



Enquiry-based teaching in social studies: An assessment of teacher competencies in Ho municipality of the Volta Region

Jerry Erasmus Goka, Franklin Bissi, George Kafu

Department of Social Sciences, Peki College of Education, Volta Region, Ghana

Abstract

This study assessed the enquiry teaching competencies of teachers of Social Studies in Senior High Schools in Ho Municipality in the Volta Region. Census survey procedures were used to engage 71 teachers of Social Studies from all 15 Senior High Schools in the Ho Municipality of the Volta Region for this study. Observation checklist and questionnaire were the instruments used in collecting the data. Descriptive statistics in terms of frequencies, percentages, mean scores and standard deviations were used to analyse the data. The study found out that all teachers in the study demonstrated various levels of competency but, their overall enquiry-teaching competence was below the acceptable level, a situation that does not enhance effective teaching of Social Studies.

Keywords: enquiry teaching competences, Ho municipality, social science teachers

Introduction

Ghana's National Development goal as contained in the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan, 2002-2004 (Government of Ghana [GoG], 2002) ^[12] aims at alleviating poverty and creating wealth. In pursuance of this goal, the philosophy that underpins our educational system stresses the need for the development of "a well-balanced (intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically) individual who has the requisite knowledge, skill, values and attitude for self-actualization and for the socio-economic transformation of the nation" (GoG, 2002, p. 20) ^[12]. In other words, one of the hallmarks of the National Policy on Education in Ghana is its emphasis on making education relevant to the needs and aspirations of individuals and the Ghanaian society at large.

Against this backdrop, Governments (both past and present) have not only demonstrated their commitments to education through huge financial investments, but have become increasingly concerned with the schooling process in terms of educational outcomes, learning activities, instructional resources, teaching techniques and evaluation procedures (Blege, 2001) ^[6].

A variety of teaching methods are employed to teach Social Studies because of its nature. Aggarwal (1982) ^[2] for example listed 15 methods used in teaching Social Studies. Some of these include discussion, problem solving, and assignment among others, while Jarolimek (1977) ^[17], and Hayford (1992) ^[12], categorize the varied methods into two: expository and enquiry/discovery approaches.

Expository teaching methods tend to be teacher dominated. In this type of setting, the teacher generates, develops, and presents facts or ideas or principles which constitute school knowledge to students who mainly listen and copy notes (Iyamu & Ukadike, 2007) ^[16]. Opportunities for students' participation in lesson are limited. They therefore learn by rote. Though literature abounds on the weaknesses of expository instructional methods in bringing about meaningful and functional learning, (Mkpa, 1993; Tamakloe

& Cobbold, 2000) ^[22, 12, 29], the prevalence of the use of these instructional methods by Social Studies teachers in Ghanaian schools appears to be justified by the peculiarities of the nation's schools. Apart from being the methods of teaching which most of the teachers are familiar with (by training and practice), the overcrowded classrooms, the desire to cover the examination oriented course syllabus, and shortage of relevant instructional materials, and equipment tend to justify their use by teachers (Akrasi, 2002; Iyamu & Otote, 2006) ^[4, 15].

On the other hand, enquiry methods of teaching presuppose the use of techniques and activities which give the students ample opportunities to participate actively in the instructional process. They are learner oriented and learner dominated (Hayford, 1992; Iyamu & Otote, 2006) ^[14, 15]. In an enquiry instructional setting, students contribute to the generation of their own knowledge, thereby developing curiosity, creativity abilities for independent thinking and problem solving.

Literature and the curriculum place a very high premium on the use of enquiry oriented methods in the teaching of Social Studies in schools (African Social and Environmental Studies Programme [ASESP], 1992 ^[1]; Hayford, 1992 ^[14]; Blege, 2001 ^[6]; Ministry of Education Science and Sports [MESS], 2007). This emphasis, according to Jarolimek (1977) ^[17] is consistent with the nature and objectives of Social Studies in every society. For example, as a problem-based discipline (Blege, 2001) ^[6], students need to be taught to develop critical thinking and skills in problem-solving, and as the study of man in his social life (Tamakloe, 2008), Social Studies should be taught in manners which make real experiences part of the classroom learning. It is in this regard that Social Studies educators including Jarolimek (1977) ^[17], Hayford (1992) ^[12], and ASEP (1992) ^[1] among others recommend the use of enquiry methods in the teaching of Social Studies.

