich and rigorous inquiry-driven environment, such as talk for learning, project-based learning, games, modelling, questioning, brainstorming, demonstration and role-play which are necessary for achieving learning-centred classrooms and developing learners into creative, honest and responsible citizens.

Learning Philosophy: The philosophy of learning Social Studies is based on the need to train citizens who are reflective, concerned, active, and participatory to fit into the ever-changing world and contribute their quota to society. Social Studies will provide avenues for learners to interact with people and interrogate issues to construct new knowledge and ideas, as well as describe, analyse, and evaluate issues critical to the survival of

the human race. In essence, the curriculum is designed to generate activities that will make learning more relevant by using their previous knowledge, experiences and environments to acquire competencies, including the following:

1. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are needed to compare and contrast, analyse, evaluate, and apply geographical knowledge with little or no supervision.
2. Creative thinking skills to be able to reconstruct important information confidently;
3. Digital literacy skills to efficiently use IT tools and resources for investigations and project work.
4. Practical communication skills to share information at various levels of interaction.
5. Values to live as global citizens capable of learning about other peoples and cultures (NaCCa, 2020).

This posits that the central role of the social studies teacher is to emphasise the development of students' relevant knowledge, positive attitudes, values, and problem-solving skills. Social studies teachers should design and prepare programmes in the country to focus on the needs of society. The classroom practices of teachers, so far as social studies are concerned, must be centred on current knowledge and understanding of the subject, issues centred on problem-solving. The indication here is that the content delivery should align with the following social studies curriculum objectives of Ghana:

1. Explore and protect the environment;
2. Exhibit a sense of belonging to the family and community;
3. Appreciate themselves as unique individuals by deepening their awareness of stereotypes associated with their gender, abilities, ethnicity, and religion and how to challenge the same
4. Demonstrate responsible citizenship;
5. Develop attitudes for healthy and peaceful co-existence (embracing diversity)
6. Ensure sustainable use of resources;
7. Develop a sense of patriotism and national pride;
8. Make themselves globally competitive (NaCCa, 2020).

The goal and vision of the curriculum are to prepare learners with relevant skills and competencies to progress and succeed in further studies, the world of work, and adult life. It aims to equip all learners with the 21st-century skills and competencies required to be responsible citizens and lifelong learners. When young people are prepared to become compelling, engaging, and responsible citizens, they will contribute to the ongoing growth and development of the nation's economy and well-being (NaCCa, 2022; NaCCa, 2020).

Content selection and objectives of the Social Studies curriculum

In line with content selection and implementation, studies conducted have shown varied views concerning the ability of teachers to select contents that reflect the objective of the social studies curriculum (Hussain, Dogar, Azeem, & Shakoor; 2011; Babatunde, Benedict, & Adu, 2016). The study by Babatunde et al. (2016) was on how teachers view the idea of integration within the Social Studies curriculum in Ekiti state, Nigeria, with a sample of 80 Social Studies teachers at the junior secondary school level. The study adopted the qualitative research approach using interviews and focus group discussions for its data collection. The result found that how Social Studies materials are collected from many topic disciplines makes it seem more easily digestible as an integrated or interdisciplinary subject. The study of Babatunde et al. (2016) further revealed that the degree to which Social Studies instructors understand the notion of integration was determined using an instrument. More so, it was identified that most Social Studies teachers are unfamiliar with the idea of integration, which makes it challenging to implement in Social Studies instruction.

Therefore, the inability of teachers to be creative and imaginative to make learning more applicable for both the students being taught in the classroom and the country as a whole will end with half-baked teachers. Critically, though the qualitative approach was used, the study established the link between the content selection and the objective of the curriculum; however, it failed to ascertain the future implications of the inability of teachers to teach solely in line with the objectives of the curriculum as planned. The results of a study conducted by Hussain et al. (2011) to evaluate the assessment strategy used during curriculum creation showed that it is essential to guarantee that the curriculum's objectives are satisfied and that the final curriculum output is appropriate for use. The findings revealed a strong correlation between the anticipated approach for curriculum creation and the current process. Study tours and the cognitive level of learners are two recent trends that show a significant change. In the study by Hussain et al. (2011), data collected from 810 participants in the curriculum-building process were acquired using a standard questionnaire with 84 items, and a Chi-Square analysis was done. Unlike the study of Babatunde et al. (2016), though the study was conducted among colleges of education, the researchers adopted the quantitative research approach where both descriptive and inferential analyses were performed, unlike the current study that adopted the mixed method approach.

