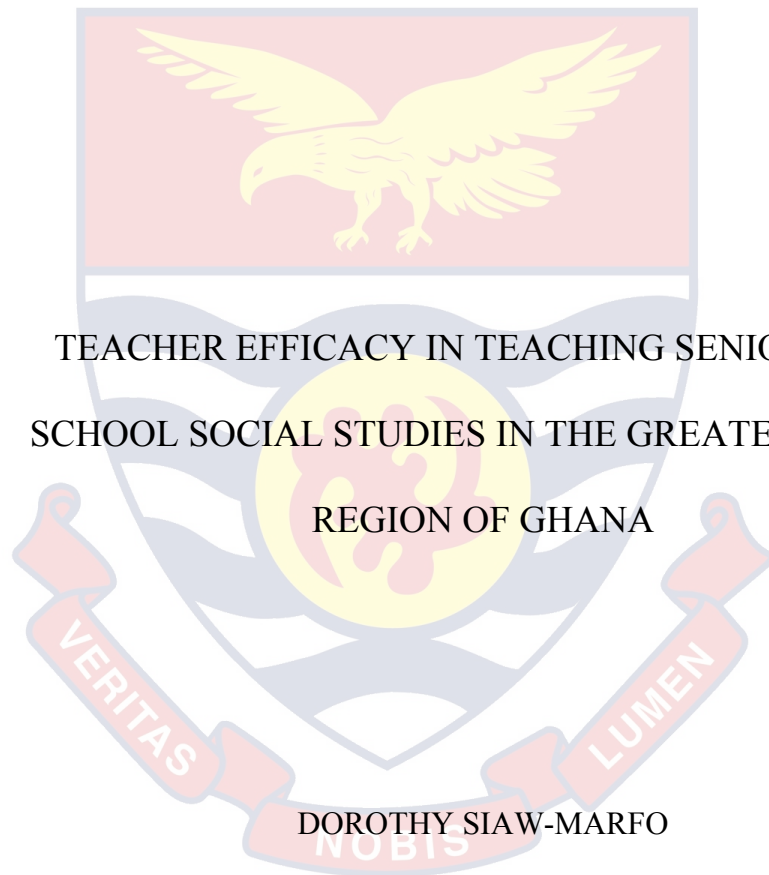


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



TEACHER EFFICACY IN TEACHING SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE GREATER ACCRA
REGION OF GHANA

DOROTHY SIAW-MARFO

2011

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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BY

DOROTHY SIAW-MARFO

Thesis submitted to the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education of
the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Curriculum Studies

JUNE 2011

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: Date:

Name: Dorothy Siaw - Marfo

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: Date:

Name: Mr. S.K. Atakpa

Co-supervisor's Signature: Date:

Name: Dr. Yaw Afari-Ankomah

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to determine the self-efficacy perceptions of Social Studies teachers in relation to the teaching of Social Studies in Senior High Schools in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Descriptive survey was adopted for the study. Multistage sampling procedure was employed to select a sample of 153 Senior High School Social Studies teachers. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyse the data. In addition an independent t-test was employed to test four hypotheses that were formulated.

The findings revealed the self-efficacy perceptions of the Social Studies teachers. However, the independent t-test revealed significant differences in the perception of teachers' self-efficacy based on their professional qualification, specialization and teaching experience but gender did not affect teachers' efficacy beliefs significantly in teaching social studies.

The study concludes that teachers have high efficacy levels. This level of teacher efficacy is affected by teacher professional qualification, specialization and teaching experience. It is therefore recommended to educational policy-makers to consider introducing the efficacy belief instrument in schools to find out the efficacy belief levels of teachers before assigning them to teach particular subjects.

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I am also grateful to my family for their support throughout my years in education. To my “best” half, Anthony, who is the most dedicated mentor I know, thank you for your love and support. To my son, Selasie, who has always parted me at my back not to relent on my effort. My twin daughters, Elinam and Edinam, God bless you for reminding me to enjoy life and aspire to new adventures. I am also grateful to my last son, Senanu who has always reminded me to finish my course on schedule. To all of you, I say God should reward your effort. I am also grateful to my mother, Madame YaaTutuwaa who also gave me the necessary support.

My lecturers and colleagues, especially Mr. Bernard Sekyi-Acquah, who read through my work painstakingly, Miss AkuaTiwaaAnkomah and Mr. Chris Kwaah will not be left out for their unflinching support and encouragement to undertake this study.

I say may God richly bless you all.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband and life companion, Kojo, my children, Worlalie, Selasie, Elinam, Edinam, and Senanu and in memory of my father, Mr. Kofi Siaw.



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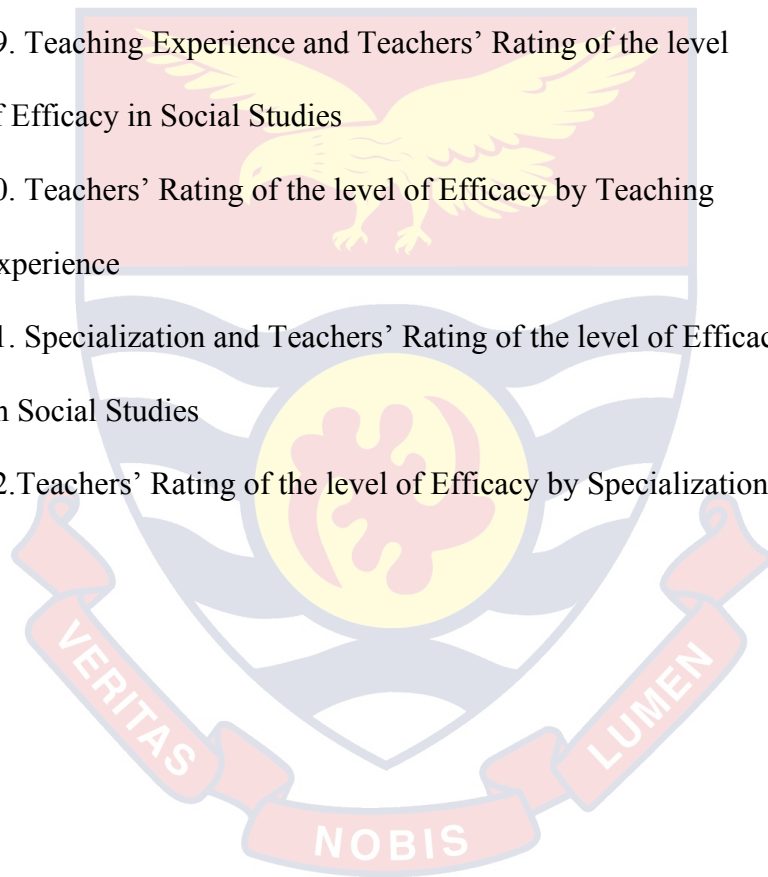
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The concern for quality education, especially in the developing nations is crucial because of the symbiosis between education and productivity, between education and manpower development and indeed between education and the demands of the labour market. Any serious discussion on quality education cannot ignore the need to maintain sustainable and efficient teaching process, since at the heart of the debate is the teacher. It is within this context that national policies are vital especially in the developing countries on such issues as teacher development, supply and demand, quality of training, funding, and curriculum development (Lewin& Stuart, 2003 cited in Ntim 2010). This calls not only for sufficient funding, but above all a strong political will to put structures in place that will cater for teacher development policies.

In the 1960s immediately after political independence from the British, the then government of the Convention Peoples Party embarked on an Accelerated Development Plan. Top of this agenda was capacity-building of the human resource in the country. In this respect, Ghana's educational system from 1960-1970 was seen as one of the most developed on the African continent. This is because advances were made at all levels of the educational system (Anamuah-Mensah, 2002). However the same educational system in

the mid-1970s was recognized as being in crisis. The undercurrent factor was economic and political. From the early 1970s to the late 1980s Ghana's economy was in the doldrums. The political situation was very volatile and turbulent (Ntim, 2010). Consequently, this resulted in such inadequate provisions as instructional materials, infrastructure, conditions of service for teachers, and poor quality of instruction. It was against this background that in 1987, there was an Education Reform Programme aimed at equipping schools and children to live productive lives and to make education more relevant to the socio-economic needs of the nation.

One of the primary functions of education is to convey knowledge to people in society. According to Jones and Sallis (2002), education is about the creation and application of knowledge. Teachers should not only educate their students but inculcate in them a sense of togetherness so that they can also share their knowledge with each other and apply it to solve personal and societal problems as indicated in the syllabus for teaching social studies in senior high schools in Ghana. In the suggested Teaching Syllabus for Social Studies, the Ministry of Education [MOE] (2007) has the following as the general aims for teaching the subject: the syllabus is designed to help students to develop the ability to adapt to the developing and ever-changing Ghanaian society; to develop positive attitudes and values towards individual and societal issues; to develop critical and analytical skills in assessing issues for objective decision-making; to develop national consciousness and unity; to develop enquiry and problem-solving skills for solving personal and societal problems; and finally to become responsible citizens capable and willing to contribute to societal advancement.

The National Council for the Social Studies identified some important themes that need to be captured in teaching the subject. One of the reasons for the adoption of Social Studies as set forth by the Mombasa Conference in 1968, was that

the new subject is supposed to enable every school-going child in Africa to understand peoples' interaction with their cultural, social and physical environments, appreciate home and heritage, develop skills and attitudes expected of citizens and learn to express ideas in many ways (NCSS, 1994, p. 2).

The subject is useful in helping to uplift the moral and intellectual development of the child, as well as the acquisition of necessary skills for building the nation. However, there has been much discussion regarding the current state of social studies in the Ghanaian senior high school programme.

Discussions with some heads of senior high schools as well as heads of social studies departments in the region revealed that social studies teachers do not require social studies background for teaching. This situation is similar to research findings in India and the USA which confirms that a significant number of social studies teachers have little to no social studies coursework in their undergraduate studies (Aggarwal, 2004; Bednarz, Stoltman & Lee, 2004; Boehm, Brierley & Sharma, 1994). With the push to make social studies teachers impart the necessary knowledge, skills, and values into students, it will be necessary to have appropriately trained teachers. Similar to teachers in other subject areas, social studies teachers need to possess not only social studies content knowledge, but also the teaching methodology that best facilitates student learning in social studies (Bednarz, Stoltman & Lee, 2004;

Brophy, 1991; Shulman, 1987). Other researchers postulate that “it should be possible for teacher education institutions to re-package some of their courses into professional development modules for teachers, successful completion of which should count towards the award of higher professional qualifications and admittance to higher professional status” (Cobbold& Dare, 2008, p.19).

Though many teachers may take an introductory social studies course to satisfy undergraduate degree requirements, it is likely this course would not be the most beneficial for instilling the pedagogical methods or content knowledge that is necessary for the social studies classroom teacher (Gregg,2001). Prior research establishes that teachers need coursework that directly parallels the curriculum they are expected to teach at the high school level (Brophy, 1991; Gilsbach, 1997; Gregg, 2001; Shulman, 1987). In the view of Ross (2001) both the quantity and quality of classroom instruction are critically important in the teaching and learning of social studies in schools. Again, as Aggarwal (2004) rightly postulates that the quality of instruction depends upon the knowledge of teachers and that there is a strong positive relationship between teachers' knowledge of social studies and levels of socio-economic literacy achieved by their students. This point is further reiterated by Tamakloe, Amedahe, and Atta (2005) who posit that “the teacher’s knowledge of the subject matter is as important as his knowledge of the child”. They explain that “a mastery of the subject matter and its methodology instil confidence in the teacher ...” (p. 8). In order to instil confidence in the teacher, he or she must be well educated.

Teacher education must address several types of teacher knowledge (Brophy, 1991; Shulman, 1987). Of particular interest for this research is the

relationship among the content knowledge of social studies, pedagogical content knowledge in social studies, and perceived efficacy of teachers in teaching social studies. Pedagogical content knowledge is a type of knowledge specific to teachers in which they integrate content and pedagogy in the most appropriate way to teach students. While content knowledge is critical for teachers to have, it is even more important for teachers to understand how to teach the content to students. This is a skill that teachers develop over years of practice and experience with learners (Brophy, 1991). While teachers might learn content and pedagogy in their pre-service classes, it is during in-service teaching that teachers fully develop pedagogical content knowledge.

This development and enrichment of a teacher's knowledge base is the goal of professional development, which should be designed so that teachers acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children. In addition, they may have access to content, instructional strategies, and resources that are beneficial to their specific classroom needs (Cobbold & Dare, 2008; Loucks-Horsley, Love, Stiles, Mundry, & Hewson, 2003). The question which however comes to mind is, "Are the necessary requirements (both material and human resources, especially, with reference to teachers) for optimal operation of the social studies curriculum in place to ensure its efficacy?" The need for competent personnel, especially teachers, is a very pertinent issue and as Smith, Stanley and Shores (1957) clearly point out, well trained teachers are one of the requirements for the effective operation of the integrated curriculum. This is because social studies as a school subject is structured along the integrated pattern of curriculum organization. There will

therefore be a greater need for teachers to remain focused and be able to plan which areas or studies should be integrated, and how other activities should fit into them. According to Oliva (1992), “in the call for ... integration, cooperative planning by all teachers is necessary” (p. 518). The role of the teacher in the effective implementation of the social studies curriculum cannot be exaggerated.

In addition to general in-service training required of all teachers during their career in school, social studies teachers must also utilize other avenues for continuing their own education in social studies, as well as furthering their skills in teaching methods and knowledge of curricular issues (Jurmu, Jurmu, & Meyer, 1999). However, professional development must be deemed beneficial by the teacher in order for it to be successfully employed in the classroom (Chalmers, Keown, & Kent, 2002). Furthermore, learning and professional development for social studies teachers may also come in the form of experiencing social studies through study trips and cultural experiences (Drummond, 2001).