It cannot be said that Social Studies teachers in Ghanaian secondary schools, like their counterparts elsewhere, are not

aware of the enquiry method of teaching and its associated advantages. It cannot also be said that they are not aware of the disadvantages of the expository methods (Iyamu & Ukadike, 2007)^[16]. Yet, despite the emphasis on the enquiry approach to the teaching of Social Studies, not much has been done in terms of empirical studies in Ghana to assess the enquiry teaching competencies of Social Studies teachers in terms of the skills in enquiry and how to teach them and questioning techniques that enhance enquiry. According to Iyamu and Otote (2006)^[15], unless the teaching and learning of Social Studies is enquiry based, its objectives can neither be seen to be realized completely nor its implementation effective. Against this backdrop, it becomes necessary to assess teacher competencies in social studies in Senior High schools in Ghana with regard to the enquiry method of teaching.

Statement of the Problem

Literature and the curriculum of Social Studies places a very high premium on the use of enquiry-oriented methods in the teaching of Social Studies in schools (African Social and Environmental Studies Programme [ASESP], 1992^[1]; Hayford, 1992^[12]; Blege, 2001^[6]; Ministry of Education Science and Sports [MESS], 2007). This emphasis, according to Jarolimek (1977)^[17] is consistent with the nature and objectives of Social Studies in every society. However, the use of inquiry instructional technique as an innovative instructional practice can only be effectively implemented if the teachers possess the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities related to its use in the instructional process. Ramsdem (1999) believes that teaching at various educational institutions has not seen much improvement because most teachers are limited in their pedagogical abilities and no major pressures exists to change the nature of their teaching. Research works by Tamakloe (1988), and Kwao (2002)^[19] attest to the lack of competent teachers as the greatest problem facing the teaching of Social Studies in Ghanaian schools.

It appears that the teaching approaches, knowledge and skills that teachers of Social Studies employ are sometimes in total disregard for objectives of the subject in terms of enquiry-teaching competencies. In other words, there is general uncertainty as to whether social studies teachers in Ghanaian secondary schools possess the requisite competence in the enquiry method of teaching in terms of the skills in enquiry and how they are taught and questioning techniques that enhance enquiry.

Besides, there exists the fear that since most of these teachers who handle social studies at the Senior High Schools in Ghana are “out-of-field” teachers with little or no training in social studies education and methodology, their awareness, equipment and willingness to embrace and effectively use the enquiry teaching technique is bound to be questionable.

Purpose of the Study

In the light of the foregoing, this study was purposed to assess the enquiry teaching competencies of Social Studies teachers in Senior High Schools. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Examine social studies teachers' skills in enquiry and how they use it in teaching.
2. Investigate into teachers' knowledge of appropriate questioning techniques to enhance enquiry teaching.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What specific enquiry skills do Social Studies teachers possess and how do they use those skills?
2. To what extent do Social Studies teachers employ appropriate questioning techniques in enhancing the enquiry abilities of their students?

Theoretical Framework

Enquiry teaching and enquiry-based learning are often viewed as constructivist approach to learning, Boyce (as cited in Aliyu, 2015)^[5]. Constructivism originated from the works of Dewey and moving forward to other theorists such as Piaget and Vygotsky. The basic premise of constructivism is that learners each have a unique knowledge base and rebuild on new information. According to Aliyu, (2015)^[5], three tenets of constructivism that have relevance to inquiry method. The first tenet is that each person brings his or her unique experience and knowledge set to the situation. Inquiry method allows learners to pull from their own frame of reference and apply themselves to the situation. Each learner has the potential to approach the situation by themselves.

The second tenet stressed that learning occurs through active exploration when an individual's knowledge does not fit the current experience. Inquiry method of teaching and learning offer the opportunity to push learners past their current knowledge level and see new areas where knowledge may be lacking. The third tenet stated that learning requires interaction within a social context. A fundamental function of inquiry method of teaching and learning is a team approach to learning institutions.

The Concept of Inquiry Method of Teaching

The concept of inquiry has been defined in different ways. According to Dubey and Barth (1980)^[9], inquiry is perceived as reflective thinking, analysis, critical thinking, inductive thinking and problem solving. Also, Njoku (1997)^[24], defines inquiry method as a process of gaining and verifying knowledge. He added that inquiry method is an approach to learning in which the learner is the active agent in discovering concept generalization and ideas.