Also, a study by Mezieobi (1998) on the availability of resources as a means to appropriately teach the content of the social studies curriculum revealed, among other findings, that the relationship between the chosen

content and the Social Studies curriculum objectives is held in high esteem by the teachers. This finding aligns with the progressive education movement of the first half of the twentieth century, when the foundations of the modern social studies curriculum may be found. The characteristics of the individual learner and the learning process itself were emphasised. Likewise, the finding blends with the study of Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2008), which focused on the adaptation of social studies content and the likelihood of teachers achieving the objectives of the planned curriculum. However, the correlational study of Mezieobi (1998) identified only the content selection without thoroughly scrutinising the teacher's competence in the influence between the selection of content and the pedagogical processes involved. This calls for a thorough study to determine how teachers can apply pedagogical skills in teaching the contents, as in the current study. Investigating the teachers' competence is necessary in evaluating the implementation of the curriculum.

In their study, Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2008) claimed that the breadth of Social Studies education appears unbounded or terrifyingly large, constrained or limited by society as a whole or by particular aspects. Because of this, it is now quite simple for any nation to specify the subject matter of its curricula for all levels of the educational system, including Colleges of Education. The educational strata, or the schools and levels for which the prescribed content is intended, also limit the substance of the curriculum. Furthermore, the focus on goals varies from nation to nation and from one level of the educational system to another. For instance, the goals of social studies education in Ghana and colleges of education differ from those in Japan and the United States. Once more, the degree to which the content and curriculum are related depends on the program implementers for social studies education. The goals of social studies education will be more effectively achieved by trained and committed teachers than by uninspired, underqualified "teachers" in social studies education courses. The goal of the Social Studies curriculum in Colleges of Education is to teach students how to connect Social Studies to people's and communities' everyday lives, understand the social system better through culture and values to create a multi-ethnic society that works as a whole; connect the country to its history of building itself; and connect environmental events to the social and economic development of society.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a positivist paradigm with a quantitative research approach. Positivism applies the scientific approach to studying social phenomena (Carr et al., 2018; Leavy, 2017) and presents social reality as something that can be independently investigated through observation and measurement, permitting the testing of laws and hypotheses. Consistent with the positivist and quantitative research approaches, this study utilised the cross-sectional descriptive survey research design. This design typically involves collecting data at one point and over a short period to provide a 'snapshot' of the outcome and the characteristics associated with a population (Cohen, Morison & Manion, 2018). These authors add that a cross-sectional survey design is mainly used when the purpose of the study is descriptive. A descriptive survey seeks to describe and interpret what exists in its present condition, attitudes, practices and beliefs (Cohen, Morison & Manion, 2018). Therefore, a descriptive cross-sectional survey fits the purpose of the study, which was to describe the nature of the alignment of Social Studies curriculum content with objectives in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. This study's population comprised all student teachers, tutors, and HoDs from the 10 selected CoEs running the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum. The total sample for the study was 397, comprised of 360 teacher-trainees, 27 Social Studies tutors and 10 Social Studies departmental heads. Twenty-seven (27) tutors and ten (10) HoDs were selected. CoEs were engaged in the study using the census sampling technique. Thirty-one public CoEs in Ghana offer Social Studies courses. Therefore, the simple random sampling strategy was used to select 10 CoEs for the study. This was informed by Davies, Williams, and Yanchar (2004); according to Davies, Williams, and Yanchar (2004), 33% of the total population is sufficient to reflect the population under investigation accurately. The simple random technique also gave all 31 CoEs an equal probability of being selected for the study. Furthermore, 360 Social Studies teacher trainees were chosen from the 10 Colleges using the proportionate random sample technique. The proportionate sampling technique was implemented because the respondents were from different colleges with varied proportions in student population.

The class lists for each level were submitted by the colleges' Curriculum and Assessment Officers and were used for the activity. A piece of paper with the student names was placed into a basket. Students were asked to pick from the basket. When a name was chosen, it was placed back into the basket. The process continued until the necessary number was reached. A name that was chosen a second time was not noted. To maintain the likelihood that a respondent would be chosen, the name that had been chosen was changed. The procedure was conducted until the student teacher candidates' sample size was attained. Table 1 indicates the sample size distribution of the student respondents.

Table 1: Sample Size Distribution of Respondents (Teacher Trainees)

s/n	College	Level	Level	Level	Level	Total
		200	300	200	300	
		n	n	n	n	n
1	Fosu	104	148	17	24	41
2	Berekum	148	123	24	20	44
3	Offinso	129	111	21	18	39
4	Wesley	129	117	21	19	40
5	Bia Lamplighter	92	86	15	14	29
6	Ada	74	92	12	15	27
7	Agogo Presby	129	166	21	27	48
8	Bimbilla	80	111	13	18	31
9	Methodist	68	104	11	17	28
10	Holy Child	104	98	17	16	33
Total		1057	1156	172	188	360

