

Evaluation of the Implementation of Distance Education Social Studies Curriculum in Ghana

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ABSTRACT:

This study investigated the implementation of distance education Social Studies curriculum in Ghana. A concurrent embedded mixed-method design was used for the study. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study. The population for the study consisted of all 168 Social Studies tutors of the College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast, and data was gathered from questionnaire interviews and observations. The mean and standard deviation were used to analyse research questions one, three, and four, while thematic analysis was performed for research question two. The results revealed that the study centres of the college had inadequate physical facilities and instructional materials. Also, the primary instructional methods used by tutors at the college were discussion, expository, inquiry, discovery, role-play, and comparative learning methods but there was a lack of motivational packages for tutors. Furthermore, Social Studies tutors were found to have a high level of self-efficacy for students' engagement and were efficient in helping students to think critically about social issues. Recommendations were made for the improvement of facilities as well as instructional materials.

Keywords: Evaluation, Implementation, Distance Education, Social Studies Curriculum.

1. Introduction

The main role of the Social Studies teacher is to emphasise the development of relevant knowledge, positive attitudes, values, and problem-solving skills of students (Eshun & Mensah, 2013). Again, the teaching and learning of Social Studies prepare the individual by equipping him or her with knowledge about the culture and ways of life of their society, its problems values, and hopes for the future (Quashigah et al., 2016). These clearly show that it is accepted that the ultimate aim of Social Studies is seen as citizenship education aimed at refining and bringing out graduates with high cultural and moral values. No matter how well articulated the philosophy and objectives of a curriculum are and 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). It is therefore pertinent to investigate the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education mode in Ghana.

In recent years, Ghanaians' immorality, negative attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours leave much to be desired. Ghanaians are becoming intolerant to national issues, people are becoming more self-centred than thinking about their neighbours, have a poor attitude toward work, and people are showing apathy toward national development (Kankam, 2016). This raises a concern as to whether Social Studies teachers are effectively implementing the Social Studies curriculum as expected. Through the distance mode, quite a substantial number of teachers are produced to add to the teaching workforce of Ghana. These teachers are expected to teach various subjects, including Social Studies at the basic level of education. Thus, graduates of distance education have the onerous responsibility of laying a solid foundation in the educational careers of the children entrusted to their care. This implies that a clearer implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in the distance education mode needs not to be taken for granted if quality-trained Social Studies teachers are to be produced from the colleges. In Ghana, researchers have not paid attention to the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in the distance education mode. Instead, the attention has been on areas such as the pre-service preparation of Social Studies teachers, the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum at the basic and secondary levels (Bekoe et al, 2015), and the prospect and problems of Social Studies in Ghana (Asimeng-Boahene, 2017). This study was delimited to the College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast because the college has the largest number of distance education students in Ghana.

The study was intended to investigate the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education in Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. assess the adequacy of physical facilities for the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education.
2. assess the adequacy of instructional materials for the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education.
3. ascertain instructional methods used by Social Studies tutors in the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education.
4. examine the level of Social Studies tutors' sense of self-efficacy in students' engagement in distance education.

To provide answers to the main problem, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What is the adequacy of the physical facilities available for the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education?
2. How adequate are the instructional materials available for the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education?
3. Which pedagogical methods are used by Social Studies tutors in the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education?
4. What is the level of Social Studies tutors' sense of self-efficacy in students' engagement in distance education?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Self-Efficacy Theory

The self-efficacy theory is a construct derived from Albert Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1986). This theory posits that behaviour is based on the fact that people develop a generalised expectancy about action-outcome contingencies through life experiences and also develop a more personal belief about their ability to cope. Therefore, one's judgment about his or her ability to carry out actions necessary to address a situation and the expectation that the actions will produce the desired outcome. The Social Studies teacher should therefore possess the skills, abilities, interests, and experience to help him produce good students. This will invariably improve the self-concept and self-worth of the teacher.