Inquiry according to Aina, Adedoyin, Obilo and Ahmadu (1982)^[3], is a method in which the students find answers to questions, problems or riddles raised during the learning processes. It involves probing, finding out, investigating, analyzing, synthesizing, discovering, evaluating, questioning and thinking. They further stated that, for students to be meaningfully engaged in the inquiry, there is need for the teacher to practically involve them from the planning stage to the evaluative stage. This can be done by the students and the teacher by locating and gathering information from many sources like reading materials, audio materials, specimen and community resources. Similarly, Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2008)^[21], describes inquiry method as an activity-oriented, thought-provoking creative method in which students, out of curiosity and on their own, or under the guidance of the teacher, probe, investigate, and interpret relevant issues.

As is evident from this method, rather than the teacher becoming the ‘knowledge encyclopedia’ or the giver of knowledge to the students, as is characteristic of the conventional expository method, the students, particularly in a free-ranging inquiry, which is usually student initiated,

strike out on their own, individually or in group, to seek solution to problems while the teachers merely functions as "a facilitator of dispenser of knowledge" (Gleeson and Whitty, 1976)^[10].

Enquiry Skills

Inquiry skills are what learners use to make sense of the world around them. These skills are important both to create citizens that can make sense of the science in the world they live in so that they make informed decisions and also to develop scientific reasoning for those undertaking future scientific careers or careers that require the logical approach that science encourages Harrison, (2014)^[13]. Part of students' difficulties stem from their lack of inquiry skills. When students engage in explanatory activities and inquiry learning, they are believed to develop a set of intellectual skills that enable them to construct understandings about science, Wu, and Hsieh (2014). Thus, it is considered very significant that to raise individuals with high inquiry skills, teachers and even pre-service teachers should have high inquiry skills, Karademir and Saracaloğlu, (2013)^[18].

In enquiry-based experiences, skills are internalized and these skills become a part of the student's information structure. Thus, for a real learning to occur, students should be allowed to have certain experiences and hence, internalization of the information and skills should be accomplished (Wu, and Hsieh, 2014). Thus, the problems of students in gathering and verifying information and self-confidence could be decreased in that manner. To improve the self-confidence of the students, students should be placed at the centre in classes and they should be provided with opportunities to develop high-level mental skills.

Questioning Techniques in Enquiry Teaching

According to Nacino-Brown *et al.* (1982)^[23], "it is a common belief among teachers that the effectiveness of teaching can be measured to some considerable extent by the teacher's ability to ask the right type of question, at the right time, in the right way" (p. 115). Indeed, the practice of enquiry in social studies classrooms almost completely depends on the teacher's ability to ask good questions at different levels (Skeel & Sterling, 1974; ASEP, 1992)^[27, 1]. In other words, the enquiry process is driven by one's own curiosity, wonder, interest, or passion to understand an observation or solve a problem. The process begins when the learner notices something that intrigues, surprises or stimulates a question; something that is new, or may not make sense in relation to the learner's previous experiences or current understanding. Thus, questions form the heart of every enquiry.

Several models of questioning have been advanced to increase the teacher's ability to ask questions at higher levels of thought. For example, Taba (as cited in Skeel & Sterling, 1974)^[27], suggested a model based on three cognitive levels namely, concept formation, interpretation of data and application of principles. At the first level, concept formation, the child is asked to list, group and categorize through such questions as what did you see? What belongs together? On what criterion do things belong together? Next, the child is requested to interpret the data collected, draw inferences, and generalize through such question as what did you notice, see or find. Why did so and so happen? What does it mean? The last level, application of principles, requires that the child hypothesize about what he or she

thinks will happen in the new situation and to support his prediction. These questions are like, what will happen if? Why did you think this will happen? What would it take for so and so to be generally true or probably true?

In his view, Wolf (1987)^[32] believes there are five major types of questions: inference questions, interpretation questions, transfer questions, questions about hypotheses, and reflective questions. Inference questions are questions that demand that students go beyond the immediately available information. Wolf (1987)^[32] argues that pushing beyond the factual in this way makes the learners find clues, examines them, and discusses and analyses which inferences are justified. Interpretation questions are those questions which demand from students to propose, show or demonstrate an understanding of the consequences of information and ideas. Transfer questions on the other hand, provoke a kind of breadth of thinking, asking students to take their knowledge to new places. Questions about hypotheses enable students to make intelligent guesses about possible causes or outcomes of issues and problems. With regard to reflective questions, Wolf (1987)^[32] argues that when teachers ask reflective questions, they are insisting that students ask themselves: How do I know that I know? What does this leave me not knowing? What things do I assume rather than examine? All these are active questions which teachers must make use of to keep enquiry lessons on track (Sadker & Sadker, 1985)^[26].