The main instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. The questionnaire examined how the B.Ed. The Social Studies programme's educational objectives were aligned with the content chosen. This aspect required the respondents to answer statements such as "the content meets the requirements of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum as required by the objectives" and "the content of the curriculum has been carefully arranged to ensure objectives are fully achieved". The questionnaire was a five-point Likert scale with a range of score values. Positive statements were graded as Very Good = 5, Good = 4, Average = 3, Poor = 2 and Very Poor = 1. Negative statements were graded as Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Undecided (Un) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. According to Amedahe (2002) and Oppenheim (1992), Likert-scale questionnaires have a high return rate and are favourable compared to open-ended questionnaires. The data were analysed using frequencies, percentages, mean, standard deviation, exploratory and complementary factor analysis, and structural equation modelling.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the results and discusses the research question: *How are the contents of the Social Studies curriculum aligned with its objectives? Items under this section were analysed using frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation and the results are presented in Table 2.*

Table 2 presents how the contents of the B.Ed. The social studies curriculum is aligned with its objectives. All the indicators received positive ratings (mean values exceeding 3.00), suggesting that the respondents agreed with the indicators. Though there were variations in the responses, they were deficient compared to most respondents who agreed. This indicates that the respondents firmly believe that the contents of the Social Studies curriculum align with the curriculum's objectives. The results showed that 24 of the tutors, representing 88.9% of the respondents, were in agreement that the content of the Social Studies curriculum was organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner to achieve the set objectives. This was also evident with the mean and standard deviation scores ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.91$). Also, it was seen that the content met the requirements of the B.Ed. The objectives require the Social Studies curriculum ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.72$), and 92.6% of the respondents agree with the statement. Again, 23 of the tutor respondents, representing 85.2%, agreed that the content of the curriculum was carefully arranged to ensure objectives were fully achieved. This was also evident with the calculated mean and standard deviation scores ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.91$); however, 14.8% of the respondents indicated otherwise.

Table 2: Alignment of contents of the Social Studies curriculum with the Curriculum Objectives (CSSCO)

Statements	M(SD)	Tutors				
		SA N(%)	A N(%)	U N(%)	D N(%)	SD N(%)
1. The content is organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner to achieve the set objectives	3.90(.91)	7(25.9)	17(63)	-	3(11.1)	-
2. The content meets the requirements of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum as required by the objectives	4.10(.72)	8(29.6)	17(63)	1(3.7)	1(3.7)	-
3. The content of the curriculum has been carefully arranged to ensure that objectives are fully achieved.	4.10(.91)	10(37)	13(48.2)	1(3.7)	3(11.1)	-
4. The content focuses on developing individuals imbued with core values and competencies who can function in a modern, technologically driven, inclusive society.	3.95(1.10)	8(29.6)	15(55.6)	-	2(7.4)	2(7.4)
5. The content provides sufficient pedagogical approaches for effective delivery to meet the demands of the curriculum's objectives.	4.00(1.03)	7(25.9)	16(59.3)	1(3.7)	1(3.7)	2(7.4)
6. The content provides appropriate lifelong skills to meet the demands of The objectives of the curriculum.	3.70(.98)	5(18.5)	16(59.3)	1(3.7)	5(18.5)	-
7. The content makes provision for gender, inclusivity and equity issues to meet the requirements of the objectives.	4.00(.92)	9(33.3)	13(48.2)	2(7.4)	3(11.1)	-
8. The content identifies resources to achieve the Curriculum objectives.	3.70(1.13)	7(25.9)	13(48.2)	1(3.7)	6(22.2)	-
9. The content covers aspects of the National Teachers Standards to meet the objectives of the curriculum.	4.00(.86)	8(29.6)	16(59.3)	1(3.7)	2(7.4)	-
10. The content makes provision for course assessment by the NTEAP to achieve the objectives of the curriculum	4.00(.79)	5(18.5)	20(74.1)	-	2(7.4)	-
The mean of means/Ave Std Dev	3.95(.93)					

Key: M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, F = frequency, SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree U = Undecided D = Disagree S = Strongly Disagree

The respondents further agreed (M=3.95; SD=1.10) that the content focused on developing individuals imbued with core values and competencies who can function in a modern, technologically driven, inclusive society. Twenty-three respondents, representing 85.2% of the respondents, agreed with the indicator, while 14.8% disagreed. The majority of the respondents, representing 85.2%, agreed that the content provided sufficient pedagogical approaches for effective delivery to meet the demands of the curriculum objectives (M=4.00; SD=1.03).

Moreover, 21 of the respondents, indicating 77.8%, agreed that content provided appropriate lifelong skills to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum, which was evident with the mean and standard deviation scores (M = 3.70, SD = 0.98). On the contrary, 5 of the respondents disagreed with the statement. With a mean value of 4.00, the respondents agreed that the content makes provision for gender, inclusivity and equity issues to meet the requirements of the objectives. This indicator was agreed by 81.5% of the respondents.

Furthermore, more than 20 tutors, representing 74.1% of the respondents, agreed that the content identified resources to achieve the curriculum objectives (M=3.70; SD=1.13), while 22.2% disagreed. The respondents again agreed (M=4.00; SD=0.86) that the contents covered aspects of the national teachers' standards to meet the curriculum objectives, with 24, representing 88.9%, stating their agreement with the indicator. Also, the results revealed that the content provides course assessment by the NTEAP to achieve the curriculum objectives. This was agreed upon by 25 of the tutors, signifying 92.6% of the respondents, with a calculated mean of 4.00.