With few opportunities for training in social studies beyond pre-service teacher preparation, teachers often feel uncomfortable teaching social studies in their classrooms (Fitzhugh, 1992). Thus, professional development must play a key role in continuing teacher education and motivation within the field of social studies (Jurmu, Jurmu, & Meyer, 1999). Required coursework and professional development alone will not guarantee an excellent, committed social studies teacher. Many education researchers have called teaching an “art”- a highly complex skill that evolves through years of study and practice in and out of the classroom (Puk, 1998). Developing this kind of

teaching skill in social studies is essential. While passion and interest in teaching are important characteristics of teachers, one other characteristic that is very important to their motivation, confidence and retention levels is that of teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Teacher self-efficacy, or how effective teachers see themselves in the role of teaching, is closely tied to teacher attitudes towards teaching, student achievement and retention of teachers (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998).

Although self-efficacy perception of teachers is important for all courses, it has a distinct meaning in social studies course. Undoubtedly, social studies is one of the core subjects, where students experience difficulties in understanding concepts. Teachers should have a high self-efficacy perception for successful teaching against any negative attitudes students may adopt toward social studies lessons. Thus, they would be able to convince their students to develop a positive attitude towards the subject. It is impossible to establish an efficient learning environment without elimination of any possible question marks that may occur on the minds of students with respect to what social studies is and why it should be learned (Ross, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

Even though the curriculum for schools has been planned and designed to achieve the broad general aims as specified by the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) of the Ghana Education Service, the probability of achieving any phenomenal results depends on the classroom teacher (Marsh & Willis, 2003). All teachers are tasked with the business of

translating the plan as outlined in the curriculum document into practical activities to help bring about the desired changes in the learner.

A casual observation reveals that most senior high school social studies students manage to pass social studies in their examinations. However, most of them tend to be very ignorant in understanding key concepts and showing any meaningful appreciation of such concepts such as constitution, government, economic growth, economic development, social development, and social environment. These concepts nevertheless, have gradually crept into our everyday use of English language as a result of the global village which we live in.

Again the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination [WASSCE] Chief Examiner's Reports on social studies students' performance over the years clearly indicate that there are serious problems with regard to students' understanding of issues. For example, the chief examiner's report for 2007 indicated that many more candidates deviated or provided irrelevant answers to questions because: they were unable to explain some key concepts; apply the terms to explain situations or solve some problems well; also they found it difficult to grasp the thrust of questions. The chief examiner therefore suggested that "social studies teachers should help the candidates attain a practical understanding of the concepts in the subject so that they can handle well the exposition aspects of the questions" (WAEC, 2007, pp.45-47).

In another disposition, members of the African Religious Union, Ghana, at their annual conference expressed disappointment at the breakdown in Ghana's rich heritage. In a communiqué, they urged the government to "encourage teachers to take social studies and religious and moral education

seriously in the schools”. They observed that “without adequate education school children end up in learning lesbianism, homosexuality, secret occultism and other forms of social vices which in turn affect the larger society” (Andoh, 2011, p. 12).

Habitually, people are quick to identify inadequate teacher motivation and lack of teaching and learning resources as some of the causes of students’ low performance in the subject. The issue of teacher efficacy has not been given much attention in trying to resolve the numerous problems threatening the teaching of social studies in Ghanaian senior high schools. Teacher self-efficacy, or how effective teachers see themselves in the role of teaching, may be closely tied to their attitudes towards teaching. It is therefore, vital to ascertain whether this problem of difficulty in understanding social studies concepts on the part of students, is as a result of the quality of instruction in the classroom or teachers for one reason or the other are unable to teach or both? The goal of this research is to contribute to bridging this gap in educational research by investigating the teaching efficacy of social studies teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The thrust of this study was to determine the self-efficacy perceptions of social studies teachers in relation to social studies teaching in senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

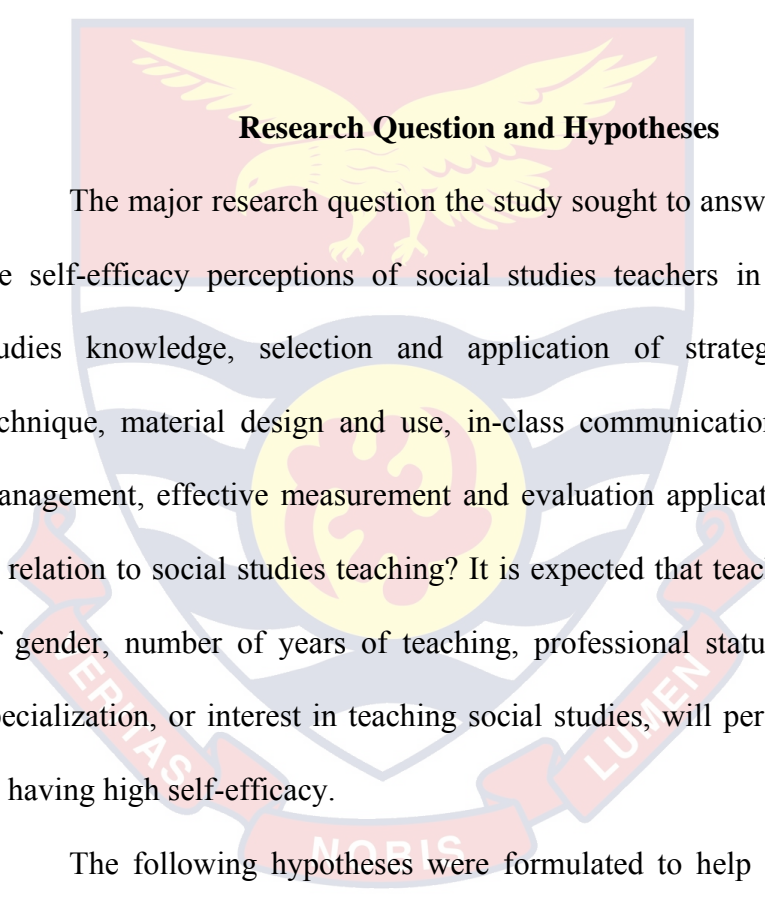
Specifically the study sought to:

1. Determine whether there was any difference in the self-efficacy perception of male and female social studies teachers.

2. Determine whether there was a difference in the self-efficacy perception of graduate professional and non-professional social studies teachers.

3. Find out whether there existed any difference in the self-efficacy perception of specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers.

4. Find out if there was any difference in the self-efficacy perception of experienced and less experienced social studies teachers.



Research Question and Hypotheses

The major research question the study sought to answer was: What are the self-efficacy perceptions of social studies teachers in terms of social studies knowledge, selection and application of strategy, method and technique, material design and use, in-class communication and classroom management, effective measurement and evaluation applications and interest in relation to social studies teaching? It is expected that teachers, irrespective of gender, number of years of teaching, professional status, major area of specialization, or interest in teaching social studies, will perceive themselves as having high self-efficacy.

The following hypotheses were formulated to help assess how such factors as gender, number of years of teaching, professional status, major area of specialization, or interest influence their perceived self-efficacy in teaching social studies:

1. H_0 : There is no significant difference between male and female social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

H₁: There is a significant difference between male and female social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

2. Ho: There is no significant difference between graduate professional and non-professional social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

H₁: There is a significant difference between graduate professional and non-professional social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

3. Ho: There is no significant difference in the self-efficacy perception of specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers in teaching social studies.

H₁: There is a significant difference in the self-efficacy perception of specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers in teaching social studies.

4. Ho: There is no significant difference between experienced and less experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

H₁: There is a significant difference between experienced and less experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

Significance of the Study

The results from this study have both research implications as well as practical implications for the education and development of Social Studies teachers. To date, research is limited in the areas of Social Studies teacher

education, more specifically on the topics of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and teacher efficacy. This research will contribute substantially to the literature in Social Studies education by addressing Social Studies teachers' perceptions of their own efficacy.

In addition, the study will inform higher education institutions of the beneficial aspects of teacher preparation programmes so that specific courses or programmes might be emphasized in a teachers' course of study. This research also has implications and suggestions for professional development and other in-service educational opportunities in order to cultivate higher levels of efficacy among Social Studies teachers. The study examines the beneficial aspects of informal social experiences and interests that are related to high efficacy in teaching Social Studies. This study also focuses on informal education through travel, both as a means of learning content knowledge in Social Studies and as continuing professional development. Findings of the study will help stakeholders in Social Studies education to be aware of the level of quality of teachers mandated to teach the subject in the classroom. This is to inform policy decisions on the training and recruitment of social studies teachers.

Finally, it is envisaged that the study will provide useful information for the inspectorate division of the Ghana Education Service (GES), to take decisions concerning teachers' practice in the classroom and to put in place measures for supervising teachers at the Senior High School level.

Delimitation of the Study

Teacher efficacy can be explained as the teacher's self-efficacy perception relating to his or her ability to reach out to students and enable them to learn effectively. There can be many factors that determine teachers' self-efficacy perception; identified key areas of pre-service education and experience, in-service education and experiences, and informal experiences and interests that are most beneficial to Social Studies teachers' self-efficacy in teaching Social Studies. However, key areas of pre-service education and experience of some current well experienced Social Studies teachers in the field now, may not be provided. This is because many might not have undergone any coursework in Social Studies before their in-service education and experiences. The informal experiences in social studies are limited to interest in learning Social Studies. In the course of this research, other informal experiences in Social Studies may merge however; these experiences are beyond the scope of this study and will not be investigated.

As a result, and for the purpose of this study, the research will focus on the Social Studies teacher's possession of pedagogical content knowledge and their ability to translate such skills into effective teaching and learning of Social Studies in the Senior High School classroom. Since the concept of pedagogical content knowledge is a wide-ranging one, this study will delimit the concept "pedagogical content knowledge" to general pedagogical knowledge, with special reference to those broad principles and strategies of classroom instruction, management and organization with specific reference to the teaching of Social Studies.

The study's aim is to determine whether factors such as gender, number of years of teaching, professional status, or major area of specialization in teaching Social Studies influence the self-efficacy perception of Social Studies teachers. Furthermore, the study specifically investigates Social Studies teachers in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Finally, the study will not examine other characteristics of teachers beyond teacher efficacy (i.e. personality traits). Though this analysis would be useful in future studies, it will not be considered in this study.

The logo of the University of Cape Coast is a watermark in the background. It features a yellow eagle with wings spread, perched on a shield. Below the shield is a banner with the Latin motto 'VERITAS LIBERABIT VOS'. The shield itself has a yellow background with a red and white emblem in the center.

Limitations of the Study

There were certain limitations that were associated with this study. In the first place, a five-point Likert-scale was used to collect data on teaching efficacy. It was realised that most respondents preferred not to choose the most extreme choices on the scale and ultimately increase the sensitivity of the measure. In the view of Bandura (2006) scales that use only a few steps should be avoided because they are less sensitive and less reliable. People usually avoid the extreme positions so a scale with only a few steps may, in actual sense, shrink to one or two points. It was observed that the five points reduced to few points resulting in the loss of differentiating information. Since people who use the same response category may differ if intermediate steps were included. This reduced the sensitivity of the measure.

Another limitation is in the area of the research design. The design could have been enhanced by including classroom observations, interviews and student achievement scores for the teachers that responded to the survey instrument. While these activities were beyond the scope of this study, the data

would have increased the validity and reliability of the efficacy results. Interviewing a teacher one time does not give a thorough picture of the teacher's education, experiences, and efficacy. A supplementary study to this one would provide an in-depth analysis of these teachers' lived experiences in teaching Social Studies, including analysis of classroom teaching, school atmosphere, and staff development experiences. This type of study would be small, preferably a case study, working with few teachers, but would provide an in-depth understanding of the complete professional lives of the teachers involved. The current study only really provided a snapshot into these teachers' professional lives.

Finally, the 2007 chief examiner's report on which the statement of the problem is based may seem too far. Nevertheless, that was the only documented evidence of social studies students' performance available at the time of the study. However, to forestall this problem a discussion was held with the current chief examiner and some examiners in Social Studies to find out about the current situation. Commenting on the 2009/2010 WASSCE examinations, they think that candidates still grappled with the problem of understanding of concepts in the subject.

Definition of Terms

The explanation of variables and concepts gives meaning to text. It is therefore expedient to define terms that were used for the purpose of this study:

In-service teachers: Current, full-time practicing teachers in a Senior High School setting.

Pre-service education and experiences: Includes all coursework pertaining to education and Social Studies, taken or completed prior to teaching.

In-service education and experiences: Includes any training relating to Social Studies received during in-service teaching, and specifically professional development opportunities.

Informal social studies experiences: Defined as those experiences that may directly relate to social studies, such as interest in socio-economic issues, reading books on social studies, or searching the internet related sites.

Perception in this study refers to the opinion or views of social studies teachers.

Out-of-field Social Studies Teacher: is a professional social studies teacher but not trained in social studies.

Graduate Professional Teacher: is a teacher who obtained either a Certificate of Education or a Bachelor's degree in Education or B.A. or B.Sc. with Postgraduate Diploma in Education Certificate which qualifies him/her to teach in the senior high school as somebody that is trained for teaching.

Non-professional Social Studies Teacher: is a teacher who has a Bachelor's degree either in Arts or Social Science i.e. B.A., B.Sc. without a post graduate Diploma in Education or without a Certificate of Education.

Experienced Teacher: is a teacher who has been teaching social studies in the senior high school for a period of 6 years or more.

Less Experienced Teacher: is a teacher who has been teaching social studies in the Senior High School for a period of 1-6 years.

Specialists in Social Studies Teaching: these are teachers who have had some form of orientation; in-service training, interest or have read social studies with Education (i.e. B.Ed. Social Studies) as a teaching subject in an institution of higher learning.

Non-specialists in Social Studies: These are teachers who read other disciplines and not Social Studies in the higher institution. Those teachers who have B.A. (Economics), B.A. (Geography), B.A. (Political Science) or B.A. (History) are non- specialists in Social Studies. They may be in the Senior High Schools teaching Social Studies but they are not specialists in the subject.