On their part, Nacino-Brown *et al.* (1982)^[23] grouped questions into two general types namely factual and thought questions. Factual questions involve all questions involving mere recall of facts and information, as well as questions requiring only 'yes' or a 'no' answer, while questions requiring reflective thinking, or application and intelligent manipulation of learned materials are called thought questions. Although many educationists favour thought questions, several researches and observations reveal that teachers' questions are more often more factual than the thought type as they believe mastery of information provides the basis for higher order mental processes. It is however advised that factual questions should be immediately followed up or replaced with questions that cause students to think or apply information since thought questions are the more superior type of questions.

The ASEP (1992)^[1] put all questions into four levels which can be divided into lower level and higher order questions. Lower order questions generally call for recall, explanation and application of information, whereas higher order questions deal with analysing, hypothesizing, and making judgments. The four basic types of questions are called 1. Cognitive-memory and 2. Convergent questions (both lower level questions); and 3. Divergent and 4. Evaluative questions (both higher order questions. It is again advised that, since all the four basic levels of questions are part of the thinking and reasoning process, teachers should make conscious efforts to include both higher and lower level questions in their questioning strategies.

While directing attention to the need for teachers to ask 'active questions' that enhance creativity and imaginative tendencies in learners, sight must not be lost of the need to elicit students' questions. One may ask, how can teachers develop questioning skills in learners? In answering this question, research on the developmental experiences of creative people and studies on children's questioning behaviours provide some clues as to how children become

productive enquirers. Typically, the world’s most recognized creative individuals have enjoyed early sustained interactions with mentors about topics and questions of personal interest (John-Steiner, 1985). Through ‘cognitive apprenticeship’ (Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989) [7], mentors model questioning strategies and mediate a child’s enquiry. From the above, it is obvious that, by imitating successful adult models, and hearing explanations of step taken, rules followed, and strategies involved; students can learn to formulate better questions (Denney, Jones, & Kreiger, 1979) [8].

It is important to add that although questions are required in classroom teaching and learning, they could be misused or overused. To avoid this, there is the need for careful planning of lessons. According to Tamakloe, Amedahe & Atta (2005) [30], there should be good reasons for asking certain types of questions and not others, however, some lazy teachers and beginning teachers have been found to have fallen into the trap of improper use of questions. Nacino- Brown *et al* and Rybum & Forge (as cited in Tamakloe *et al*, 2005) [30] give five hints on techniques or procedures for questioning which are considered useful and appropriate for beginning teachers.

The first hint bothers itself with the fact that appropriate questioning procedure normally requires that the question is posed first by directing it to the whole class before anything else is done in the process. This first step will direct every student’s attention to the question. The second hint or technique requires that a teacher pauses for a moment to allow time for students to think about the answer to a question posed to them. This step, According to Tamakloe *et al* (2005) [30], has an added psychological advantage in the sense that it builds a sense of confidence in students and helps them to answer the question within a specific time. It should, however, be noted that pausing for an answer depends on the difficulty level of the question.

The third technique implies calling students by name to answer a question(s). This, according to Tamakloe *et al* (2005) [30], is a good sign of recognition given to individual students. It implies a respect for individual differences and has the indirect advantage of instilling discipline in the students. Questions should be evenly and randomly distributed so that everybody has a fair chance of being called to answer a question. The fourth technique bothers itself with listening to students’ answers to questions. The teacher should be alert to the answers given by students to

the questions. This is because; students’ answers to questions may take different forms which may be correct, partly correct or incorrect. Listening to students’ answers means understanding the feelings being expressed by particular students. The fifth and final hint on appropriate questioning procedures concerns commenting on answers provided by the students. According to Tamakloe *et al* (2005) [30], effective communication requires a feedback to the student on the rightness or otherwise of an answer. The teacher at this stage reacts to the answer given by the student by evaluating or making a comment on the student’s answer to indicate whether the answer is correct or not. Kissock and Lyortsum (as cited in Tamakloe *et al.*, 2005) [30] stated that teachers react to students’ answers by means of summarizing, elaborating, shaping, focusing, rephrasing, highlighting important points, encouraging, and probing or rewording.