Table 2 shows that the respondents agreed that the Social Studies curriculum aligns with the objective. This was evident in the mean of means and average standard deviation scores (MM= 3.96, SD= 1.21). Table 3

presents the alignment of the Social Studies curriculum with the Curriculum Objectives from the perspectives of teacher trainees.

Table 3: Alignment of contents of the Social Studies curriculum with the Curriculum Objectives

Statements	M(SD)	Teacher Trainees				
		SA N(%)	A N(%)	UD N(%)	A N(%)	SD N(%)
1. The content is organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner to achieve the set objectives.	3.82(1.17)	102(28.3)	177(49.2)	28(7.8)	20(5.6)	33(9.2)
2. The content meets the requirements of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum as required by the objectives	3.98(1.05)	122(33.9)	164(45.6)	37(10.3)	19(5.3)	18(5.0)
3. The content of the curriculum has been carefully arranged to ensure that objectives are fully achieved.	3.92(1.13)	124(34.4)	157(43.6)	27(7.5)	31(8.6)	21(5.8)
4. The content focuses on developing individuals imbued with core values and competencies who can function in a modern, technologically driven, inclusive society.	4.08(2.31)	119(33.1)	169(46.9)	40(11.1)	28(7.8)	10(2.8)
5. The content provides sufficient pedagogical approaches for effective delivery to meet the demands of the curriculum's objectives.	3.96(0.99)	113(31.4)	169(46.9)	40(11.1)	28(7.8)	10(2.8)
6. The content provides appropriate lifelong skills to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum.	3.89(1.12)	123(34.2)	141(39.2)	46(12.8)	32(8.9)	18(5.0)
7. The content provides gender, inclusivity, and equity issues to meet the objectives.	4.13(1.01)	146(40.6)	165(45.8)	17(4.7)	15(4.2)	17(4.7)
8. The content identifies resources to achieve the curriculum objectives.	3.93(1.15)	131(36.4)	143(39.7)	38(10.6)	25(6.9)	23(6.4)
9. The content covers aspects of the National Teachers Standards to meet the objectives of the curriculum.	4.00(1.01)	119(33.1)	170(47.2)	39(10.8)	16(4.4)	16(4.4)
10. The content provides course assessment by the NTEAP to achieve the curriculum objectives.	3.91(1.15)	130(36.1)	136(37.8)	46(12.8)	26(7.2)	22(6.1)
The mean of means/Ave Std Dev	3.96(1.21)					

Key: M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, F = frequency, SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree U = Undecided D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

From Table 3, the majority of the respondents, representing 79.5%, generally agreed (M = 3.98, SD = 1.05) that the content selected by tutors met the requirements of the B.Ed Social Studies curriculum as required by the objectives. Also, 289 Teacher Trainees, representing 80.3% of the respondents, supported (M = 4.00, SD = 1.01) that content covered aspects of the National Teachers Standards that met the curriculum objectives. However 32, 8.8% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the contents cover aspects of the National Teachers Standards. Similarly, 86.4% of the teacher trainee respondents indicated their agreement (M = 4.13, SD = 1.01) that the content made provisions for gender, inclusivity and equity issues to meet the requirement of the objectives. Again, with a mean score of 3.96, the majority of the respondents constituting 78.3% agreed in the fact that the content provided sufficient pedagogical approaches for effective delivery to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum; on the contrary, 10.6% of the teacher trainees disagreed to the statement. The majority of the respondents, 73.9%, agreed that the content makes provision for course assessment by the NTEAP to achieve the objectives of the curriculum, which came with a calculated mean value of 3.91. Table 4 presents HODs' perspectives on the alignment of the contents of the Social Studies curriculum with the Curriculum Objectives.

Table 4 Alignment of contents of the Social Studies curriculum with the Curriculum Objectives

Statements	HoDs					
	M(SD)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)
1. The content is organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner to achieve the set objectives	4.10(.57)	2(20)	7(70)	1(10)	-	-
2. The content meets the requirements of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum as required by the objectives	4.40(.52)	4(40)	6(60)	-	-	-
3. The content of the curriculum has been carefully arranged to ensure that objectives are fully achieved	4.00(.82)	2(20)	7(70)	1(10)	-	-
4. The content focuses on developing individuals imbued with core values and competencies who can function in a modern, technologically driven, inclusive society.	4.00(.82)	2(20)	7(70)	-	1(10)	-
5. The content provides sufficient pedagogical approaches for effective delivery to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum	3.90(1.10)	3(30)	5(50)	-	2(20)	-
6. The content provides appropriate lifelong skills to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum	3.50(1.35)	2(20)	5(50)	-	2(20)	1(10)
7. The content makes provision for gender, inclusivity and equity issues to meet the requirements of the objectives	4.60(.70)	7(70)	2(20)	1(10)	-	-
8. The content identifies resources to be used in achieving the curriculum objectives	4.10(.57)	2(20)	7(70)	1(10)	-	-
9. The content covers aspects of the National Teachers Standards to meet the objectives of the curriculum	4.20(.79)	4(40)	4(40)	2(20)	-	-
10. The content makes provision for course assessment by the NTEAP to achieve the objectives of the curriculum	4.10(.57)	2(20)	7(70)	1(10)	-	-
The mean of means/Ave Std Dev	4.09(.78)					