Organization of the Study

The study has been organized into five main chapters. The first chapter deals with the general introduction of the study, covering the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research question and hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study and definition of concepts and variables used in the study. Chapter Two of the study deals with the review of related literature. It covers the theoretical framework of the study and empirical review. Chapter Three also deals with the methodology which includes: research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, research instrument, validity and reliability of instrument, data collection procedure, as well as data analysis. Chapter Four of the study is devoted to the presentation of results and discussion of the study. The final chapter, which is chapter five, concerns the summary, conclusions and recommendations made by the researcher to address the research question posed in Chapter One.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is concerned with the review of literature related to the topic – self-efficacy perception of social studies teachers’ in teaching social studies. For the purpose of the review, two categories of literature had been dealt with: the theoretical framework and empirical review. The first section looked at teacher effectiveness, teachers as learners as they relate to teaching social studies, theoretical underpinnings of teacher preparation, including pedagogical content knowledge and experiential learning theory. The final section was a discussion of research in the field of teacher self-efficacy, that was, the empirical review.

Teacher Effectiveness

Effective or productive teaching is a concept which is very broad and defies a clear-cut definition, as it is seen as not mutually exclusive from teacher efficacy. This is because different researchers, approach the subject from their own perspectives. Some researchers think that it is essentially concerned with how best to bring about desired changes in students’ behaviour. However, for a teacher to be effective, he or she must have conceived the idea to perform creditably. A thought when conceived will give an indication of self-efficacy perception. For many decades, there have been many developments in the way in which effective teaching has been defined

and the concept will continue to evolve as researchers continue to learn more about teaching. For instance, McBer (2000) undertook research into teacher effectiveness and outlined some attributes of effective teaching. He also added some new dimensions that demonstrate the extent to which effective teachers make a difference for their students. He found three main factors within teachers' control that significantly influence student progress:

1. teaching skills
2. professional characteristics
3. classroom climate.

Each provides distinctive and complementary ways that teachers can understand the contribution they make. None can be relied on alone to deliver value-added teaching. The three factors are different in nature. Two of them – professional characteristics and teaching skills – are factors which relate to what a teacher brings to the job that culminates into one's ability, which is self-efficacy, to perform. The professional characteristics are the on-going patterns of behaviour that combine to drive the things they typically do. Amongst those things are the "micro-behaviours" covered by teaching skills. Whilst teaching skills can be learned, sustaining these behaviours over the course of a career will depend on the deeper seated nature of professional characteristics the teachers possess. Classroom climate, on the other hand, is an output measure. It allows teachers to understand how the students in their class feel about some dimensions of climate created by the teacher that influence their motivation to learn. There is, in other words, a multiplicity of ways in which particular patterns of characteristics determine how a teacher

feels about his or her ability and chooses which approach to use from a repertoire of established techniques in order to influence performance.

All competent teachers know their subjects. They know the appropriate teaching methods for their subjects and curriculum areas and the ways students learn. According to McBer (2000), more effective teachers make the most of their professional knowledge in two linked ways. One is the extent to which they deploy appropriate teaching skills consistently and effectively in the course of all their lessons – the sorts of teaching strategies and techniques that can be observed when they are at work in the classroom, and which underpin the national teaching and learning strategies. The other is the range and intensity of the professional characteristics they exhibit – on-going patterns of behaviour which make them effective. Student progress results from the successful application of subject knowledge and subject teaching methods, using a combination of appropriate teaching skills and professional characteristics. Professional characteristics can be assessed, and good teaching practice can be observed.

Classroom climate provides another tool for measuring the impact created by a combination of the teacher's skills, knowledge and professional characteristics. Climate is a measure of the collective perceptions of students regarding those dimensions of the classroom environment that have a direct impact on their capacity and motivation to learn.

McBer (2000) pointed out that teachers really do make a difference. Within their classrooms, efficacious teachers create learning environments which foster pupil progress by deploying their teaching skills as well as a wide range of professional characteristics. Outstanding teachers create an excellent

classroom climate and achieve superior pupil progress largely by displaying more professional characteristics at higher levels of sophistication within a very structured learning environment, where the teacher and the students learn. Taken in combination, these three factors provide valuable tools for a teacher to enhance the progress of their students in their bid to be effective.

Teachers as Learners

When researchers talk about “learners” they are typically discussing senior high school students, undergraduate college students, or even adult learners. However, teachers themselves can be seen as “learners.” While they are the ones teaching, they are also continually learning. In the last three decades, educational research has challenged this misconception and has focused on the development and growth of teachers. It is critical for researchers to see teachers as life-long learners, always constructing new knowledge and skills, rather than ending their own education when they enter the door of their first classroom. The emergence of the information and knowledge society has brought a change of mind-set in learning. According to Cobbold and Dare (2008),

New approaches to learning necessitate new approaches to teaching which challenge the teacher’s role as knowledge provider. These include teaching that emphasizes higher order thinking skills, metacognition, constructivist approaches to learning and understanding, brain-based learning, cooperative learning strategies, multiple intelligences and different

“habits of mind”, employing a wide range of assessment techniques, and using computer-based and other information technology that enables students to gain access to information independently (p. 14).

More and more governments, educators and other stakeholders are urging teachers in the knowledge society to commit themselves to standard-based learning in which all students achieve high standards of cognitive learning. In this role, teachers create knowledge, apply it to unfamiliar problems, and communicate it effectively to others, instead of treating knowledge as something that, students should simply memorize and reproduce. Today’s teachers therefore need to be committed to and continually engage in pursuing, upgrading, self-monitoring, and reviewing their own professional learning. In brief, teachers can no longer take refuge in the notion that teaching is technically simple, and that once you are qualified to teach, you know the nitty-gritty of teaching forever.

Other researchers, (Fullan, 2007; Hargreaves, 2003) concurring, remarked that teachers must be able to build a special kind of professionalism where they, among other things, promote deep cognitive learning; learn to teach in ways they were not taught; commit to continuous professional learning; work in collegial teams; and develop and draw on collective intelligence. If teachers are to win the confidence of their students and be seen as professionals, then they must commit themselves to a process of lifelong learning.

While the body of research on teachers is growing substantially, less research has focused on the preparation of social studies teachers as compared

to teachers of other subjects, such as history, reading, maths, or science. Although the last two decades has seen numerous articles on the need for better teacher preparation, few research articles have ventured to investigate what social studies teachers find most beneficial in their educational experiences. Research-based definitions of “effective social studies teachers” and “effective social studies teacher education” are needed. The following is a discussion of the research regarding the theoretical underpinnings of teacher preparation for self-efficacy, including two theories: pedagogical content knowledge theory and experiential learning theory.

It is undeniable that the skills of a teacher grow with classroom experience (Brophy, 1991). Theories and models have addressed this type of professional growth. Noting the transition from novice to expert is one in which knowledge of the classrooms (curriculum, procedures, administrative tasks) and knowledge of one’s own abilities (content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, ability to affect student achievement) somehow have grown seamlessly together through experience with students. Puk (1998) proposed one such model in which teachers acquired competency through four phases:

1. **Functionality:** Phase where teachers learn the “technology of teaching.” This phase represents the actual skills and tools used in the classroom. This includes the basic resources teachers use: textbooks and technology, as well as learning basic strategies for teaching.
2. **Intuitive Excellence:** Phase where teachers learn the “art of teaching.” In this phase, teachers acquire knowledge through reflection and attainment of personal practical knowledge (through trial and error in the classroom). This is the phase where teachers discover what works.

3. Conceptual Understanding: Phase where teachers learn the “science of teaching.” During this phase teachers begin building conceptual models that describe the relationship between the teaching and learning process.
4. Self-transcendence: Phase where teachers learn the “spirituality of teaching.” The final phase of growth represents one where teachers develop compassion, sensitivity, and respect for students to maximize communication (Puk, 1998).

While this model by no means represents a model for all teacher growth, the emphasis is given here on teachers learning basic skills and developing a more complex concept of their growth as teachers. Many argue that these steps can, and do, occur in any order. Studies, such as Kagan (1992) and Corney (1998) have investigated the growth of teachers. Kagan’s research found that teachers focus less on content and instruction, whilst they are less experienced and more on classroom management and procedures, other researchers (Corney 1998; Grossman 1992; Kagan 1992) have found that content knowledge is crucially important to the decisions novice teachers make about what to teach in their classrooms. Making such decisions is based on the orientation teachers have that informs their efficacy levels.

Theoretical Framework

Researchers, teacher educators, and administrators are interested in knowing what teacher attributes and sources contribute to a greater sense of teacher efficacy. Teacher efficacy can contribute to teaching effectiveness (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998), student achievement, professional

commitment, and career longevity. A teachers' self-efficacy to teaching plays an important role in determining how long one remains in the profession, and how dynamic he or she is to bring about changes in learners. All these achievements depend on how well prepared the teacher is. Teacher preparation is a multifaceted, complex topic replete with theories on both content knowledge and pedagogical strategies. Teachers need to learn curriculum and pedagogy as well as developmental psychology, classroom management, and understanding cultural diversity. Equally important is teachers' knowledge of the subject matter they are expected to teach. There are several theories that specifically address teacher learning as it relates to subject matter content. In addition to learning in formal settings, Social Studies teachers can also learn their subject matter through informal experiences with social studies, particularly developing interest through diverse means. Therefore, it is through both formal and informal learning settings of Social Studies teachers that the theoretical frameworks for this study have been chosen:

1. Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge-

This concept explains how teachers learn content knowledge, and other forms of teacher knowledge, and apply these types of knowledge appropriately in the classroom setting (Shulman, 1987, 1986). It supports both content learning and curricular learning, but specifically emphasizes pedagogical content knowledge. According to Shulman (1987), it is important for teachers to understand the content being taught, how best to present the content in the classroom, and how to follow the curricular guidelines set forth for the subject (Shulman, 1986). This will make the teacher develop some level of competence towards the subject reflecting higher efficacy levels. By having a

thorough understanding of content, curriculum and pedagogy, the teacher can then be on top of issues and will be able to integrate the subject knowledge into a classroom setting to best facilitate student learning.

2. Experiential Learning Theory-

This theory states that an individual constructs new knowledge based on previous experiences. By integrating concrete experiences into abstract ideas through reflection, new knowledge is formed. It is important to note that teachers may bring with them knowledge gained from prior experiences and their knowledge will change with new experiences. Experiential learning theory explains how students learn from the experiences they have within and outside of the classroom (Dewey, 1938 cited in Mohan, 2009). By actively participating in the learning process, students (or in this study, teachers) can become life-long learners (Kolb, 1984 cited in Mohan, 2009). In the case of social studies teachers, interest in socio-economic issues may be integrated to create new knowledge for the teacher and affect future classroom lessons.

These two theories about teacher knowledge are by no means the only underpinnings of knowledge that teachers have, but offer two theoretical frameworks for understanding where most Social Studies teachers gain their subject matter knowledge and how they attain higher levels of self-efficacy to decide what to teach in Social Studies and how to teach. In addition to content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and other educational knowledge (of curricula, of learners, of educational institutions, etc.), another important theoretical framework for this research study is teacher self-efficacy.

Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, and Zellman (as cited in Hansen, 2005), defined teacher efficacy as the extent to which the teacher believes he or

she has the capacity to affect student performance. Teacher efficacy, or self-efficacy, has been correlated to increase in teacher retention, increased student achievement and motivation, and decrease in negative attitude toward teaching (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Positively influencing teacher self-efficacy is a goal of in-service trainings, and results have shown that self-efficacy is a complex and fluid trait that varies from teacher to teacher (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Nonetheless, Hoy and Spero (2005) are of the view that self-efficacy is an important trait to address in in-service teacher education in order to increase positive outcomes for teachers and students in the classroom. If knowledge and understanding of Social Studies is an important component to teacher self-efficacy in Social Studies, then the theoretical framework could be illustrated in Figure 1 to show how the theories contribute to Social Studies teacher efficacy.

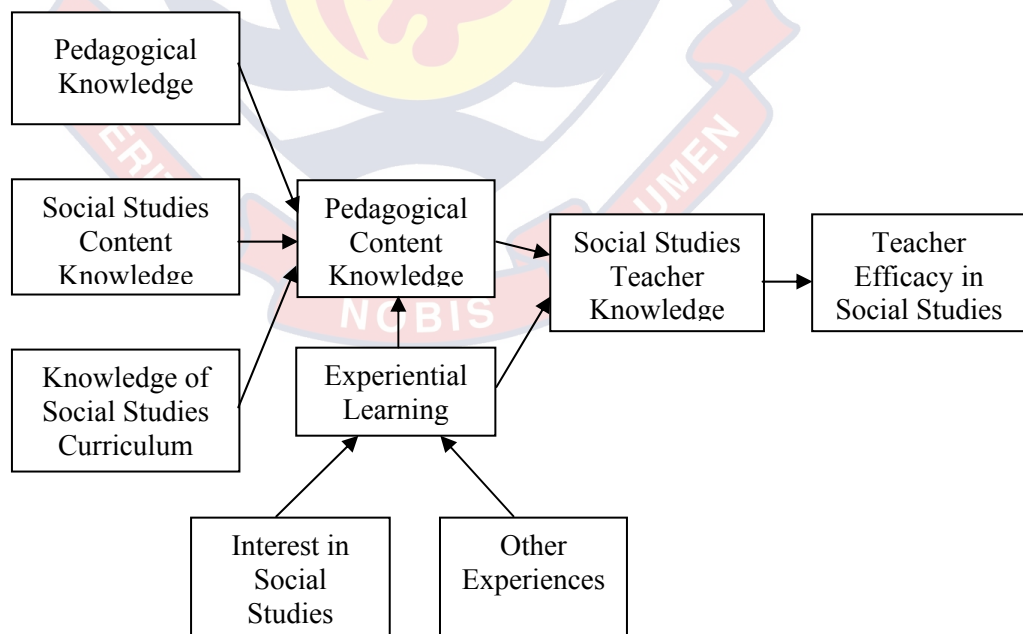


Figure 1: Relationship between Teacher Knowledge and Teacher Efficacy in Social Studies

Source: Adapted from Mohan, 2009.