Methodology

The research design that has been used for this study is the descriptive survey. Descriptive survey research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject of study. It does not involve changing or modifying the situation under investigation, nor is it intended to determine cause-and-effect relationships (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005) [20]. With the aid of census survey procedures, all social studies teachers totalling 71 in all 15 public senior high schools in the Ho Municipality of the Volta region of Ghana were used for the study.

Results and Discussion

Research question 1

What specific enquiry skills do teachers of Social Studies possess?

This question sought to find out the extent of teachers’ skills in enquiry. Mean scores and standard deviations were used to compute items 1-9 in the observation checklist. The results are presented in Table 1. Without bias, a teacher with the needed inquiry teaching competence was expected to score a mean score of 2.5 on the interval scale. Thus a teacher who scores below the criterion mean of 2.5 on the particular item was generally considered as not possessing the needed competence as far as that particular item was concerned.

Table 1: Enquiry skills exhibited by the teachers

S/N	Item	X	SD	Remarks
1	Ability to guide learners to sources of information.	2.18	0.39	Incompetent
2	Ability to involve students to develop hypotheses in lessons.	1.94	0.24	Incompetent
3	Involving students in identifying real social problems related to lessons.	2.88	0.33	Competent
4	Ability to help students plan to approach or study a question an issue or problem.	1.94	0.75	Incompetent
5	Ability to involve students in forming generalizations about issues and problems	2.18	0.64	Incompetent
6	Ability to guide students to discover relationships between and among variables.	2.18	0.53	Incompetent
7	Involving students in examining a hypothesis to determine sources of evidence to support or reject it.	2.94	0.24	Competent
8	Ability to develop in students skills of applying school knowledge to practical realities of life.	2.59	0.51	Competent
9	Ability to guide students to relate teaching and learning concepts and ideas to current issues.	1.88	0.60	Incompetent

The results of the data analysed in Table 1 shows that the social studies teachers in the target area are generally incompetent in skills in inquiry. The table shows that items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 9 had mean scores below the criterion mean of 2.5, while only three items; 3, 7 and 8 had mean scores

above the criterion mean score of 2.5. Specifically, item 1 had a mean score of 2.18; item 2 had 1.94; item 3 had 1.9; item 5 had 2.18, item 6 had 2.18 and item 9 had the least mean score of 1.88. A mutually exclusive problem which most of the respondents had was on the skills of guiding

students to relate teaching and learning concepts and ideas to current issues and affairs in society.

Although the social studies teachers were found to be generally incompetent in the use of skills in inquiry, they were however found to possess and demonstrate a few specific inquiry teaching skills. Of the 9 items that centred on the skills in inquiry teaching, teachers' level of competencies was found to be significant for only three. These 3 skills related to the ability to develop in students the ability to apply school knowledge to the practical realities of life, involving students in examining a hypothesis to determine potential source of evidence to support or reject it and involving student to identify real social problems related to lessons.

The low levels of competency demonstrated by the teachers go to corroborate the views of Mkpa (1993) [22], Tamakloe (1988) and Kwao (2002) [19]. Whereas Mkpa (1993) [22] believes that the major problem facing social studies education is the gross lack of appropriate pedagogical skills

and competencies by teachers, Tamakloe (1988) and Kwao (2002) [22] attest to the lack of competent teachers as one of the greatest problems facing the teaching of social studies in Ghanaian schools. It is however important to state that indications from the table showed that most teachers possess the competencies in inquiry teaching though not at the appropriate level.

Research question 2

To what extent do social studies teachers employ good questioning techniques to enhance the inquiry abilities of their learners?

The intent of this question was to find out good questioning techniques that social studies teachers exhibit in their presentations of lessons so as to enhance the inquiry abilities of their learners. In answering this question, items 10-20 were analysed using mean scores and standard deviations as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Questioning techniques in inquiry teaching (n=17)

S/N	Item	X	SD	Remarks
10	Ability to ask questions that urge students to create novel situations and ideas that bear the stamps of their personal uniqueness and individuality.	2.35	0.49	Incompetent
11	Ability to ask thought provoking questions that lead to the formation of defensible answers.	2.71	0.47	Competent
12	Ability to ask questions that stimulate student's interest, attention and activities.	2.29	0.49	Incompetent
13	Ability to ask questions that include both lower order and higher order items.	2.64	0.49	Competent
14	Ability to provide feedback and reinforcement for student's questions.	2.88	0.33	Competent
15	Ability to provide clear concise and adequate competent direction as well as sufficient time for students to respond to questions.	2.82	0.39	Competent
16	Ability to ask questions that are answered by the application of facts and principles.	2.06	0.43	Incompetent
17	Ability to encourage learners to raise their own questions, prepositions and explanations to issues and problems.	2.94	0.24	Competent
18	Ability to promote students questions that are borne out of curiosity critical thinking and imagination.	2.12	0.60	Incompetent
19	Ability to ask thought provoking questions.	2.18	0.39	Incompetent
20	Ability to evenly distribute questions between competent and among students.	2.71	0.47	Competent