2.2. Concept of Evaluation

Evaluation is a program, design, project or any other intervention or initiative to assess any aim, proposal, any alternative, to help in decision-making; or to ascertain the degree of achievement or value concerning the aim and objectives and results of any such action that has been completed. The main purpose of curriculum evaluation, in addition to gaining insight into prior or existing initiatives, is to assist in the identification of future change. Evaluation is the structured interpretation and giving of meaning to predicted or actual impacts of proposals or results. It looks at original objectives, and at what is either predicted or what was accomplished and how it was accomplished. The main purpose of a program evaluation can be to "determine the quality of a program by formulating a judgment" (Hurteau, Houle, & Mongiat, 2009).

2.3 Concept of Curriculum Implementation

Implementation is the process through which a proposed concept, model, topic, or theory is taken up by some practices (Chukwuemeka, 2016). In t of a given topic, the teacher adopts the appropriate teaching methods and materials to guide the students' learning. The students on their own are made to become actively involved in the process of interaction with learning activities (Pwajok, 2010). Curriculum implementation is the stage of presentation of the combination of the curriculum content and topics, methodology, and instructional materials by the teachers to the learners, most of the time in a classroom setting, a subject or combinations that will enable them to take up the learning that the teacher wants to pass across to them (Chukwuemeka, 2016).

2.4. Concept of Distance Education

Distance education is a form of education that brings together the physically distant learners and the facilitators of the learning activity around planned and structured learning experiences via various two or multi-way mediated media channels that allow interactions between/among learners, facilitators as well as between learners and educational resources (Gunawardena & McIsaac, 2017). Distance learning is teaching and learning involving the implementation of various technological applications. This term also reflects the fact that all or most of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in time and space from the learner. As a force contributing to social and economic development distance learning is today one of the most rapidly growing fields of education and training. The mission of distance learning includes greater dimensions of openness and flexibility, whether in terms of access, curriculum or other elements of a structure. The use of technologies for this purpose can be divided into four categories including print, audio, computer and video.

2.5. Social Studies Curriculum

Durbey and Barth (2016) point out that Social Studies is an integration of social science and the humanities for citizenship education. In this sense, Mezieobi (2016) believes that Social Studies is focused on society and is created to sharpen the creative potential of the learner in

terms of thinking creatively and contributing ideas towards identifying societal problems as well as proffering solutions. Social Studies is a programme of study that a society uses to instil in the students the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions it considers important concerning the relationship human beings have with each other, their world, and themselves. Akubue (2015) points out that Social Studies is the area of the curriculum that cultivates good citizenship in children. Enem (2017) agrees that Social Studies is the study of man in his environment. He further opines that Social Studies education is at developing the skills and knowledge of the Social Studies student and at achieving the overall development Social Studies enables. A good Social Studies programme aims at the integration of knowledge, experience, and effective use of resources to foster national unity and citizenship education. Social Studies exposes students to their cultural environment, which enables them to develop desirable concepts, values, and attitudes (Enem, 2017). It equally equips students with basic skills and social habits, which should help them adapt to the society in which they may find themselves. It also enables people to develop a good sense of judgment and a sense of moral and social responsibilities, which enables them to become useful members of society (Akubue, 2015; Enem, 2017).

2.6. Physical Facilities and Social Studies Curriculum Implementation

Fwang'le (2015) reveals amongst others, that a shortage of qualified teachers and the inadequacy of physical facilities and instructional materials hamper the effective implementation of the curriculum. He also agrees that there is a significant relationship between the availability and use of physical facilities and the results from oriented curriculum implementation. In the same vein, a lack of college physical facilities impedes the potency of education as an instrument of sustainable development. This is confirmed by Babo (2015) that inadequate facilities, such as classrooms for Social Studies lessons, a library, and inadequate instructional materials affect the Social Studies curriculum implementation negatively. Ndemba (2016) reveals that the availability and use of physical facilities result in good curriculum implementation. Babo (2015) again reiterates that inadequate facilities such as classrooms and libraries and inadequate instructional materials affected the Social Studies curriculum implementation negatively. Ndunda (2012) establishes that the adequacy of teachers' competencies, physical facilities, and other resources positively affects curriculum implementation. The study of Mezieobi (2016) confirms that most Social Studies teachers make use of reading materials, largely textbooks, and visual materials such as chalkboards, diagrams, and pictures, but completely ignore audio-visual materials, and concludes that facilities and material resources are very vital to the progress and development of any educational system.