The theoretical framework, represented in Figure 1, guided the development of the hypotheses, research question, and data analysis during the research study. It is important to note again that investigating teacher efficacy is a complex task, so the focus of this study will remain on the role of content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in contributing to teacher efficacy in Social Studies.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

In the early 1980s, educational researchers identified the “missing paradigm” in teacher education research: subject-specific content knowledge (Shulman, 1986). In identifying this missing paradigm, Shulman (1986) asked the following questions: “Where do teacher explanations come from? How do teachers decide what to teach: how to represent it, how to question students about it and how to deal with problems of misunderstanding?” (Shulman, 1987, p.6) These questions have been central to teacher education research.

Shulman, (1987) identified three key areas of knowledge (along with some others) that teachers need in order to be effective in the classroom: 1) content knowledge, 2) pedagogical content knowledge, and 3) curricular knowledge. In its most basic form, Shulman’s theory asserts that “the person who presumes to teach subject matter to children must demonstrate knowledge of that subject matter as a prerequisite to teaching” (Shulman, 1987, p.5).

There are several other similar models of teacher knowledge bases, but all include components of content and pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of curriculum, and knowledge of learners (Brophy 1991; Guyver & Nichol,

2004). Content knowledge refers to the deep understanding a teacher has regarding the subject matter, including facts, concepts, and structures within the subject. Content knowledge, according to Shulman, (1986) includes knowing the accepted truths of a discipline, why the discipline is worth knowing, and how it relates to other theories or disciplines; it is the knowing what “it” is and why “it” is so. Jurmu, Jurmu and Meyer (1999) add that content knowledge is usually attained during teacher preparation studies, but may also be reinforced through content specific professional development opportunities. Gudmundsdottir (1991) considering content specialists think that content knowledge is specifically important for secondary school teachers who view themselves as subject-matter specialists, and many of these teachers may have majored or minored in the subject during their pre-service education.

The second type of knowledge outlined by Shulman (1986) is pedagogical content knowledge, or the “dimension of subject matter for teaching.” It is the most effective way to convey the subject matter content to students and the understanding of what makes learning the content easy or difficult. Abd-el-Khalick and Boujaoude (as cited in Mohan, 2009) have observed that the idea of pedagogical content knowledge stemmed from the realization that teacher preparation programs were not linking subject knowledge to the actual teaching of the subject in the classroom. Several studies have shown that beginning teachers tend to struggle transforming their own understanding of content into an appropriate teaching method (Abd-el-Khalick & Boujaoude, 1997; Gregg, 2001, cited in Mohan, 2009).

The final type of knowledge teachers need to possess is curricular knowledge, which is knowledge that “represents the full range of programmes

designed for the teaching of particular subjects and topics at a given grade level” (Shulman, 1986, p.10). Curricular knowledge correlates with national standards advocated for each subject. According to Shulman (1986), an advanced teacher should have the knowledge of alternative methods of teaching, as well as horizontal and vertical curricular knowledge. Horizontal curricular knowledge is the ability to relate the subject-matter to other subjects being taught for that level while vertical curricular knowledge is the familiarity of the objectives within a subject and at which level those objectives are taught (Shulman, 1986).

Shulman’s theory advocates that teachers need knowledge from all three domains in order to be effective teachers, but there are several more types of knowledge that are important for teacher’s to possess. Shulman (1986) also proposed propositional (principles, truisms, norms), case(knowledge of specific, well-documented events) and strategic knowledge (beyond principles, this is the wisdom of practice).

Improving on previous works, Shulman (1987)described in more detail the types of knowledge that teachers possess. With regard to content knowledge, he proposed two types of content knowledge: 1) accumulated literature and studies in the content area, and 2) the historical and philosophical scholarship in the field of study. For example, asocial studies teacher need not only know the demographic data of Ghana, but would also need to understand theories about population growth and dynamics in relation to social and economic indicators (such as access to health care or per capita GDP). More than just knowing facts about a discipline, the teacher must possess knowledge of the concepts, theories, and values that are important to

understanding the discipline. Table 1 shows the different types of knowledge that teachers need to know in order to be efficacious in teaching.

Table 1: Types of Teacher Knowledge

Type of Knowledge	Description
Content Knowledge:	Knowledge of subject matter.
General Pedagogical Knowledge:	Broad principles and strategies of classroom instruction, management, and organization that is not specific to subject matter.
Curriculum Knowledge:	Grasp of materials and programmes that are specific for each course.
Pedagogical Content Knowledge:	A special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is unique to teacher; a special form of understanding how best to teach specific content.
Knowledge of Learners and their Characteristics:	Knowledge of learning theories and their application to the classroom.
Knowledge of Educational Contexts:	Knowledge of working in groups and in the classroom, governance and financing of schools, and the character of communities and cultures.
Knowledge of Educational Ends, Purposes, and Values, and their philosophical and historical grounds:	Roots of the educational system and goals for the education of all learners.

Source: Shulman (1987). "Categories of the Knowledge Base,"

Other Perspectives on Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Shulman's pedagogical content knowledge theory stimulated several researches in all subject areas, although these are largely found in English, Science and Maths, with a few studies in History and Social Studies. Warren and Ogonowski (1998), who conducted a study investigating the knowledge growth of science teachers, stated "the nature of knowledge and knowing in teaching, chiefly, of the teacher as an active problem-solving agent, whose expertise is richly contained in structured mental representations" (p. 2). Teacher knowledge is probably best described by Duncan (1998) as "Teacher knowledge is a messy kind of wisdom involving content knowledge, learning research, and teaching techniques as well as knowledge that can only be attained in social practice or by personal experimentation" (p. 1).

Studies to measure pedagogical content knowledge have had mixed results. Rowan et al. (2001) attempted to develop survey measures of pedagogical content knowledge for elementary Reading and Maths; the results were mixed with only a few of the survey items proving to be valid and reliable measures of pedagogical content knowledge. Rowan et al. (2001) posed several research questions: "What are the sources of teacher knowledge? What does a teacher know, and when did he or she come to know it? How are new knowledge acquired, old knowledge retrieved, and both combined to form a new knowledge base?" (p. 8).

In linking student learning with teacher quality, the National Center for Education Statistics [NCES] (1996, cited in Mohan, 2009) stated two key areas of professional competency: 1) content expertise, and 2) pedagogical expertise as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Teacher Competences Needed for Student Learning

Content Expertise	Pedagogical Expertise
Knowledge of specific content (what to teach)	Instruction skills (pace, organization, student engagement and participation)
Pedagogical content knowledge (how to teach content)	Classroom management skills (ability to implement rules and procedures, and monitor student behaviour)
Knowledge to assess significant learning of content (including what students already know about topic)	Assessment skills (ability to design and assess instructional goals).

Source: National Centre for Education Statistics (1996, cited in Mohan, 2009).

Another model proposed by Kennedy (1990) emphasized the importance of content knowledge for teachers:

1. The content of the subject (facts, concepts, principles, or laws).
2. The organization and structure of content (network of relationships among facts and ideas); facts are not discrete, isolated forms, but are related to other facts and ideas within the subject.
3. Methods of inquiry (sets of assumptions, rules of evidence, or forms of argument that develop or advance the subject).

It is important to note here that teachers are not necessarily academic scholars in their discipline; in fact, to the contrary teachers must be much more concerned with other types of knowledge than just disciplinary knowledge.

This is reiterated by Gudmundsdottir (1991) as he perceives teachers to be different from others and states that,

unlike scholars, teachers cannot focus only on content ... they have to think about students' preconceptions and misconceptions. They have to generate appropriate analogies, explanations, and examples to explain the subject matter, and they have to engage a group of students in an activity that facilitates learning. This means that teachers must reconstruct their own content knowledge to make it pedagogical (p.266).

Numerous studies have been conducted in Science, Mathematics, Reading, and History on pedagogical content knowledge (Brophy, 1991; Guyver& Nichol, 2004; Phelps&Schilling, 2004), but there has been little done in the subject of Social Studies. Research has shown that there exists a relationship between teacher knowledge and teacher efficacy (Carlsen, 1991). The following discussion highlights findings from this important work on subject-matter knowledge.

Carlsen (1991) found that while disciplines may change over time, teachers may be "satisfied with their old conceptions of Science teaching, and hence unwilling to change them" (p.123). It is expected that teachers will be able to present subject matter to students in many ways, but typically unknowledgeable teachers tend to focus on fact recall from textbooks when assessing students' understanding while knowledgeable teachers insert and assess supplementary material and modify textbook activities when used (Carlsen, 1991). The skill of a teacher is not only in having content knowledge

or procedural knowledge, but also in understanding how best to ask questions of their students (beyond textbook fact recall), as Duncan (1998) states:

teachers must have both a well-developed working knowledge of the discipline as well as a good handle on what students will respond to, what interests them and how to ask questions in a way that provokes them to respond, but they will never be able to ask good questions without knowing something about the material, independently of whether they have finely tuned classroom management skills (p. 2).

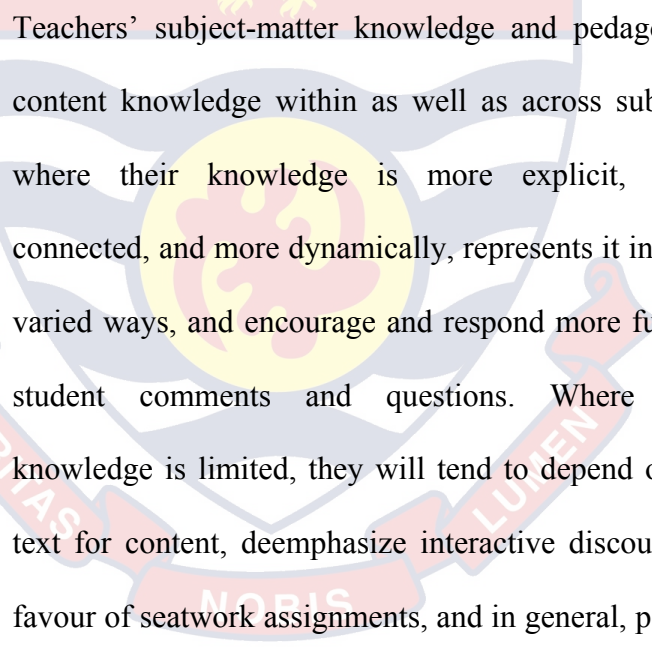
In a similar study, Hollon, Roth, and Anderson (1991) asserted the point that teachers must make decisions about what to teach and why, and these decisions are related to their content knowledge of the subject they are expected to teach, as well as their knowledge of learners, planning, and teaching. Types of decisions identified by the researchers included curricular decisions and instructional decisions, or what to teach and how to teach it. Most notably the researchers argued that teachers “must find ways of transforming the knowledge, language, and activities of the adult scientific community into forms that are simultaneously accessible to their students and faithful to the scientific community” (Hollon, Roth & Anderson 1991, p. 149). It is not just enough for teachers to have knowledge of subject matter and knowledge of learners, they also need avenues to share information and investigate problems in science, and participate in supportive professional communities (Hollon, Roth & Anderson, 1991). This type of professional development “must foster the development of a conceptually integrated base

of knowledge about the content to be taught and the ways in which students understand and learn that content” (Hollon, Roth & Anderson, 1991, p.177).

Leinhardt, Putnam, Stein, and Baxter(1991) asserted in similar findings that a teacher does not become a better teacher by knowing more subject matter (i.e., taking advanced subject areacourses) but becomes better by having a more in-depth knowledge of the subject matterthey teach. Both focus on a deeper knowledge of the subjectmatter rather than a wider breadth of knowledge. However, Hollon, Roth and Anderson(1991) did point out that “Teachers who had more content knowledge were far better atidentifying key points or issues, and developing instructional representations, and at analysing students’ thinking than those who had less” (p.184). The point here is that teacher subject matter knowledge makes a difference by“tightening” the “intricate relationship between subject matter knowledge and actualclassroom instruction” (Leinhardt et al. 1991, p.110), but it is not wholly responsible to developing effective teachers.

This point was also echoed by Gudmundsdottir (1991)when he stated that “it is not enough for teachers to know their subject matter; they also need to know how to teach it” (p.265). Wineburg and Wilson (1991) took a step further by acknowledging the fact that “while subject matter does not equal effective teaching, it does influence not only what they choose to teach, but also how they choose to teach it” (p.310). It must be recapped that for teachers to be efficacious well enough in their endeavour they need subject matter knowledge. The conclusion to this is that subject matter knowledge is critically important to the choices teachers make in their classroom, but does not ensure that effective instruction will occur in those classrooms.

Considering the results of this research, it is important for Social Studies educators to consider the types of knowledge Social Studies teachers must possess in working within the senior high school classroom. With regard to content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge of Social Studies teacher, it is imperative that Social Studies education research focus on three key areas of study 1) Where does Social Studies content knowledge come from?, 2) What does pedagogical content knowledge look like for Social Studies?, and 3) How does content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge influence effectiveness and self-efficacy in the classroom? Brophy's (1991) conclusions resonate well with this research:

The logo of the University of Cape Coast is a watermark in the background. It features a shield with a yellow eagle with wings spread, perched on a globe. Below the shield is a red banner with the Latin motto "VERITAS LIBERABIT VOS A OMNI LUMINE NOBIS".

Teachers' subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge within as well as across subjects; where their knowledge is more explicit, better connected, and more dynamically, represents it in more varied ways, and encourage and respond more fully to student comments and questions. Where their knowledge is limited, they will tend to depend on the text for content, deemphasize interactive discourse in favour of seatwork assignments, and in general, portray the subjects as a collection of static factual knowledge (p.352).