Key: M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, F = frequency, SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree U = Undecided D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

The results presented in Table 4 showed a strong agreement that the content of the Social Studies curriculum aligns with the objectives. This was evident with the mean of means and the average standard deviation values (MM= 4.09, ASD= 0.78). All the respondents, constituting 100%, thought that the content selected by tutors meets the requirements of the B.Ed Social Studies curriculum as required by the objectives. This opinion of the respondent came with the calculated mean and standard deviation values (M = 4.40, SD = 0.52). Also, 8 of the respondents, representing 80%, concurred with the fact that content in the Social Studies curriculum covered aspects of the National Teachers Standards to meet the objectives of the curriculum (M = 4.20, SD = 0.79). Again, 9 of the respondents, signifying 90%, agreed that the content made provisions for gender, inclusivity and equity issues to meet the requirement of the objectives with mean and standard deviation values. This assertion by the HoDs was supported by the calculated mean and standard deviation (M = 4.60, SD = 0.70). Again, with a calculated mean of 4.10, the majority, 9 representing 90% of the HoD respondents, thought that the content of the Social Studies curriculum makes provision for course assessment by the NTEAP to achieve the objectives of the curriculum. The remaining items came with a calculated mean value greater than 2.50, indicating that the respondents agreed with all the indicators. There was an alignment between the content selected for Social Studies and the curriculum objectives, it can be inferred. This indicated that the content met the New BEd Social Studies curriculum requirements as required by the objectives.

Exploratory Factor Analysis: Dimensionality of Content of Social Studies Curriculum and Objectives (CSSCO) Construct

The EFA was conducted to assess the data's suitability, and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: One-dimensionality and Reliability of Content of Social Studies Curriculum and Objectives (CSSCO) Construct

	Statements	CSSCO	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	The content of the curriculum has been carefully arranged to ensure that objectives are fully achieved	0.924	0.742	0.899	0.949	0.952
2.	The content makes provision for gender, inclusivity and equity issues to meet the requirements of the objectives	0.904	0.734	0.945	0.949	
3.	The content makes provision for course assessment by the NTEAP to achieve the objectives of the curriculum	0.860	0.906	0.954	0.942	
4.	The content provides sufficient pedagogical approaches for effective delivery to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum	0.851	0.794	0.904	0.947	
5.	The content focuses on developing individuals imbued with core values and competencies who can function in a modern, technologically driven, inclusive society.	0.832	0.821	0.954	0.945	
6.	The content provides appropriate lifelong skills to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum	0.824	0.787	0.888	0.947	
7.	The content identifies resources to be used in achieving the curriculum objectives	0.814	0.879	0.869	0.943	
8.	The content covers aspects of the National Teachers Standards to meet the objectives of the curriculum	0.803	0.774	0.902	0.948	
9.	The content is organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner to achieve the set objectives	0.799	0.740	0.900	0.949	
10.	The content meets the requirements of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum as required by the objectives	0.796	0.819	0.887	0.946	

The EFA was conducted to assess the one-dimensionality and reliability of the contents of the Social Studies curriculum and objectives (CSSCO). Maximum Likelihood with Varimax rotation (ML Varimax) was specified as the extraction and rotation method. Ten items were measuring the construct. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) of 0.840 with Bartlett's test of sphericity of $p < 0.000$ was also obtained, indicating consistency with the recommended KMO cutoff value of 0.70 and Bartlett's test of sphericity of $p < 0.05$ suggested by Hair et al. (2014). These results suggested that factor analysis could be conducted with the data. All ten items (CSSCO1, CSSCO2..., CSSCO10) are expected to measure the content of the Social Studies curriculum and objectives (CSSCO) loaded one component. Using a threshold of 0.5 for factor loading is more significant than the recommended value of 0.40; as Field (2005) and Hair et al. (2014) suggested, all items had their factor loading exceeding 0.5 for the respective components.