2.7. Instructional Materials and Social Studies Curriculum Implementation

Kigwilu and Akala (2017) assert that Social Studies teachers make use of reading materials, largely textbooks, visual materials such as chalkboards, diagrams, and pictures, and completely ignore audio-visual materials, and command unity resources. They, therefore conclude that facilities and material resources are vital to the progress and development of any educational system. Kigwilu and Akala (2017) further stress that teaching and learning resources, such as workshops, equipment, lecture rooms, laboratories, raw materials for practical training, and reference books, are adequate, although under-utilised. Ogaga, Igori and Egbodo (2016) point out that the selection of relevant instructional materials, their availability, and the ability of the teacher to use them effectively have significant

relationships with the teaching and learning of Social Studies. Kankam (2015) accepts that the objectives of the Social Studies curriculum are valid and very necessary for the programme.

2.8. Instructional Methods and Social Studies Curriculum Implementation

Ubah and Shu'aibu (2014) agree that the implementation of the course contents of Social Studies is mostly dominated by the use of traditional techniques of instruction, notably the lecture method, to the detriment of other instructional strategies. Francis (2016) discloses that the methods used in teaching Social Studies, such as discussion, inquiry, and role-play have tremendous effects on the teaching of citizenship education at the basic school level. Onipe (2017) also admits that teachers place more emphasis on teacher-centred methods than activity-based or student-oriented methods, while Adoke (2016) confirms that the most commonly used methods are discussion, storytelling, and problem-solving approach.

2.9. Teachers' Self-efficacy and Social Studies Curriculum Implementation

Teachers' sense of efficacy can potentially influence both the kind of environment that they create as well as the various instruction practices introduced in the classroom (Bandura, 2016). Teachers' efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs about their ability to make a difference in their students' learning, whereas general teaching efficacy comprises teachers' beliefs about the power of factors outside of the school and the teacher's control in affecting student performance. Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy are confident that even the most difficult students can be reached if they exert extra effort; teachers with lower self-efficacy, on the other hand, feel a sense of helplessness when it comes to dealing with difficult and unmotivated students (Tschannen-Moran & Wookfolk Hoy, 2017). The foregoing indicates that indeed teachers' beliefs about their capabilities influence instructional decisions. Bekoe et al. (2015) revealed that mentees' orientation about what they believe in rather impacts what and how they go about their classroom

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A descriptive survey research design with concurrent embedded mixed-method was used for this study. This research strategy can be identified by its use of one data collection phase, during which both quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously (Creswell, 2016). The researcher found this approach useful because the mixing of the data from two methods helped him to integrate the information and compare one data source to the other (Halcomb & Andrew, 2015). This research design has several advantages including the fact that a researcher can collect the two types of data simultaneously, during a single data collection phase (Creswell, 2016).

3.2. Population

The population for the study was all the Social Studies tutors of CoDE, UCC in the various study centres across the country. Their total number was 168, and they were the population targeted for the study. The distribution is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Social Studies Tutors within the Regions in Ghana

Region	Number of Social Studies
Ahafo	2
Savannah	2
Oti	2
Western North	2
Bono East	6
Bono	12
Ashanti	15
Western	11
Northern	11
Eastern	13
Upper East	13
Upper West	12
Volta	13
North Eastern	14
Greater Accra	21
Central	19
Total	168

Source: Field survey (2019)

3.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure

For convenience and also to ensure a more detailed study of the elements involved, all 168 Social Studies tutors of CoDE, UCC were used in the study. This procedure was deemed appropriate because the size of the population was relatively small. If the population is small in size, it is ideal to use all of them (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). In the case of the interview, however, the eleven regions that had more than ten Social Studies tutors were purposely selected. One tutor was sampled from each of the eleven regions, and this was done through simple random sampling of the Social Studies tutors in the study centres in the regional capitals.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaires were used to collect data from the 168 respondents while the interview guide was used to elicit information from 11 of the respondents. An observation guide was also developed to help solicit information for the study concerning tutors' strategies for teaching.