In the end, the goal of this research is to understand how content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (from formal and informal learning experiences) influence teachers efficacy in attending to classroom dynamics; in terms of social studies knowledge, selection and application of

strategy, method and technique, material design and use, in-class communication and classroom management, effective measurement and evaluation applications and interest in relation to social studies teaching, measured by teacher efficacy.

Experiential Learning and Social Studies Teacher Knowledge

Although Shulman's theory, and other teacher content-knowledge theories, explains the necessity of linking content and pedagogy in order to be a successful teacher, it does not account for the interest teachers develop through diverse cultural and travel experiences that add to the knowledge base of a Social Studies teacher, which inevitably influence efficacy levels and attitude towards classroom lessons. The theory of experiential learning states that students acquire knowledge by participating actively in the learning process (Dewey, 1938 cited in Mohan, 2009). Learning is social with knowledge constructed through experiences, which will promote life-long learning (Roberts, 2003). Experiential learning can be beneficial for Social Studies teachers and students as it allows both groups to reflect on problems and discover solutions through applications (Dorsey, 2001; Healey & Jenkins, 2000). According to experiential learning theory, genuine education comes from experience (Dorsey, 2001). For example, Social Studies teachers may benefit from social discussions, travelling, as it enhances their own content knowledge of Social Studies and enriches the classroom experience for students if used appropriately in instruction (Drummond, 2001). Social Studies teachers may also learn Social Studies through other experiences, such as reading Social Studies books or watching Social Studies-related TV shows.

Widely travelled person receives first-hand information on the important and significant cultural, geographical, historical buildings and places. This will greatly help in the teaching of Social Studies. Travels will also enable the person to develop the breadth of outlook and width of understanding which will assist him/her to interpret the culture of different parts of the country and the world to his/her pupils and thus promote emotional, national and international understanding (Aggarwal, 2004).

Experiential learning theory is widely used by educators, psychologists, and other academic disciplines to explain not only the mode in which individuals learn but also the manner in which they learn best. In experiential learning theory, Steinaker and Bell (as cited in Mohan, 2009) have observed that knowledge is constructed from past experiences as well as new experiences. Experience is seen as an integrated whole involving mind, physical being, and the sum of their previous experiences (Kolb, 1984, as cited in Mohan, 2009).

Contemporary research on experiential learning is largely credited to the work of Kolb, who in 1984, published *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*, which proposed an explicit learning cycle to experiential learning theory (Moon, 1999). Kolb's cycle represents two ways to grasp knowledge (concrete experiences and abstract conceptualization) and two ways to transform knowledge (reflective observation and active experimentation), as shown in Figure 2. The learner achieves this process by moving from actor to observer while in the course of learning (Kolb, 1984 cited in Mohan, 2009).

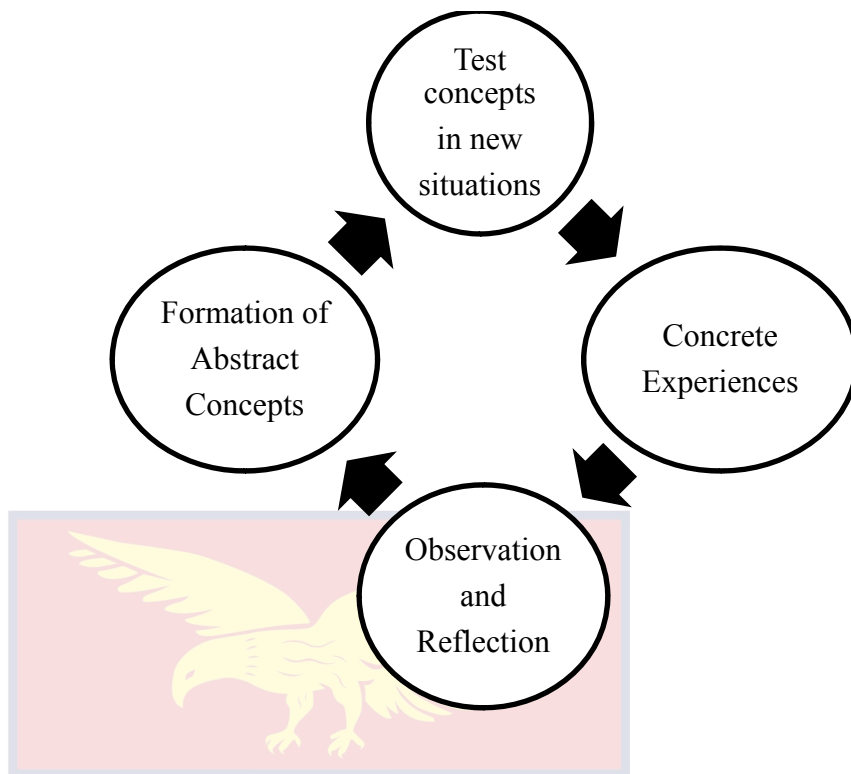


Figure 2: Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

Source: Kolb 1984; cited in Mohan, 2009.

Teacher handbooks on professional development have also acknowledged the importance of teacher experiences in shaping their teaching practice. One influential work discussed four important steps in teacher learning: 1) what learners know influences future learning, 2) learners acquire new knowledge by constructing it, 3) constructing new knowledge includes adding, modifying, refining, or rejecting knowledge, 4) learning happens through experience (Loucks-Horsley, et al. 2003). In this case the Social Studies teacher would move through this cycle on a continual basis, which would have an effect on classroom instruction, whether this effect is on curriculum, teaching strategies, or preference of instructional area.

Pedagogical content knowledge theory, combined with experiential learning theory, provides a solid foundation for investigating the best methods of teacher preparation in Social Studies. Pedagogical content knowledge theory

offers a practical, more formal approach to preparing teachers for the Social Studies classroom, specifically by preparing teachers to be efficacious in order to teach the Social Studies content through the most effective means. However, Social Studies teachers are also influenced by their own experiences, whether these experiences are specific to Social Studies or whether they are related to the curricular, pedagogical, or political issues found within general education careers. In the first case, a teacher may travel to another place and use this experience in future classroom instruction. On the other hand, a teacher may have a bad experience with Social Studies curriculum materials or have little support from school administration, which may cause the teacher to avoid teaching Social Studies again. In either case, a teacher's experiences are important to whether or not the teacher enjoys teaching Social Studies or feels efficacious in the Social Studies classroom.

The interaction between the pedagogical content knowledge a teacher possesses and the experiential learning that takes place within and outside the classroom can help explain how teachers learn and grasp the discipline, Social Studies, able to express themselves and teach Social Studies, and feel effective in contributing to student learning of Social Studies. As this sociologic and pedagogic knowledge is learned, transformed, and recalled, the teacher creates their own understanding of the subject of Social Studies, how best to teach it, and how best to assess student learning; this understanding ultimately becomes tangible in the form of Social Studies lessons. What lessons do the social studies teachers provide? How are they able to impart what is expected of them in improving students learning?

The Social Studies Teacher

The teacher of social studies deals with knowledge, skills, attitudes, ideals, and appreciations to a large extent than is the case in other branches of study. According to Aggarwal, (2004) “the subject of study more than any other subject demand well prepared conscientious men and women of sound knowledge and training whose personalities rank high among men” (p. 228). The study of maths, appreciation of a poem, knowledge of the natural world, important as they may be, cannot be compared with the teaching of Social Studies which deals with the teaching of pupils to live together in a democracy and raising the tone of democracy by developing thoughtful, appreciative and an intelligent electorate.

Teaching of social studies, Aggarwal (2004) asserts has suffered very much from poor teaching especially at the elementary stage. It is generally held that anyone could teach social studies. All that was necessary was a textbook and the ability to read it. The teaching task was merely to see that the pupils knew the facts presented in the book. This attitude towards social studies still exists. A social studies class is frequently given to a physical education teacher or a music teacher in order that he may complete the schedule. When one considers the aims and objectives of the education and the role that social studies is destined to play in accomplishing these aims, one wonders why the teaching of social studies has been neglected and dealt with very indifferently in so many of our schools.

Inadequacy of the preparation of teachers to handle social studies in the school curriculum has been found to be a major challenge in teaching. This inadequacy relates not only to a lack of teacher content knowledge but also to

an inability to employ a range of teaching and learning approaches appropriately for Social Studies education. There are a number of debates as to whether teachers who teach Social Studies are lacking appropriate pedagogical techniques and/or an understanding of the central concepts, which underpin Social Studies (Kerr, 1999).

Many countries referred to the inadequacy of a university degree as preparation for the day-to-day demands on social studies teaching. This is in terms of degree content and the style of teaching during the course. For instance, there is a question mark concerning the appropriateness of a degree in History, Geography or Social Sciences as an adequate preparation for the teaching of Social Studies (Kerr, 1999). If Social Studies is to assist learners to understand this complex world in which we live, in order that they may better adapt themselves to it and prepare themselves for an intelligent and constructive citizenship, we must provide well-trained teachers of social studies at all stages of education.

Aggarwal(2004) proposed some essentials of a social studies teacher and categorised them as scholarship, professional training, personality, teaching skills and human relations. Under the teaching skills, the Core Training Programme Package (CTPP) of the NCERT (1979) aiming at enabling the teacher to acquire mastery of manipulative skills higher levels of efficacy for making their teaching effective includes skills of class management, communication, interaction, the use of teaching aids, attitude and behaviour. To investigate efficacy believes of teachers, these teaching skills are important elements.

The Concept of Teacher Efficacy

Various characteristics of teachers have been identified to influence their performance on the job. Among some of these features are teacher competence, training, support services, as well as teacher efficacy. Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) postulated that teacher efficacy or self-efficacy has been identified as an important characteristic of teachers that can positively influence teacher and student outcomes and consistently relate to teaching and learning. Defined as a teacher's perception of his or her abilities to effect change in student achievement, teacher efficacy has been debated and studied for several decades (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy 1998). It is important to note that "Teacher efficacy is a self-perception, not an objective measure of teaching effectiveness. It represents teachers' expectations that, their efforts will bring about students learning" (Rosset al. 1999, p.786).

Ashton (1984) contributing to the definition of teacher efficacy postulates that teacher efficacy has been defined as teachers' "beliefs in their ability to have a positive effect on student learning" (p. 142). He reiterates that teachers with higher teaching efficacy find teaching meaningful and rewarding, expect students to be successful, assess themselves when students fail, set goals and establish strategies for achieving those goals, have positive attitudes about themselves and students, have a feeling of being in control, and share their goals with students.

Tschannen-Moran, Hoy and Hoy (1998) observe that teacher efficacy research arose from research on self-efficacy, ora cognitive process in which people construct beliefs about the capacity to perform at a given level of attainment. They add that these beliefs influence how much effort people put

forth, how long they will persist in the face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with failures, and how much stress or depression they experience in coping with demanding situations. A number of researchers have attempted to increase their understanding of the role of these reciprocal relationships in the development and maintenance of teacher efficacy. For example, Hipp and Bredeson, Resenholtz, and Webb and Ashton (as cited in Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy 1998) studied the role of the school context and teacher efficacy. School-level variables, such as school climate, principal's behaviour, sense of school community, and the general school culture were also seen as being related to a teacher's sense of efficacy. For example, Hipp and Bredeson (1995) found that when a principal of a school modelled appropriate behaviour and provided performance rewards, both personal teaching efficacy and general teaching efficacy scores were higher. Specifically, the principal's ability to inspire a common sense of staff purpose was related to higher teacher scores. Resenholtz (1989) found that the four school factors were significantly associated with teacher efficacy. These factors were identified as: receiving positive feedback on teacher performance, collaboration with other teachers, parental involvement in the school, and school-wide coordination of student behaviour.

Other researchers have also examined the extent to which teacher efficacy is a shared sense. Hoy and Spereo (2005) found that school climate influenced student achievement even when socio-economic status was controlled. In general, studies in this area have tended to demonstrate that an important aspect of school climate is the extent to which it strengthens or weakens teachers' efficacy beliefs. A low sense of efficacy among a group of

teachers can be very contagious. Bandura (1997) pointed out that low teacher efficacy leads to low student efficacy and related low achievement, which leads, in turn, to further declines in teacher efficacy. It must be emphasised that teacher efficacy can be influenced in different context; ranging from teacher characteristics, school ethos, educational context, curriculum issues and many others. It is a construct that is important in ensuring the effective performance of every teacher and need to be investigated.

Importance of Teacher Efficacy

Chase, Germundsen and Brownstein (2001) explained the importance of teacher efficacy as teachers with a high sense of efficacy communicate high expectations for performance to students, put greater emphasis on instructions and learning with students are aware of student's accomplishments, are less likely to give up on low-achieving students and are more likely to work harder on their behalf. Additionally, teachers with high efficacy are more open to implementing and experimenting with new teaching strategies because they do not view change as an affront to their own abilities as teachers. In contrast, teachers with low efficacy tend to doubt that any amount of effort by teachers or school in general, will affect achievement of low-performing students. In sum, high teacher efficacy creates direct and predictable links to increased student achievement, especially for low-performing students. Alderman (1999) comparing high and low teacher efficacy adds that teachers with high self-efficacy perception rely on their students' learning capacity more compared to those with low level of self-efficacy, and they endeavour in line with that purpose. Teachers with high self-efficacy perception can endeavour

to create an effective educational life using a variety of strategies, methods and techniques in the classroom.

Yilmaz (2009) investigating the self-efficacy perception of prospective social studies teachers in teaching history observes that teachers' self-efficacy perception is one of the major determining factors in classroom management as well. Teachers with high instructional self-efficacy perception endeavour spending their time in the classroom mainly with academic studies and productive activities aiming student development, while those with low level of self-efficacy use their teaching periods to solve discipline and noise problems and to talk about mistakes made by students.

Self-efficacy perception is also effective in individual's future goals. For Yilmaz, individuals with high self-efficacy perception also have high levels of future goals and they endeavour to attain these goals. On the other hand, individuals with low self-efficacy perception have rather modest goals, which are easier to attain. Since such individuals do not believe they can even do more, they are unable to use their capacities fully, and fail to reach the required performance (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990).