Ten (10) items recorded a threshold of more than 0.5 for the component. They are "There are sufficient and appropriate learning materials for the course", "The content of the curriculum has been carefully arranged to ensure objectives are fully achieved", and "The content makes provision for gender, inclusivity and equity issues to meet the requirement of the objectives", "The content makes provision for course assessment by the NTEAP to achieve the objectives of the curriculum", "The content provides sufficient pedagogical approaches for effective delivery to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum", "The content focuses on the development of individuals imbued with core values and competencies who can function in a modern technologically driven society that is inclusive", "The content provides appropriate lifelong skills to meet the

demands of the objectives of the curriculum”, “The content identifies resources to be used in achieving the curriculum objectives”, Additionally, "the content covers aspects of the National Teachers Standards to meet the objectives of the curriculum", "The content is organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner to achieve the set objectives", and “The content meets the requirements of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum as required by the objectives”. These items measure the content of the Social Studies curriculum and objectives (CSSCO). Thus, they will be called the content of the Social Studies curriculum and objectives (CSSCO).

After using the EFA to extract the component, the corrected item-total correlation for the components' items was extracted using the suggested cutoff value of 0.30. The items were considered reasonable measures of the components since Cronbach's alphas were more significant than 0.800 at 0.952 for the component (CSSCO), indicating acceptable internal reliability (Quansah, 2017).

Structural Equation Model (SEM) for Content of Social Studies Curriculum and Objectives (CSSCO) Construct

A CFA was administered after the constructs demonstrated sufficient evidence of one-dimensionality and reliability using EFA. The analysis strategy of goodness of fit for the content of the Social Studies curriculum and objectives (CSSCO) construct followed a three statistics strategy of fit indexes as recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999). The sample data on the CSSCO model yielded the $S - B\chi^2$ of 3.239 with 35 degrees of freedom (df) with a probability of $p = 0.0000$. This chi-square value indicated that the departure of the sample data from the postulated model was significant and indicative of a good fit. The chi-square test is sensitive to sample size and is used more as a descriptive fit index than a statistical test (Kline, 2005). The CFI value was found to be 0.968, which was greater than the cutoff limit of 0.90, and this describes the model as acceptable. The NFI value was 0.997, within the given range, but the given cutoff value of $NFI \geq .90$, as shown in Table 6. Therefore, the model is acceptable. The PNFI value obtained is 0.464, below the cutoff value of 0.80. Also, the RMR of 0.047 is smaller than 0.05, and the GFI value of 0.921 is more significant than 0.090. These fit indexes for the CSSCO model suggest that the postulated model adequately describes the sample data and could be included in the complete latent variable model analysis (Table 5).

Table 6: Robust fit index for Content of Social Studies Curriculum and Objectives (CSSCO) Construct

Fit Index	Cutoff Value	Estimate	Comment
$S - B\chi^2$		3.239	
Df	$0 \geq$	35	Acceptable
CFI	$0.90 \geq$ acceptable $0.95 \geq$ good fit	0.968	Good fit
PCFI	Less than 0.80	0.520	Good fit
RMSEA	Less than 0.08	0.043	Acceptable
RMSEA 95% CI	0.00-0.08 "good fit."	0.027-0.041	Acceptable
NFI	More significant than 0.90 "good fit."	0.997	Good fit
IFI	More significant than 0.90 "good fit."	0.982	Good fit
PNFI	Less than 0.80	0.464	Good fit
RMR	Less than 0.05 "good fit."	0.047	Good fit
GFI	More significant than 0.90 "good fit."	0.921	Good fit

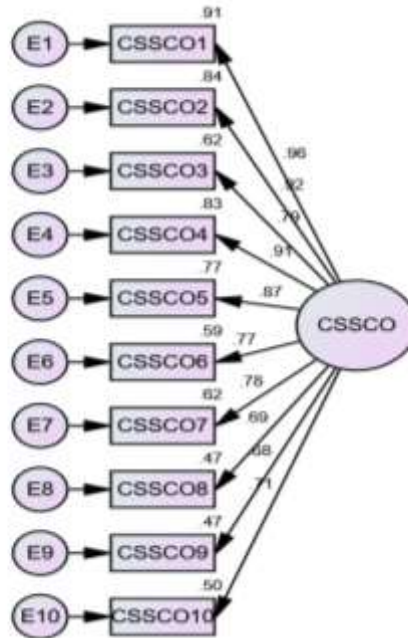


Figure 2: CFA Model for Content of Social Studies Curriculum and Objectives (CSSCO)

Table 7: Final conceptual model indicator variables for Content of Social Studies Curriculum and Objectives (CSSCO) Construct

Latent Component	Indicator Variable	Measurement Variable	Label
Content of the Social Studies curriculum and stated objectives (CSSCO)		The content of the curriculum has been carefully arranged to ensure that objectives are fully achieved.	CSSCO1
		The content makes provision for gender, inclusivity and equity issues to meet the requirements of the objectives.	CSSCO2
		The content makes provision for course assessment by the NTEAP to achieve the objectives of the curriculum.	CSSCO3
		The content provides sufficient pedagogical approaches for effective delivery to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum.	CSSCO4
		The content focuses on developing individuals imbued with core values and competencies who can function in a modern, technologically driven, inclusive society.	CSSCO5
		The content provides appropriate lifelong skills to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum.	CSSCO6
		The content identifies resources to be used in achieving the curriculum objectives.	CSSCO7
		The content covers aspects of the National Teachers Standards to meet the objectives of the curriculum.	CSSCO8
		The content is organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner to achieve the set objectives.	CSSCO9
		The content meets the requirements of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum as required by the objectives	CSSCO10