4. Results And Discussions

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Details of information regarding the characteristics are shown in Table 2

Out of the 168 Social Studies tutors who responded to the questionnaire, Table 2 shows that 138 (82%) of them were males, while 30 (18%) were females. This implies that, at the time of this study, more males dominated the teaching of the Social Studies course than females in CoDE, UCC. This is not surprising because most lecturers in most universities in Ghana are males. Another demographic variable of interest is the age range of the respondents. The result indicates that the majority ($n = 49$, 29%) of the respondents were between the ages of 40-44 years old. This is followed by a good number of 35 (21%) who were within the age

category of 50 years and above. Again, a substantial number of 32 (19%) were within the age range of 45–49 years. This is also directly followed the by age range 35-39 which had 24 (14%) of the respondents. The age range with the fewest 11 (7%) respondents was between 25 and 29 years. The results support the fact that at the time of that of collecting data for this study, the majority of 140 (83%) of the respondents were over 35 years of age, and this shows that the Social Studies course was handled by people who were of age.

Table 2: Background Information of the Respondents (n = 168)

Variable	Sub-scale	No.	%
Gender	Male	138	82
	Female	30	18
Age group	25-29	11	7
	30-34	17	10
	35-39	24	14
	40-44	49	29
	45-49	32	19
	50+	35	21
Years of teaching experience	Below 1yr	19	11
	1-3yrs	44	26
	4-6yrs	56	34
	7-9yrs	25	15
	10+	24	14

Source: Field survey (2020)

The number of years that respondents have taught the Social Studies course in the distance education mode of CoDE, UCC, was also explored. The result shows that the majority of 56 (34%) of the respondents have served as tutors of the Social Studies course for 4-6 years. Respondents who have taught for between 1-3 years were 44 (26%). Aside, respondents who have taught for between 7-9 years were 25 (15%), while those who have taught for 10 years or more were 24 (14%). Tutors who have taught for less than 1 year were the minority with 19 (11%). The figures show that most Social Studies tutors at CoDE, UCC are not new. They have had some experience regarding the implementation of the curriculum. This is because most of them have spent not less than 3 years as tutors for the Social Studies course.

4.2 Main Results

4.2.1 Research Question One: What is the adequacy of the physical facilities available for the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education?

This research question sought to investigate the adequacy of the physical facilities available for the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in CoDE, UCC. A 4-point Likert scale was used and the responses were analysed using means and standard deviations with cut-off point values as (1-1.9 = strongly disagree, 2.0-2.4 = disagree, 2.5-3.4 = agree; more than 3.4 = strongly agree). Table 3 shows the mean responses and the standard deviations of the sampled tutors on the adequacy of the physical facilities available for the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education

Table 3: Adequacy of Physical Facilities Available and Social Studies Curriculum Implementation

Statements	Mean	SD
There are enough spacious lecture halls for teaching-learning and examination in my study centre	3.6	.75
Lecture halls are adequately furnished for the comfort of students and tutors in my study centre	3.4	.75
There are sufficient offices that are furnished for tutors in my study centre	2.2	1.0
I have witnessed a spacious Social Studies workshop room with a sitting capacity for at least 50 students in my teaching study centre	1.7	.88
In my centre, we have at least a functional bus for excursions or field trips	1.8	1.0
There exist a functional and well-furnished counselling office at my study centre	2.0	1.0
My study centre has a well-stocked library for students and tutors to do further reading	1.8	1.0
There are well-kept toilets facilities for tutors and students	2.7	.93
My study centre has health officials who provide first aid for emergency cases for tutors and students	1.9	1.0
My study centre has adequate and comfortable hostel accommodations for students who travel from distant places	1.9	1.0
Average Mean and Std. Dev.	2.3	.93