Types of Teacher Efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy is a type of self-perception specific to the roles and responsibilities of a teacher, including teaching subject specific content, classroom management, and student motivation. Specific types of efficacy include personal teaching efficacy, general teaching efficacy (also called outcome expectancy), and collective efficacy. Personal teaching efficacy [PTE] is the confidence a teacher has in his or her own teaching capabilities, specifically to effect change in student achievement (Tschannen-Moran,

Hoy & Hoy 1998). General teaching efficacy [GTE] is defined as the perceptions a teacher has regarding the capabilities of teachers in general in effecting change in student achievement (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy 1998). GTE is also called outcome expectancy by some researchers. PTE is an individual's beliefs about their own capabilities while GTE is an individual's beliefs about the capabilities of teachers in general. Collective efficacy is the belief shared across teachers in a school regarding the school's capabilities to impact student achievement and motivation (Goddard, Hoy & Hoy 2002). Most research to date has focused on creating quantitative measures to capture teacher self-efficacy, both PTE and GTE as well as subject specific self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998). In line with this, the research work is on social studies teachers' self-efficacy, indicating subject specificity, both personal teaching efficacy (PTE) and general teaching efficacy (GTE).

Sources of Efficacy Expectations

Bandura (1997) postulated four sources of self-efficacy information: mastery experiences, physiological and emotional arousal, vicarious experience, and social persuasion. These four sources contribute to both the analysis of the teaching task and to self-perceptions of teaching competence, but in different ways. For example, observing a teacher can provide information about the nature of a teaching task, but it also contributes to self-perceptions of teaching competence as the viewer compares self with model. Mastery or enactive experiences are a powerful source of knowledge about one's own capabilities as a teacher, but also supply information about the complexity of the teaching task. The differential impact of each of these

sources depends on cognitive processing; what is attended to, what is remembered, and how the teacher thinks about each of the experiences.

Mastery Experiences

Mastery or enactive experiences are the most powerful source of efficacy information. The perception that a performance has been successful raises efficacy beliefs, contributing to the expectation of proficient performance in the future. Efficacy beliefs strengthen substantially when success is achieved on difficult tasks with little assistance or when success is achieved early in learning with few setbacks; however, not all successful experiences encourage efficacy. For example, efficacy is not enhanced when success is achieved through extensive external assistance, relatively late in learning, or on an easy and unimportant task. The perception that one's performance has been a failure lowers efficacy beliefs, which contributes to the expectation that future performances will also be useless. This attack on efficacy is likely when the failure occurs early in learning and cannot be attributed to a lack of effort or events outside the person's control (Bandura, 2006, 1997). Only in a situation of actual teaching can an individual assess the capabilities she or he brings to the task and experience the consequence of those capabilities.

Physiological and Emotional Indications

The level of emotional and physiological arousal a person experiences in a teaching situation adds to self-perceptions of teaching competence. Feelings of relaxation and positive emotions signal self-assurance and the anticipation of future success (Bandura, 2006). Arousal, such as increased heart and respiratory rate, "butterflies," increased perspiration, or trembling

hands, can be read either positively as excitement or negatively as stress and anxiety, depending on the circumstances, the person's history, and the overall level of arousal (Bandura, 1997). Moderate levels of arousal can improve performance by focusing attention and energy on the task. However, high levels of arousal can impair functioning and interfere with making the best use of one's skills and capabilities. In order for physiological states to have an effect, they must be attended to. If the task itself requires all of a person's attention resources, then affective states may contribute little to a sense of personal teaching competence.

Vicarious Experiences

Watching others teach, whether from the vantage point of a student or from images portrayed in the media, provides impressions about the nature of the teaching task and its context. Images formed during teacher education, from the professional literature, and from elsewhere contribute information. Through these and other vicarious experiences one begins to decide who can learn and how much, who is responsible, and whether teachers can really make a difference (McBer, 2000). Models of successful teachers are the bases for deciding that the teaching task is manageable and that situational and personal resources are adequate. Watching others teach in skilful and expert ways- especially observing admired and credible models- can affect the observer's personal teaching competence (Ornstein &Lasley, 2000). Comparisons to others can lead observers, particularly beginning teachers, to believe that they also have the capabilities to be successful teachers under similar circumstances (Bandura, 1997; Schunk, 1987 cited in Khan 2011). Likewise, observing other teachers' failures despite strong effort erodes efficacy beliefs by leading to the

conclusion that the task is unmanageable, unless the observer believes that he or she is more skilful than the model.

Verbal Persuasion

Verbal persuasion can be general or specific; it can provide information about the nature of teaching, give encouragement and strategies for overcoming situational obstacles, and provide specific feedback about a teacher's performance. Course work and professional development workshops give teachers information about the task of teaching. These experiences also provide strategies and methods that can contribute to a teacher's arsenal of skills. But these new skills may not have an impact on self-perceptions of teaching competence until they are used successfully to enhance student learning. Although a "pep talk" alone may be limited in strengthening personal teaching competence, such persuasion can counter occasional setbacks that might otherwise instil self-doubt and interrupt persistence (Schunk, 1989 cited in Khan, 2011). Specific performance feedback from supervisors, other teachers, even students, can be a potent source of information about how a teacher's skills and strategies match the demands of a particular teaching task. Specific performance feedback provides social comparison information, that is, whether the teaching performance and outcomes are adequate, inferior, or superior to others in a similar teaching situation when measured.

Measuring Teacher Efficacy

Generally, teacher self-efficacy has been difficult to define, isolate, and measure, and has been identified as a situational construct that can vary by context (Henson, 2001; Raudenbush, Rowan & Cheong, 1992 cited in Hoy

2004;Wheatley, 2005). General conclusions from the literature show that high teacher self-efficacy is correlated with higher student achievement and motivation, higher teacher retention rates, feelings of professional commitment and teacher persistence, higher likelihood of implementing new innovations or teaching strategies, and a greater willingness to work with difficult students (Hoy 2004; Tschannen-Moran and Hoy 2001; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy and Hoy, 1998). Conversely, low teacher self-efficacy is correlated to higher levels of teacher stress (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998).

Teacher self-efficacy is influenced by grade level, achievement levels of students, and amount of preparation for classes and it varies within teachers and among teachers (Raudenbush,Rowan & Cheong, 1992 cited in Hoy 2004). Further studies have found that teacher self-efficacy is influenced by factors such as resource availability, administrative processes, school culture, teacher workload, and school or grade level (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Teachers that teach out-of-field were found to have lower efficacy than those teachers that were teaching within a subject area in which they were prepared to teach (Ross et al. 1999). Most research in teacher self-efficacy has been quantitative, focusing primarily on defining and measuring the characteristics of teacher self-efficacy through survey scales. There has been much debate about the construct validity of teacher efficacy (Guskey&Passaro 1994; Henson 2001). Ashton, (1985) contributing to the measurement of teacher efficacy identified eight dimensions of teacher efficacy.The dimensions are explained in Table 3.

Table 3: Dimensions of Teacher Efficacy

Dimensions of Teacher Efficacy	
1. Sense of personal accomplishment	The teacher must view the work as meaningful and important.
2. Positive expectations for student behaviour and achievement	The teacher must expect students to progress.
3. Personal responsibility for student learning	Accepts accountability and shows a willingness to examine performance.
4. Strategies for achieving Objectives	Must plan for student learning, set goals for themselves, and identify strategies to achieve them.
5. Positive effect	Feels good about teaching, about self, and about students.
6. Sense of control	Believes he or she can influence learning.
7. Sense of common teacher/student goals	Develops a joint venture with students to accomplish goals.
8. Democratic decision making	Involves students in making decisions regarding goals and strategies.

Source: Ashton 1985.

The origin of teacher efficacy was based on Rotter's theory of locus of control (Henson, 2001). In recent years, research has shifted from this focus to a more holistic approach, specifically aiming to determine which factors are

influential in the development and maintenance of high teacher self-efficacy (Wheatley, 2005). There has been several efficacy scales, each one used at one point tries to build on the other by either improving on the scale or using it to investigate another construct. Some of these scales include:

1. Teacher Locus of Control Scale (Rose & Medway, 1981)
2. The Webb Scale (Ashton, Buhr& Crocker, 1982)
3. The Gibson and Dembo Teacher Efficacy Scale (Gibson &Dembo, 1984)
4. Science Teacher Efficacy Belief Instrument (Riggs &Enochs, 1990)
5. The Ashton Vignettes (Ashton, Buhr& Crocker, 1984)
6. Personal Teaching Efficacy and General Teaching Efficacy Scale (Guskey&Passaro, 1994)
7. Bandura's Extended Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (Bandura, 1997)
8. Optimal Levels of Specificity (Pintrich&Schunk, 1996)
9. An Integrated Model of Teacher Efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al, 1998)

At this point there is a need for qualitative and quantitative research that explores the context and situations that influence, and more importantly enhance, teacher self-efficacy, including factors from in-service teacher experiences. Therefore this research uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques to explore more in depth teacher efficacy in Social Studies hence adopted the Integrated Model of Teacher Efficacy.

Integrated Model of Teacher Efficacy

Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) proposed a model of teacher efficacy that built on the earlier measures mentioned in the paper. However, they

pointed out that there was still some refining and testing to be done. They drew particular attention to the way in which teachers analyse the teaching task, and the extent to which this analysis then influences efficacy beliefs. Moreover, they were particularly concerned with identifying the optimal level of specificity required for accurately analysing teacher ability.

In response to the confusion and lack of research agreement surrounding teacher efficacy, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) proposed an integrated model of teacher efficacy where both conceptual strands are incorporated. While the major influences on efficacy beliefs are assumed to be the attribution analysis and interpretation of Bandura's (1986) four sources of efficacy information, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) emphasised that "teachers do not feel equally efficacious for all teaching situation" (p. 227). Teacher efficacy is context specific, and specialist secondary subject teachers are not expected to be consistently efficacious across all subjects and circumstances. Therefore, in making an efficacy judgement, a consideration of the teaching task and its context is required by the teacher. In addition, it is necessary for teachers to assess their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the requirements of the task.

Further, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) advised that the assessment of the teaching task should be weighted to reflect the relative importance of different aspects of the teaching job. He also suggested that a "valid measure of teacher efficacy must encompass both an assessment of personal competence and an analysis of the task in terms of the resources and constraints that exist in particular teaching contexts" (p. 28). In the Tschannen-Moran et al. (2001) model, two dimensions are related to general

teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy factors, but they are not identical in their manifestation. When analysing the teaching task and its context, the relative importance of factors that make teaching difficult, should be weighed against an assessment of the resources available to facilitate learning. Therefore, in the integrated model, perceptions of personal teaching competence are separated from teacher efficacy. In this model, self-perceptions of teaching competence are assessed by questions that focus on perceptions of current functioning as a teacher. These perceptions, then, contribute to a teacher efficacy judgement or a prediction of future capability.

Identifying certain situations, Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998) further recommended that the following questions should be included in future teacher efficacy studies, and might help identify appropriate levels of specificity, correspondence, and success for typical classroom tasks: How specific are teachers' definitions of common classroom tasks? Do experienced and inexperienced teachers hold different conceptions of these tasks? Do these conceptions vary in specificity?

Tschannen-Moran et al. also suggested that qualitative research could be beneficial in providing some more in-depth information to complement quantitative analyses based on the scores from teacher efficacy measures. In addition to the above questions it is important to consider the relationship between teacher efficacy beliefs and teacher knowledge, and that teacher efficacy beliefs about subject content knowledge may not be consistently correlated with pedagogical content knowledge.

Teacher Knowledge

Orton (1993) theorized that the nature of teacher knowledge was both tacit and situated. He considered the ‘tacit problem’ as being the fact that teacher knowledge is primarily a form of knowledge related to how to teach, while the ‘situated problem’ is that teacher knowledge is deeply dependent on particular times, places, and contexts. In the case of specialist secondary teachers, there is a third dimension to the nature of teacher knowledge: subject content knowledge. This knowledge is primarily a form of the knowledge of the ‘what’. In examining teacher efficacy beliefs in relation to a subject-specific context one needs to be aware that ‘expert’ subject knowledge (what) may not necessarily equate to a belief that this knowledge can be effectively taught (tacit) in a given situation (situated).

Two studies (Schoon & Boone, 1998; Sciutto, Terjesen & Bender Frank, 2000 as cited in Hansen, 2005) investigating the link between demonstrated knowledge and teachers’ level of content-specific efficacy beliefs, found a strong link between the demonstrated knowledge of teachers and their reported feelings of teacher efficacy.

In summarizing the relationship between teacher knowledge and teacher efficacy, Fives (2003) suggested there were three categories based on teachers’ assessment of knowledge. The first category is the educational level or academic qualification a teacher has. The second category is knowledge that is gained through specialized training or unique experiences. The third category relates to demonstrated knowledge. Studies focusing on education or academic qualifications (e.g., Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993) have demonstrated a relationship between educational level and teacher efficacy. However, Fives

(2003) emphasized that the education level a teacher has “does not inform us as to the specific experiences that may have served to build and enhance participating teachers’ sense of efficacy” (p. 34).

In conclusion, Fives (2003) claimed the “relationship that exists between knowledge and efficacy demonstrated in these studies suggests that higher level of knowledge are associated with higher levels of efficacy” (p. 40). The more practical teaching experiences a teacher undertakes, the greater the opportunities are for increasing pedagogical knowledge and performance experiences.

Teacher Knowledge and Out-of-Field Teaching

At any rate, to be effective, teachers must have an in-depth content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, curricular knowledge, and knowledge of learners (Brophy, 1991 & Shulman, 1987, 1986). Measuring effectiveness in the classroom has been the latest target of educational researchers, but defining effectiveness is more elusive than mere coursework and student test scores. In a report on teacher education, the Education Commission on the States [ECS] (2003) published a summarized research, and specifically focused on content matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge and how each of these factors affect teacher effectiveness. The review of these critical issues in teacher education reported that: 1) teachers need subject matter knowledge, but currently are inadequately prepared, and 2) pedagogical expertise is needed, but the best means of teaching this to student teachers is inconclusive in the research (ECS, 2003).