A unidimensional model for CSSCO features is presented (Figure 2 and Table 7). Out of the ten (10) indicator variables, ten (10) were obtained and used for the final CFA analysis (Byrne, 2006; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1988). From the cases analysed for this construct, ten (10) indicator variables made up of one (1) component realised as CSSCO (CSSCO1, CSSCO2, CSSCO3, CSSCO4, CSSCO5, CSSCO6, CSSCO7, CSSCO8, CSSCO9 and CSSCO10).

Table 8: Factor loading and P-value of Content of Social Studies Curriculum and Objectives (CSSCO)

Hypothesised relationships (Path)	Unstandardised coefficient (λ)	Standardised coefficient (λ)	P-Value	R- Square	Significant at 5% Level
CSSCO1 \leftarrow CSSCO	1.000	0.957	0.00	0.915	Yes
CSSCO2 \leftarrow CSSCO	0.966	0.918	0.00	0.843	Yes
CSSCO3 \leftarrow CSSCO	0.720	0.790	0.00	0.624	Yes
CSSCO4 \leftarrow CSSCO	1.070	0.910	0.00	0.827	Yes
CSSCO5 \leftarrow CSSCO	1.102	0.875	0.00	0.765	Yes
CSSCO6 \leftarrow CSSCO	0.863	0.769	0.00	0.591	Yes
CSSCO7 \leftarrow CSSCO	1.016	0.785	0.00	0.616	Yes
CSSCO8 \leftarrow CSSCO	0.677	0.688	0.00	0.474	Yes
CSSCO9 \leftarrow CSSCO	0.713	0.682	0.00	0.465	Yes
CSSCO10 \leftarrow CSSCO	0.584	0.709	0.00	0.503	Yes

Table 8 shows the correlation values, standard errors and the test of statistics of the final ten-indicator model. All the correlation values were less than 1.00, and all the p-values were less than the significant value of 0.05 and showed appropriate signs. The estimates were therefore deemed reasonable, as well as statistically significant. The parameter with the highest standardised coefficient was the indicator with variable CSSCO1, and its parameter coefficient was 0.957. Most of the parameter estimates had high correlation values close to 1.00. The high correlation values suggest a high degree of linear association between the indicator variables and the unobserved variables (CSSCO). In addition, the R Square values were also close to the desired value of 1.00, indicating that the factors explained more of the variance in the indicator variables. The results suggest that the indicator variables significantly predict the unobserved components because all the measured variables are significantly associated with the component (CSSCO) under the content of the Social Studies curriculum and objectives factors.

In the analysis, it was identified that the Social Studies curriculum has an adequate supply of electronic learning materials suitable for the course and that the content of the curriculum has been thoughtfully organised to ensure that the stated objectives are fully addressed. This ensures that tutors have access to the necessary resources to deliver the curriculum effectively and is designed to facilitate achieving its intended outcomes. Moreover, the curriculum content considers gender, inclusivity and equity issues. This indicates that the curriculum addresses these important considerations to meet the objectives and ensure equal opportunities for all students. The content makes provision for course assessment by the National Teacher Education Assessment Policy (NTEAP) to achieve the objectives of the curriculum; thus, the curriculum content includes provisions for assessing student learning in alignment with the National Teacher Education Assessment Policy (NTEAP). This ensures that the assessment practices implemented are in line with the objectives of the curriculum.

The content provides sufficient pedagogical approaches for effective delivery to meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum. That is, the curriculum content incorporates a variety of pedagogical approaches to support effective teaching and meet the demands of the curriculum objectives. This suggests that the curriculum provides tutors with a range of instructional methods to facilitate student learning and also focuses on the development of individuals imbued with core values and competencies who can function in a modern, technologically driven society that is inclusive. The content incorporates relevant lifelong skills that align with the objectives of the curriculum. This suggests that the curriculum aims to equip students with skills that are not only applicable in the present but also valuable throughout their lives. Also, the curriculum content identifies the resources required to achieve the curriculum objectives effectively. This implies that the curriculum provides guidelines and recommendations for necessary resources, such as textbooks, digital materials, or supplementary materials. Again, the curriculum content aligns with the National Teachers Standards. This indicates that the curriculum incorporates the required standards to ensure that tutors are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the objectives of the curriculum.