Source: Field survey (2020)

Table 3 shows that the respondents agreed ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.75$) that they had enough spacious lecture halls for teaching as well as for examinations in their study centres. This is followed by their positive response that the lecture halls were adequately furnished ($M = 3.4$, $SD = .75$) for the comfort of students and tutors at the study centres. Tutors also agreed that their study centres had well-kept toilet facilities for students and tutors. However, respondents disagreed ($M = 2.2$, $SD = 1.0$) on the issue of whether sufficient offices were furnished for tutors' use. Again, respondents affirmed ($M = 2.0$, $SD = 1.0$) that functional and well-furnished counselling rooms existed in their study centres. They also disagreed ($M = 1.9$, $SD = 1.0$) on the issue of the presence of sick bays where health officials attend to students or tutors who require first aid. Furthermore, the study centres having adequate and comfortable accommodation facilities for students disagreed ($M = 1.9$, $SD = 1.0$). Respondents further did not affirm in the survey that they had ($M = 1.8$, $SD = 1.0$) a well-stocked library for students and tutors to do further reading. Furthermore, respondents' responses confirmed that the study centres for the CoDE, UCC programmes had no functional buses designated for excursions or field trips. The mean of means scores shows that respondents disagreed ($M = 2.3$, $SD = .93$) that the CoDE and UCC study centres as of the time of the study, had adequate physical facilities. The standard deviation score of .93 also suggests that respondents' responses were homogeneous. It is concluded from these results that the study centres do not have adequate facilities for the smooth implementation of the Social Studies curriculum.

According to the respondents, facilities such as an office for tutors, a Social Studies workshop room, at least one functional bus for field trips, a guidance and counselling office at the study centre, and a dispensary, among others, were not in existence. The findings

corroborate with Fwang'le (2015) who stresses that colleges of education in the north-central geo-political zone of Nigeria have inadequate physical facilities for the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum. Fwang'le (2015) in a similar study also confirms that colleges lack physical facilities for the smooth implementation of the Social Studies curriculum. He also agrees that a lack of physical facilities impedes the smooth implementation of the Social Studies curriculum. Most tertiary institutions implementing Social Studies curricula have inadequate physical facilities, according to the findings of studies in the Social Studies literature (Babo, 2015; Ndunda, 2012; Mezieobi, 2016).

4.2.2 Research Question Two: How adequate are the instructional materials available for the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum?

The researcher interviewed eleven tutors. The interview data was collected using an interview schedule and the analysis was done using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach. The research question sought to investigate the instructional materials available and whether or not they were adequate for the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in CoDE, UCC.

Adequacy of Instructional Materials for Teaching and Learning of Social Studies

Out of the 11 tutors who were interviewed, eight (8) of them indicated that the only instructional materials that were available to them were the Social Studies course modules given to them by the college and that all other materials such as maps, atlases, workbooks, charts, bulletin boards, pictures, newspapers, and magazines were not provided. The following were some of the responses given by respondents on the issue of the adequacy of instructional materials:

"Since the day I was appointed as a tutor, I was given a small blue book for Social Studies as a course module and that is all. No other material has been given to me for the past five years" (Respondent 1, male, 43yrs).

"I am not sure CoDE wants us to teach the Social Studies subject well. When they give you their module they think no other material is necessary" (Respondent 2, male, 35yrs)

"I do not worry myself so much because all that I have is the module so I use only that one. Maybe in the new future, we will get other instructional materials" (Respondent 3, female, 30 yrs.).

"Sincerely, materials for teaching at CoDE, especially, the Social Studies course is not enough at all but we are managing. At least we have an instructional module, we will utilize it" (Respondent 8, male, 31yrs).

On the same issue of adequacy, instructional materials respondents continued to lament the absence of key instructional materials needed for the teaching of the Social Studies course. This category of tutors instead mentioned what they needed.