One specific report that ECS (2003) cited concluded that “the subject-matter preparation that prospective teachers currently receive is inadequate for

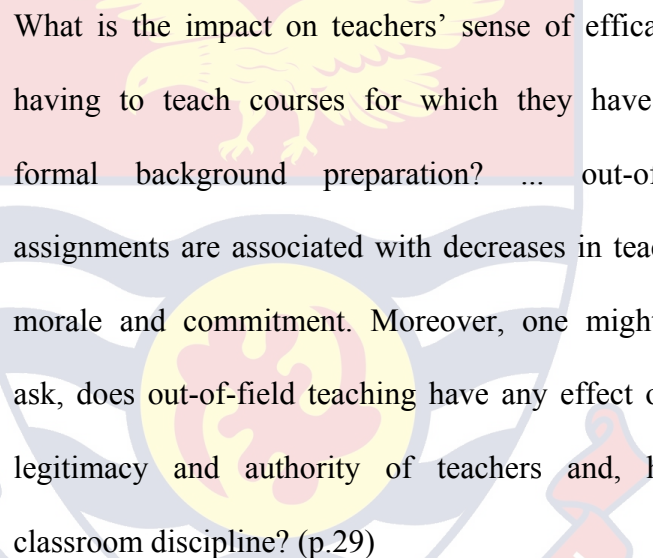
teaching toward high subject matter standards, by anyone's definition” (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001, p.19). It is an obvious conclusion that teacher preparation programs need input from the content area fields; in this case, while pedagogy and curriculum are the responsibility of institutions of education, it is important for social studies departments to ensure that teachers are provided with high-quality content instruction in social studies.

Away from the emphasis of subject matter knowledge, teaching social studies in Ghana faces the issue of out-of-field teaching, or when teachers are assigned to teach courses in which they have no subject-matter preparation. Ascertaining subject-matter preparation is a difficult task, and there are no regulations on schools to appropriately match teachers to classes in which they have subject-matter knowledge. Ingersoll (1999) reported that “probably the most precise method of assessing teachers’ educational preparations is to count the actual number of undergraduate or graduate courses completed in any given field” (p. 27). This report estimated that, in 1999, there were about 20-30% of teachers in classrooms that had no major or minor in the subjects they were assigned to teach (Ingersoll, 1999).

Ross, Cousins, Gadalla, and Hannay (1999) in conducting a study on the administrative assignment of teachers in restructuring secondary schools, concluded that 25% of all secondary school teachers are out-of-field with up to 50% in science alone. Out-of-field teaching raises the issue of how qualified teachers are to be effective in the classroom if they are teaching subject in which they have little preparation.

One study by Rowan, Chiang, and Miller (1997) found that high school students taught by teachers with an academic major in their assigned

subject area had higher student achievement in the subject than students taught by teachers without a major in the subject area. Ingersoll (1999) suggests “Teachers assigned to teach a subject for which they have little background are probably more likely to overly rely on textbooks, and the kinds of learning obtained from textbooks are probably what standardized examinations best capture” (p. 29). While excessively relying on textbooks is not entirely detrimental to classroom teaching or student learning, Ingersoll (1999) also posed the questions:

The logo of the University of Cape Coast is a watermark in the background. It features a shield with a yellow eagle with wings spread, perched on a globe. Below the globe is a red banner with the Latin motto 'VERITAS LIBERABIT VOS'. The shield is surrounded by a blue and red border.

What is the impact on teachers' sense of efficacy of having to teach courses for which they have little formal background preparation? ... out-of-field assignments are associated with decreases in teachers' morale and commitment. Moreover, one might also ask, does out-of-field teaching have any effect on the legitimacy and authority of teachers and, hence, classroom discipline? (p.29)

Ross et al. (1999) found that teacher efficacy was lower for teachers who were teaching courses out-of-field; the effects were greater for out-of-field teaching than student education track and grade level. Schools that were most affected by out-of-field teaching were poorer schools or rural schools, while schools that offer higher pay and were more affluent typically, and had lower rates of out-of-field teaching; likewise, lower level classes had higher rates of out-of-field teaching (Ingersoll, 1999). The Ingersoll study (1999) found that 25% of social studies teachers in high need schools taught out-of-field teachers as opposed to 16% in more affluent schools.

It is important to note here that teacher preparation programmes are not entirely to blame for teachers' lack of subject matter preparation. There is not only a problem with the degree of emphasis of subject-matter knowledge in teacher training programmes, but the more concerning problem is a lack of fit between a teacher's preparation and the classes they are assigned to teach. So, while subject-matter knowledge in teacher training should be addressed, it is equally important to establish an appropriate fit between their preparation and teaching assignments (Ingersoll, 1999). In addition, once assigned, teachers need to develop their profession continuously in order to make the necessary impact that is required of them.

Teacher Education in Ghana

Teacher preparation is a multifaceted topic, which includes research and input from an array of academic fields, but most namely psychology, curriculum and instruction, and educational administration and planning. Teachers are expected to be "highly qualified," a task that has proved difficult to define and implement in most developing countries. Under the current global aspirations of Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals to which Ghana is committed, has resulted in its attempt to recent demonstration of government commitment to upgrading of school infrastructure, institution of a Capitation Grant that absolves all fees, a School Feeding programme by which some basic school students are provided with one free meal a day, and a Bus System by which students enjoy free transport to and from school, if accessible. The outcome of these procedures is increased enrolments in schools, which call for an adequate number of well-

qualified, highly competent, stable and dedicated teacher workforces (Cobbold, 2007).

This requirement, however, comes at a time when stakeholders and school leaders face the challenge of recruiting and retaining qualified teachers in schools to ensure quality teaching and learning for all students. At the senior high school level, the rate at which teachers leave the profession and the consequent demand for teachers continue to increase. While “qualified” has most commonly been equated to “effective” or having met the nation’s standards for teaching, research studies have shown that “qualified” teachers are not necessarily “effective” teachers (Centre for Education Policy, 2007; ECS, 2007). Education reformers have generally defined “effective teaching” as improving student learning, and is generally measured by achievements made on standardized tests, improvement on periodic classroom assessments, performance on end-of-course exams. Teacher education in Ghana has a chequered history, resulting in various categories of teachers in the system, which possesses different professional qualifications: teachers’ certificate ‘A’, post graduate certificate, post graduate diploma, bachelor’s degree and master’s degree.

Professional Development

One scholar on teacher professional development stated “high quality professional development is a central component in nearly every modern proposal for improving education...schools can do no better than the teachers and administrators who work within them” (Guskey, 2002, p. 381). Specifically, within social studies, Gaudelli (2001) investigated types of professional development that improve teacher knowledge and motivation,

noting that “professional development is frequently undertaken as an activity to be done to teachers rather than in collaboration with them” (p. 2).

Gaudelli (2001) found that meaningful professional development which focused on four types of teacher knowledge (content, pedagogy, pedagogical-content, and self-knowledge) was an effective alternative to traditional “one-shot” workshops. While research has established a need for better teacher education programmes and professional development in social studies, what are the specific components that are needed to enhance teacher knowledge and effectiveness in social studies? In addition to coursework, some social studies teachers have benefited from participation in the training of trainers as a means of professional development in content knowledge and teaching methods in social studies (Englert & Barley, 2003; G.E.S., 2011; Jurmu, Jurmu & Meyer, 1999; Kenreich, 2004).

In addition to workshops, institutes, and conferences, mentoring programmes have shown promise as a sustainable in-service educational experience. Mentoring programmes have been studied in-depth because beginning teachers who receive mentoring become more effective as teachers. Since they are learning from guided practice rather than trial and error, and they leave teaching at much lower rates (Anamuah-Mensah, 2002). Furthermore, mentor programmes can, and should, be subject-specific.

Bednarz, Bockenbauer and Walk (2005) supporting the earlier assertion, proposed a Mentor Model, in which the relationship between expert teachers and novice teachers would work “collaboratively, to co-teach, co-adapt instruction, and to co-reflect on classroom experiences” (p. 109). This mentor model recommended fourteen specific traits for mentors to possess,

including rich content knowledge and professional knowledge, be enthusiastic about the subject, and be willing to support and provide feedback to mentees not only through formal means but also through informal education (Bednarz, Bockenbauer, & Walk, 2005).

Informal Education in Social Studies

Drummond (2001) called travel the sine qua non for social studies teachers. When social studies teachers travel, they experience a lot of things at first-hand; they experience sceneries and cultures in person rather than reading about them from text they use in their classroom (Bein & Rea 1992). While there is a lack of research on the role that travel plays in the education of teachers, it is an important educational experience to consider. Even the act of teaching outside, or “in the field”, has been beneficial for teachers of social studies, geography, environmental studies, and outdoor education for the experiential learning that occurs can be beneficial for both the teacher and students (Healey & Jenkins, 2000; Ives-Dewey, 2008). Tamakloe (2008), looking at the affective aspects of fieldwork in social studies, observes that in most instances, teachers engage in these activities so that they and their students may “gain knowledge of some things which are important in the social, physical, and natural milieu of the school or of things which are not within the environs of the school” (p. 38). He went further to posit that if the teacher is a follower of the philosophy of Abelard, Socrates and Froebel, then his emphasis will be on the outcomes of the acquisition of knowledge. His main focus will, therefore, be on the development of affective skills as a result of the acquisition of the intended knowledge which is a means to an end.

Fieldwork has long been a requisite for social studies around the world, but has been less emphasized in social studies teacher education and senior high social studies education (Bednarz, 1999). Fieldwork is recognized as an important component to learning social studies, for both teachers and students (Foskett, 2004; Kent, Gilbertson & Hunt, 1997; Tamakloe, 2008). In addition to travelling and participating in fieldwork, there are other informal experiences with social studies that are undoubtedly influential in teachers' lives, such as have a personal interest in social studies, reading texts and other nonfiction books, perusing the internet, or watching television shows on social, political, economic, and other related topics. While the primary focus of this research is on informal experiences, it is important to note that informal education in social studies encompasses a wide range of activities that provides teachers with wide range of experiences.

Teacher Experience

Some research has also indicated that a relationship exists between teacher efficacy and teacher experience. Ross (1998) proposed that as teachers gain more experience they develop a relatively stable set of core beliefs about their abilities. Even when teachers are exposed to new methods and ideas through professional development courses or workshops, efficacy beliefs are resistant to long-term changes. When teachers gain new skills, they tend to hold their efficacy beliefs in 'provisional status' attempting to test their newly acquired knowledge and skills before venturing to make predictive competence judgements (Bandura, 1997).

New challenges, however, such as having a new class, teaching a completely new element in the curriculum, or working in a new school

environment, can lead to a re-evaluation of efficacy beliefs. Experienced teachers develop a relatively stable sense of their teaching competence that is combined with their analysis of a new task to produce judgements about expected efficacy on the task. When the task is seen as routine and as one that has been handled successfully many times before, there is little analysis of the task. Inexperienced teachers rely more heavily on their analysis of the task and on vicarious experience (what they believe other teachers could do) to predict their likely success, that is their efficacy in the given task.

Gist and Mitchell (1992) found that teachers are most likely to engage in close self-analysis of their efficacy beliefs when the task is salient to the individual teacher, or when new or different tasks are being attempted. For this reason, some researchers (e.g., Bandura, 1997) believe that efficacy beliefs are most malleable in the early stages of learning when tasks are new, and fixed routines have not become commonplace.

The development of teacher efficacy beliefs among inexperienced teachers has generated a great deal of research interest because once efficacy beliefs are established they appear to be somewhat resistant to change. Moreover, Bandura (1997) warned that beliefs about the task of teaching and personal teaching competence were likely to remain unchanged unless compelling evidence forced a reassessment. For this reason, Bandura (1997) believed it was vital that teachers developed strong efficacy beliefs early in their careers.

Campbell (1996 as cited in Hansen, 2005) compared the efficacy of pre-service and in-service teachers in Scotland and found a relationship between educational level and teacher efficacy, where higher levels of

education were associated with higher levels of efficacy. A study by Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) further found that teachers with more teaching experience and higher levels of education had higher levels of both personal and general teaching efficacy.

Teacher Efficacy and Out-of-Field Teaching

Most research has treated teacher efficacy as an omnibus trait. However, Bandura (1997) expressed that efficacy can vary in different situations or contexts- it is a situation-specific construct. While early research on teacher efficacy typically avoided specificity of teaching assignments, efficacy researchers now are beginning to explore different types of efficacy that teachers may have in different roles, situations, or teaching assignments.

Ross, et al. (1999) investigated the effects of out-of-field teaching assignments on teacher efficacy. These researchers found that secondary school teachers had high efficacy when teaching courses in which they felt academically prepared. “Academically-prepared” is usually measured by the number of content courses the teacher has taken or his or her academic major or certification. They observed that problem arises in measuring subject area expertise when teachers’ courses assignment and speciality areas change over the course of their careers (Ross, et al. 1999). However, the research did conclude that teaching outside one’s area of expertise did have a negative effect on efficacy (Ross, et al. 1999). From the literature, it seems that knowledge in one’s area of expertise (that is, content knowledge in the subject area) is linked to efficacy in teaching the subject.

Empirical Review

Numerous studies have attempted to survey teachers' knowledge base and preparation for the classroom. Also, there is a push to develop better education and training programmes for social studies teachers, few surveys have actually investigated the factors that are most influential in enhancing the efficacy beliefs of social studies teachers. This section of the study examines some variables that have been discussed in the literature on teacher efficacy. The variables to be considered include: gender, professional qualification, teaching experience and orientation towards the teaching of social studies.