A close look at the data in Table 2 above shows that, out of the 11 items that formed the core of good questioning techniques that enhance the inquiry ability of learners, social studies teachers' level of competency was found to be significant for six. These were skills related to questioning and utilization of students' contributions in lesson. Specifically, item 11 had a mean score of 2.71, item 13 had 2.64, item 14 had 2.88, item 15 had 2.82, item 17 had 2.94, and item 20 had 2.71. Thus social studies teachers in senior high schools in the target area were generally competent in questioning techniques in inquiry teaching.

This finding is not surprising because the question and answer method appears to be the main instruments of interaction between teachers and students (Iyamu & Otote, 2006) [15]. The finding also goes to confirm the views of Tamakloe and Cobbold (2000) [29] that questioning and answer method appears to be one of the major pedagogical tools that most school teachers possess and use in their instructional delivery. Although most teachers possess the skills of good questioning strategies and for that matter are able to promote students questions, it was observed that students' questions were not borne out of curiosity or imagination or critical thinking. Student questions were rather mainly responses to teachers' regular questions or in some cases mere recall questions. For example students could be seen or heard asking teachers to go over aspects of the lesson taught or give further explanations of concepts and ideas in a lesson.

According to Iyamu and Otote (2006) [15] these types of questions obviously are not the type of questions that imply students understanding, reflective thinking, curiosity or active minds.

The data also revealed that the teachers' level of competency was not significant for the remaining 5 items in Table 2. These were related to the teacher's ability to ask questions that urge students to create novel situations and ideas that bear the stamp of their personal uniqueness and originality, ability to ask questions that stimulate students' interest, activities and attention ability to promote students' questions that are borne out of curiosity imagination and critical thinking and the ability to ask thought provoking questions. In all, the general awareness in questioning techniques as contained in research questions represents an upward trend in awareness over research question 1.

The overall observation of this study seems to indicate or suggest that social studies is not being taught in accordance with prescriptions of the subject. The deficiencies are not surprising to the researcher as there are still a large number of pupil untrained and 'out-of-field' teachers teaching the subject at various levels of education in the country. According to Ramsdem (1999), teaching at various educational institutions has not seen much improvement because most teachers are limited in their pedagogical abilities and no major pressures exists to change the nature of their teaching. The implication thus is that much is needed to assist classroom teachers to acquire the needed

competencies to improve the quality of their teaching as their levels of competence leaves much to be desired.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the finding the following conclusion has been drawn: Majority of the teachers of Social Studies perform below average competency levels as far as the skills of enquiry are concerned. The teachers of social studies teachers in the target area lack adequate competence for the enquiry teaching of the subject. Thus, by implication, the subject is not effectively taught the way it should be, going by its nature and objectives in Ghanaian schools. However, the general awareness in questioning techniques as contained in the research question 2 represents an upward trend in awareness over research question 1.

In respect of recommendations, since most of the respondents were found to have lack adequate competency as far as skills in enquiry are concerned, teachers of Social studies in senior high schools in Ghana should be exposed to continuous in-service training to update their knowledge and skills of innovative pedagogies for them to undertake effective teaching of Social Studies. Besides, Social studies teacher education curriculum needs to be reviewed to place more emphasis on skills related to the inquiry teaching social studies. Even though, on the average, most of the respondents were found to have done well on appropriate questioning techniques that they ought to employ with the view to enhancing the enquiry ability of their learners, teacher education in social studies should give further attention to questioning techniques that teacher trainees must master for the effective teaching of social studies.

Students' teaching practice should be more effectively organized and supervised to promote students' development of relevant teaching skills, particularly those that make teaching and learning student-centred. This will make teachers inculcate the tendencies of curiosity and independent in learners. Digital technologies should be introduced to all the schools so as to raise teachers' awareness of other sources of information for students' learning and become less authoritative in the instructional processes.

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