"As a tutor, to be able to facilitate this course well, I need, a globe, charts, maps and even newspapers but here is the case that we are given only a module to use, in this case, are we serious or not" (Respondent 4, male, 34yrs.). "The use of just a module by a tutor, to me, is not appropriate. Certain topics require that we use bulletin boards but here is the case we do not have even one. It means certain topics will not be well taught" (Respondent 5, female, 29yrs).

“I want you to tell UCC-CoDE that we need, atlases and maps to teach the students. It is not enough to teach with one module as if we are teaching English reading here” (Respondent 6, male, 32yrs.).

“I always ask my students to google things like a map of Ghana, and Africa, we sometimes google latitude and longitude, current affairs in the country as well as other issues if we are treating them as a topic” (Respondent 7, male, 41yrs).

Effects of Inadequate Instructional Materials for Teaching and Learning of Social Studies

According to the respondents, inadequate instructional materials for the facilitation of the Social Studies curriculum has debilitating effects on the implementation of the entire Social Studies curriculum. Among the effects outlined by respondents include the fact that tutors were unable to explain a certain concept better when instructional materials are not adequately provided. Second, students largely learn in abstraction in the absence of adequate instructional materials. Third, teaching the Social Studies course was tedious and full of imaginative procedures. In responding to the question about the effects of inadequate instructional materials the respondents gave the following responses;

“Because I do not have other materials such as maps and charts, I suffer when teaching and this is not helpful, it makes facilitation difficult” (Respondent 3, female, 30yrs).

“In my view, if instructional materials are not adequately implemented the curriculum becomes a struggle which is not healthy”. We are training robots who will not be able to think creatively because of how we facilitate courses here in the university, tutors have no materials to concretise what they say. We only teach in abstraction and students also learn in abstraction. Nothing better can come out of them” (Respondent 6, male, 32yrs).

“Explaining certain concepts during facilitation without any pictorial material to show is the biggest that I face as a tutor, teaching CoDE is very difficult for my brother” (Respondent 8, male, 31yrs).

“For me, the students are just learning in abstraction, for they don’t know in reality whatever we are teaching them” (Respondent 9, male, 41yrs).

“For this course the instructional material is expensive and I cannot use my money for that. The college needs to provide those materials. Because the materials are not there, I use imaginative procedures in facilitating” (Respondent 10, male, 37yrs).

The absence of these instructional materials may result in over-reliance on only course modules which makes students rigid thinkers, and rote learners and no opportunity then is offered to students for self-evaluation and growth. The aforementioned methods were not only reported by CoDE, UCC tutors but were also observed during the data collection exercise. It was observed that the teaching methods stated by tutors were being used in teaching. This finding is parallel with the views of Francis (2016) who also found that methods of teaching such as discussion, inquiry and role-play were prevalent among Social Studies teachers in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Francis’ study project interactive approach to teaching Social Studies as a means to instil values and national virtues into students. This is not different from Kadiri (2017) who also discovered that interactive teaching techniques could raise the level of students’ performance in Social Studies. Confirming what has been

found earlier, Deveci and Dal (2017) discovered that interactive activities used in teaching Social Studies would not only help instil values and virtues of citizenship in students but would as well catalyse better performance.

Effective teaching and learning depend more on student-centred approaches like brainstorming, discussions and group activities which work best when students have materials like newspapers, atlas, charts and other instructional resources to deliberate on. The findings of this present study concur with Babo (2015) and Fwang'le (2015) assert that instructional materials are not enough in junior high schools and colleges of education for effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum. Mezieobi (2016) also agrees that instructional resources such as reading materials, whiteboards, diagrams, pictures and atlases are very important for the effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum.

6.2.3 Research Question Three: What are the instructional methods used by Social Studies tutors in the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education?

The items in the questionnaire as regards this issue explored the instructional methods used by tutors at CoDE, UCC in the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum. A 4-point Likert Scale was used and the responses were analysed using means and standard deviations with cut-off point values as (1-1.9 = strongly disagree, 2.0-2.4 = disagree, 2.5-3.4 = agree; more than 3.4 = strongly agree). Table 4 shows the mean responses and the standard deviations of the sampled tutors on the issue under investigation.