Furthermore, the curriculum content is organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner. This approach implies that the curriculum integrates multiple subject areas and encourages connections across disciplines to achieve the objectives. Also, the content of the Social Studies curriculum meets the requirements of the New Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program. This indicates that the curriculum content aligns with the objectives and guidelines set forth by the B.Ed. Program for Social Studies education. These findings indicate that the Social Studies curriculum is carefully designed and aligned with its objectives.

It provides tutors with the necessary resources, promotes inclusive education, incorporates diverse assessment practices, offers various pedagogical approaches, and focuses on lifelong skills development. The curriculum also meets national standards and is designed to meet the requirements of the B.Ed. Program. It was evident in the findings of the current study that there was an alignment of content selected and curriculum objectives of Social Studies. For curriculum objectives to be effectively implemented, the content selected must

match the objectives (Hussain, Dogar, Azeem & Shakoor (2011). Babatunde, Benedict and Adu (2016) revealed that the content must be organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner to establish the alignment between the content selected and curriculum objectives. In this way, the objectives of the curriculum will be achieved. In their study, Babatunde, Benedict and Adu (2016) found that classroom teachers do not clearly understand the concept of Social Studies as an integrated subject. This finding contradicts the current study, which shows that the content of the Social Studies curriculum was organised and taught in an interdisciplinary manner to achieve the objectives.

Similarly, this study agrees with the recommendation made by Ampofo (2020) that contents of Social Studies must be drawn from other social sciences to give the subject a comprehensive outlook. The findings of this study again conform to the findings of Mezieobi (2008) that the content of Social Studies education programmes is drawn from the social science, the humanities, oral history, contemporary issues, mass media, personal or group experiences of learners, teachers, and parents and from resource persons, places, ideas, past activities and thoughts. The findings of this current study also showed that the content selected met the requirements of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum objectives. This finding was also corroborated by a classroom lesson observation, which revealed that the content selected meets the objectives of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum. This implied that tutors selected learning experiences aligned with the learning outcomes and indicators. This ensured that teacher trainees received the correct knowledge, skills and competencies to prepare them for further studies (when required), the world of work and adult life.

Mezieobi (1998) proposed that Social Studies contents must be drawn from the society or community, books and other published materials, government documents, policy statements, circulars of pronouncements, resource places, oral tradition, and oral or local history. This meant that the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum content must be based within a social context or milieu. This is very important because the level of the educational strata limits curriculum content, that is, the schools and levels to which the content prescription is designed (Mezieobi, 1998). In this case, the content selected must be suitable for students in Colleges of Education. More so, the contents selected must be appropriate for the country as the goal-emphasis of every curriculum differs from country to country (Holmes & McLean, 2018).

Similarly, respondents of this study agreed that the content must reflect the objectives of the Social Studies curriculum and focus on developing an individual imbued with core values and competencies who can function in a modern, technologically driven, inclusive society. This implies that learners (teacher trainees) will be equipped with values such as honesty, integrity, hard work, patriotism and responsible citizenship. Inferably, teacher trainees may pass these values on to young learners in the basic school while the trainees enter the field of work. This finding is in line with the rationale of the Social Studies Curriculum for JHS, which seeks to equip learners with critical thinking, communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, digital literacy, cultural identity and global citizenship, problem-solving skills and competencies for personal development and leadership (NaCCA, 2020).

Again, this study has revealed that the content of the B.Ed. The social studies curriculum has been carefully arranged to ensure that objectives are fully achieved. This implies that learners (teacher-trainees) may develop the skill of arranging contents from known to unknown in their field of work. i.e., the classroom. By implication, teacher-trainees will study curriculum contents chronologically and develop skills of bringing relevant examples from their community into the classroom as learning experiences. Arranging curriculum contents from simple and concrete to complex and abstract knowledge also goes a long way to ensure that students (teacher trainees) appreciate societal norms and practices and can fit well into society (Egan, 1989).

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study concluded that the B.Ed Social Studies curriculum for Colleges of Education had been developed to incorporate gender issues and build equity and inclusivity issues in teacher trainees, which aligns with the curriculum objectives. Also, the new curriculum provided information about teachers' standards, which assisted the teacher trainees in better appreciating the NTS. The careful and systematic arrangements of the content of the curriculum, the interdisciplinary organisation of the content, and providing lifelong learning skills, among others, meet the demands of the objectives of the curriculum, confirming that there was a strong alignment between the selected content and objectives of the B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum. It is recommended that Colleges of Education Social Studies tutors should continue to exemplify and ensure that all concepts and principles related to B.Ed. Social Studies curriculum objectives are faithfully inculcated in teacher trainees so that there is always an alignment between the selected content and objectives of the curriculum to build their professional competencies for the teaching career.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this study. The research was conducted independently without any external pressures that could have influenced the results or analysis.

Data Availability

The data supporting this study's findings are available upon reasonable request from the corresponding author. Due to privacy restrictions, data may not be freely shared but will be available to legitimate researchers for academic purposes.

Funding

This research did not receive a specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors. The researchers bore all expenses related to the study.

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