Table 4: Instructional Methods used by Social Studies Tutors

Statements	Mean	Std.
I use the discussion method	3.5	.55
I use the expository method	2.9	.67
I counsel students to read their modules at home and present what they read during face to face	3.3	.60
I use the inquiry method	3.1	.59
I use the discovery method	3.0	.61
I use the role-play method	2.6	.74
I use the lecture method	2.8	.86
Projects are often given to students	2.6	.80
I use field trips as a teaching strategy	2.0	.80
I use comparative learning	2.8	.63
Average Mean and Std. Deviation	2.9	.69

Source: Field survey (2020)

The result in Table 4 reveals that respondents agreed ($M = 3.5$, $SD = .55$) that when it comes to course facilitation, they often made use of the discussion method. Again, respondents agreed ($M = 3.3$, $SD = .60$) that they used the strategy of counselling students to read their modules at home before attending face-to-face interactions at the study centres. Also, as an instructional procedure, respondents confirmed ($M = 3.1$, $SD = .59$) that they often made use of the enquiry method when facilitating. There was an agreement ($M = 3.0$, $SD = .61$) among respondents' that the discovery teaching method was often used. Furthermore, the lecture method and comparative learning approach were found to be often used ($M = 2.8$, $SD = .86$) and ($M = 2.8$, $SD = .63$) respectively by respondents. Finally, role-play methods and projects

were reported to be used frequently during Social Studies course facilitation. The respondents reported to have often used teaching methods such as discussion, expository, inquiry, discovery, role-play, comparative learning and lecture. This is shown by the mean of the means score of 2.9. The standard deviation score of .69 also suggests that the respondents' responses to the items on the questionnaire were uniform. On average, the respondents reported to have used methods such as discussion, expository, inquiry, discovery, role-play, comparative learning and lecture. For tutors at UCC-CoDE, the use of methods like discussions of topics among students, expository style of teaching, inquiry and discovery were critical in their facilitation purposely to make their facilitation encounter more students centred than lecturer-centred.

6.2.4 Research Question Four: What is the level of Social Studies tutor's self-efficacy in students engagement in the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in distance education?

Items in the questionnaire on this sought to find out Social Studies tutors' level of self-efficacy in students' engagement. A 4-point Likert Scale was used and the responses were analysed using means and standard deviations with cut-off point values as (1-1.9 = strongly disagree, 2.0-2.4 = disagree, 2.5-3.4 = agree; more than 3.4 = strongly agree). The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Tutors' Self-Efficacy in Students Engagements in Social Studies Curriculum Implementation

Statements	Mean	Std.
I get through to the most difficult students in the lecture hall during instructional ti	3.0	.68
I control disruptive behaviour in the lecture hall during instructional time	3.3	.65
I motivate students who show low interest in the Social Studies course in class	3.5	.82
I establish routines to keep lecture hall teaching and learning activities running smoothly	3.2	.66
I help my students think critically	3.4	.65
I foster creativity among my students	3.3	.67
I provide challenging tasks for very capable students	3.1	.65
Adjusting my lessons to the appropriate level of my students is not a difficult task at all for me	3.3	.71
I monitor my students comprehension of what I have taught them	3.3	.69
I help students to value the learning of the Social Studies course	3.6	.70
Average Mean and Std. Deviation	3.3	.69

Source: Field survey (2020)

Table 5 shows the mean responses and the standard deviations of the sampled tutors on the issue under investigation. When the statement "I help students to value the learning of the Social Studies course" was posed to find out respondents' effectiveness of students engagement, respondents agreed (M = 3.6, SD = .70). This was followed by respondents' agreement (M = 3.5, SD = .82) of the statement, "I motivate students who show low interest in the Social Studies course in class." Again, when the statement "I help my students to think critically" was given, respondents agreed (M = 3.4, SD= .65).

Also, respondents reported that they helped ($M = 3.3$, $SD = .67$) to foster creativity among students, guide students ($M = 3.3$, $SD = .71$) in adjusting lessons to their level, assist ($M = 3.3$, $SD = .69$) when it comes to monitoring of students' comprehension of what is taught and finally try ($M = 3.3$, $SD = .65$) to control disruptive behaviours in the lecture hall during instructional time. Furthermore, on the account of establishing routines to keep lecture hall teaching-learning activities running smoothly, the respondents agreed ($M = 3.2$, $SD = .66$) that they practised that. Finally, the respondents agreed ($M = 3.1$, $SD = .65$) that they consciously provided challenging tasks for every capable student.

Respondents appeared to be very effective when it comes to students' engagement. This is indicated by the mean of means score of 3.3. The standard deviation of .69 suggests that respondents' responses were homogeneous. This suggests that teachers had a higher chance of positively influencing their teaching. This is because they believed in themselves that they had the skills and strategies that would help impart knowledge to their students through their delivery of both content and approach to teaching and learning. Respondents were helping students to think critically about issues within the Social Studies discussion. More critically, respondents used their instruction to foster creativity among students. Further, respondents reported that they were also efficient in adjusting their lessons to the various academic levels even though at each level challenging tasks were given to students to elicit their participation. The responses as shown by the tutors demonstrate clear personal teaching effectiveness that echoes teachers' beliefs about their ability to make a difference in their students' learning. Respondents indicated personal teaching effectiveness and this confirms predominant efficacy dimensions in the literature (Arko, 2021; Berman et al. 1977).

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that teaching Social Studies courses at CoDE, UCC is not likely to be effectively done since major physical infrastructures such as libraries, staff rooms for tutors and functional buses for field trips are not available. It can also be said that the objectives of the Social Studies course at CoDE, UCC are not likely to be fully achieved because of insufficient teaching and learning resources. Social Studies tutors were found to be competent towards the implementation process of the curriculum. As a result, the study concludes that if the competence of the tutors is not maintained, the quality of teaching (face-to-face interaction) will decrease. It is worth concluding that tutor absenteeism and tutors use of unapproved personnel to teach the course on their behalf is bound to happen since tutors have that inkling that their efforts are not been rewarded. Moreover, tutors are more likely to be utilising the same old information that they were exposed to in their days of training since they are not being assisted with professional development programmes.

Student self-directed learning and peer assessment which foster independence and group learning are more likely to improve because of the adoption of interactive student-centred approaches to facilitation adopted by tutors at the study centres. Tutors are more likely to have high expectations for students, feel responsible for student learning, have strategies for achieving objectives, have a positive teaching attitude and believe that they can influence their student learning because of the high level of efficacy belief among most of the tutors. As tutors demonstrate highly effective monitoring strategies, they are more likely to choose appropriate methods without any influence on their gender.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are offered to the management of CoDE, UCC.

1. Essential physical facilities like libraries and staff common rooms should be provided for tutors at all the study centres. Furthermore, functional buses for field trips must be made available to augment face-to-face teaching.
2. Social Studies course tutors should be provided with relevant instructional materials such as daily newspapers, atlases, maps, and historical audio-visual among others in the libraries of the study centres in addition to the course modules. This will help ensure the smooth implementation of quality Social Studies education.
3. Again, As a matter of policy management should organise at least a workshop or seminar for all Social Studies tutors once every academic year to help improve upon their professional development.
4. Also, as a matter of importance, management should ensure that all Social Studies course tutors are given the necessary opportunity to function in the course of their interaction with students.
5. Furthermore, some incentive motivational packages should be instituted to help boost the teachers' morale, confidence and commitment to their work.
6. Finally, management should appeal to the government of Ghana through the Ministry of Education to financially support distance education, especially at a time when the nation is implementing a free senior high school education policy. Such support would help the universities to acquire the needed physical facilities and relevant instructional materials as well as attract competent and dedicated tutors for quality tuition.

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