Gender and Teacher Efficacy

Gender and its influence on teacher efficacy is an issue which has not been given much attention by various studies, hence no definite conclusion has been arrived at. Many major reviews on teacher efficacy conclude that gender does not have a significant effect on the rating of teacher efficacy, whereas others also conclude that the subject of gender should not be isolated but looked at in relation to other personal characteristics because it could as well influence, to some extent, the ratings teachers give to their level of efficacy.

For example, Khan (2011) investigated the sense of efficacy between male and female teachers of secondary schools of WahCantt. He found out that male and female teachers are efficacious and able to help the students in their learning and that there are no statistical differences in the self-efficacy beliefs of male and female teachers. In concurring, McBer (2000) conducted a study into teacher effectiveness, found that biometric data (i.e. information about a teacher' sex, age and teaching experience, additional responsibilities, qualifications, career history and so on) did not countenance prediction of their

effectiveness as teachers. Effective and outstanding teachers came from diverse backgrounds. The data did not show that, the school context could be used to predict student progress. Effective and outstanding teachers teach in all kinds of schools and school contexts. This means that using biometric data to predict a teacher's effectiveness could well lead to the exclusion of some potentially outstanding teachers. This finding is also consistent with the notion that student progress outcomes are affected more by a teacher's skills and professional characteristics than by factors such as their sex, qualifications or experience. This means that gender, per say, does not have much influence on teacher efficacy levels.

On the contrary Cheung, (2008) investigating teacher efficacy concluded that female in-service teachers have a higher teacher efficacy than male in-service teachers. He observed that in many different regions, the number of female teachers surpassed the number of male teachers at the primary level. Misperception may occur that primary teaching is a 'feminine' career and that female teachers are better at teaching young children whereas male teachers could also handle adolescents at the second cycle much better.

Teachers' Qualification and Self-Efficacy

Investigating teacher efficacy and levels of education, some researchers found that teachers with more teaching experience and higher levels of education had higher levels of both personal and general teaching efficacy (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Similarly, Cheung (2008) conducted a comparative study on Hong Kong and Shanghai in-service primary school teachers. He employed an independent t-test to examine the teacher efficacy levels of Hong Kong and Shanghai in-service primary school teachers. In

addition, he compared the highest educational qualification obtained; the years of teaching experience, and age between the Hong Kong and Shanghai in-service teachers. The results obtained indicated that Shanghai in-service teachers had a significantly higher score than their Hong Kong counterparts. Moreover, there were no significant differences in their teaching efficacy with respect to the highest educational qualification. Another study found no differences across career stages among outstanding teachers (Pigge & Marso, 1993 cited in Khan, 2011).

Among teachers in Kentucky implementing a nongraded primary school programme, no significant differences were found in mean efficacy between teachers with different steps of development in education and training in their teaching careers (DeMesquita & Drake, 1994 cited in Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). However, differences across career steps of development in education and training were found for efficacy in implementing specific aspects of the change, such as the ability to balance teacher and child-directed activities, for teaching mixed-age ranges, and for fostering parent involvement. Further investigation of the progress of efficacy beliefs throughout the span of teachers' careers, using more finely tuned measures of efficacy, would be useful.

Teaching Experience and Self-Efficacy

There are a number of factors that influence teacher efficacy. From previous studies it has been determined that years of teaching has no relationship with teacher efficacy while the academic level of the class being taught does have a relationship. Other researchers also think that number of

years in teaching exposes the individual to numerous experiences hence have significant influence on the level of efficacy displayed by a teacher.

One such study by Cheung (2008) compared teacher efficacy of in-service primary school teachers in Hong Kong and Shanghai, and identified the number of years of teaching experience as one factor that influenced teacher efficacy. Similar to other studies (Imants & De Brabander, 1996; Lin et al., 2002, cited in Cheung, 2008), his study demonstrated that teaching experience related to teachers' perceived self-efficacy and school efficacy. The number of years of teaching experience appeared to have a significant relationship to teacher efficacy. Mertler (2004) compared pre-service and in-service teachers on 'assessment literacy' and in-service teachers scored significantly higher than pre-service teachers. Such results might be due to the experiences that in-service teachers have accumulated in handling different challenging situations in schools and classrooms. That will make the experienced teachers develop strong positive feelings towards achieving their assigned tasks successfully. Studies on experiential learning showed that learning occurs through both concrete experiences and critical reflection on these experiences (Hui & Cheung, 2004; Zuber-Skerritt, 2002 cited in Cheung, 2008). As mentioned, with more years of teaching experience, teachers are able to see, experience and handle different situations and thus critically reflect on these situations, which can help them grow and handle similar situations better or in more mature ways the next time they occur hence their higher efficacy levels.

Similar findings in the United States on teacher self-efficacy suggest personal teaching efficacy tends to increase during teacher education and student training (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993), but decrease during the end of

teacher training and to the end of the first year of teaching (Hoy, 2000). It is suggested that this may be caused by the removal of support given to teachers to develop efficacy during the beginning phase of teaching (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). While beginning teachers may enter the profession with high hopes about the kind of teacher they would like to be for students, a “reality shock” sets in when they realise their hopes may be harder to achieve than anticipated (Mohan, 2009). Alternatively, beginning teachers exposed to doubts may be more motivated for continued growth and learning to maintain the belief of future success (Wheatley, 2005). Beginning teachers may simply “recalibrate” the meaning of quality teaching, lowering their standards in an attempt to avoid self-assessment of failure (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Another researcher, Ross, (1994) pointed out that efficacy beliefs of novice teachers were related to stress and commitment to teaching, as well as satisfaction with support and preparation. Novice teachers who had a high sense of teacher efficacy found greater satisfaction in teaching, had a more positive reaction to teaching, and experienced less stress. Confident new teachers gave higher ratings to the adequacy of support they had received than those who ended their year with a shakier sense of their own competence and a less optimistic view of what teachers could accomplish. Efficacious beginning teachers rated the quality of their preparation higher and the difficulty of teaching lower than those who were less efficacious. Efficacious novices indicated greater optimism that they would remain in the field of teaching. Moreover efficacy beliefs among in-service teachers seem to be more difficult to produce and sustain. Among experienced teachers, efficacy beliefs

appear to be quite stable, even when the teachers are exposed to workshops and new teaching methods (Ross, 1994).

In examining the efficacy beliefs among both novice and experienced teachers during their first year of teaching in an urban context, Chester and Beaudin (1996 cited in Henson, 2008) found that experienced teachers generally saw a decrease in their sense of efficacy in their first year of teaching in an urban district. However, certain school practices apparently contributed to increased efficacy among the newly hired teachers. The greater the opportunity for collaboration with other adults and the more observations that were made the greater was the teachers' sense of efficacy. Surprisingly, the availability and quality of resources did not have a significant independent relationship to efficacy. Chester and Beaudin, (1996 cited in Henson, 2008) speculated that there may be a decision-overload effect when new teachers are presented with a large number of resources in the absence of guidance and support to make instructional choices.

On the other hand, from some studies it has been determined that years of teaching has no relationship with teacher efficacy while the academic level of the class being taught does have a relationship (Raundenbush, et al., 1992 and Watson, 2006 cited in Khan 2011).

Orientation and Teachers Efficacy

Teacher education puts one in the realm of undertaking course work; however, there can also be other training situations that seem to provide one with some level of knowledge on subject-matter and pedagogy. Teachers, who go through these, tend to develop some level of interest in the subject in order to be efficacious in handling it. Khan (2011) investigated the sense of efficacy

between male and female teachers of secondary schools of WahCantt. He found out that the teachers can successfully teach even the most difficult topics due to the kind of orientation they have to handle their subjects. Similarly when they try really hard, they are able to teach even the most difficult students. He added that the teachers feel confident while teaching weak students. The teachers can alter their own teaching behaviour to help the weakest students in their class. When a student is having difficulty with an assignment, teachers were usually able to adjust them to their level. The teachers have enough training to deal with their work. The teachers have adequate skills and motivation to teach.

This study supports the finding of Schwarzer and Hallum (2008). They found that efficacy beliefs become more stable over time and are fairly stable once set, this stability is due to the wealth of experiences through various programmes teachers undertook. The study reflects that teachers are convinced that, as time goes by, they will continue to become more and more capable of helping to address their student's need.

Other studies show that in-service programmes that focus on a specific area increase the teacher's confidence as well as implementation (Telljohann et al., 1996 & Watson, 2006, cited in Khan, 2011). This is due to the fact that in-service participation also has an impact on a teacher's level of efficacy. The purpose of in-service programmes is to provide teachers with the information they need to be successful in the classroom.

Conversely, Fitzhugh (1992) surveyed elementary school teachers' attitudes regarding social studies instruction, with a particular focus on geography. Fitzhugh (1992) found that newly hired teachers had better

preparation for geography instruction, but all of the elementary teachers did not seem to have higher levels of efficacy for social studies instruction. One explanation was that teachers were more likely to enjoy instruction in content areas that they are more prepared to teach (Fitzhugh 1992).

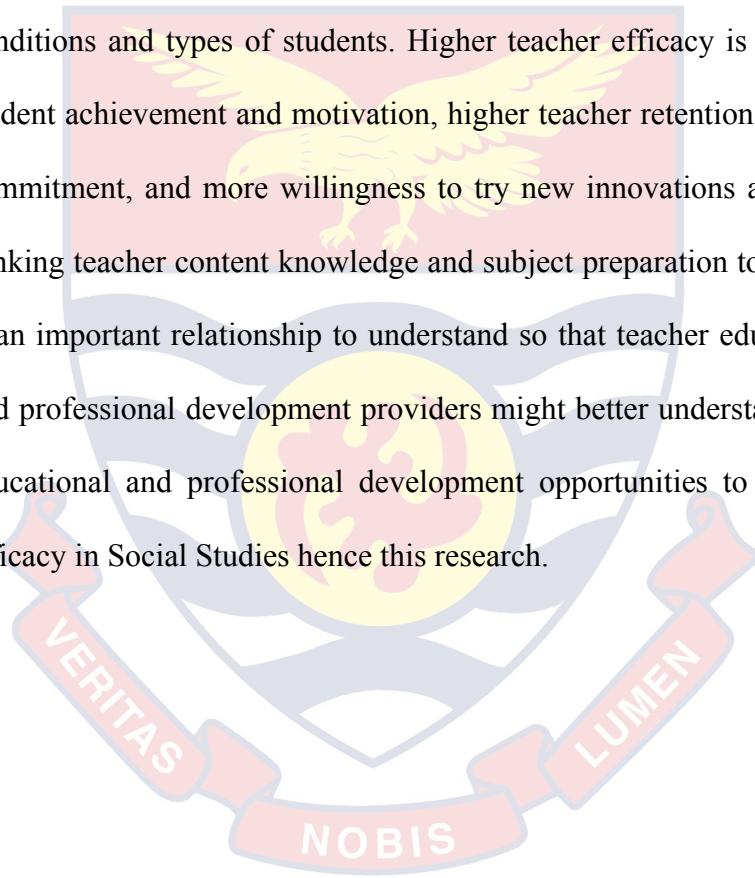
Professional development and teacher preparation programmes can enhance teacher self-efficacy and teacher interest in subject areas (Long & Hoy 2006; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy 1998), which is of particular interest to this study. Specifically, professional development that goes beyond learning new knowledge and skills by addressing teacher confidence has also been significantly related to increasing teaching efficacy (Fritz, Miller-Heyl, Kreutzer, & MacPhee, 2001). Further, there is a significant change in efficacy beliefs as teachers' transition from pre-service programs into classroom teachers, primarily as a result of student teachers facing the realities of classroom teaching for the first time (Hoy & Spereo 2005). The needs of in-service teachers with regard to self-efficacy should be addressed early in teaching careers so that rewards for higher self-efficacy may produce positive teacher and student outcomes for years to come (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy 1998).

Summary of Literature Review

Even though Ghanaian classrooms are in need of highly-qualified and effective Social Studies teachers, research on Social Studies teacher education has concluded that most teachers are unprepared to teach the content and pedagogy needed for the Social Studies classroom. Requiring more content courses in pre-service education programmes or more professional

development workshop in in-service education will not necessarily ensure effective Social Studies teachers. However, most studies have shown that content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge are key traits teachers must have to be successful. Even for this knowledge to be effective teachers must also have confidence in their own abilities to affect student learning; in other words, teachers need a sense of efficacy in doing professional tasks.

Teacher efficacy is situational and varies across subjects, grades, conditions and types of students. Higher teacher efficacy is related to higher student achievement and motivation, higher teacher retention and professional commitment, and more willingness to try new innovations and technologies. Linking teacher content knowledge and subject preparation to teacher efficacy is an important relationship to understand so that teacher education programs and professional development providers might better understand how to tailor educational and professional development opportunities to increase teacher efficacy in Social Studies hence this research.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the procedures by which data required for the study was collected and analysed. It specifically takes a critical look at the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, research instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, data collection procedure, and data analysis.

Research Design

The research design that was deemed more appropriate for the study was descriptive survey. Descriptive research is research which specifies the nature of a given phenomenon (Amedahe, 2002; Leedy&Ormrod, 2005). It is used to describe the characteristics of a population by directly examining the samples of that population. It determines and reports the way things are. According to Best and Khan (1995)

descriptive research is concerned with the conditions or relationships that exists, such as determining the nature of prevailing conditions, practices and attitudes, opinions that are held; processes that are going on; or trends that are developed.

...only descriptive research ... has generalization as its goal (p.26).

Descriptive studies make primary use of surveys, interviews, questionnaires, and observation to acquire information about one or more

groups of people – perhaps about their characteristics, opinions, attitudes, or experiences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Even though there are different types of survey method, the general survey method is used in this study. In order to form a general opinion about the population in this survey method, either the whole population or the sample is researched (Karasar, 2005). The study endeavoured to determine the self-efficacy perceptions of social studies teachers and also sought to ascertain whether there were significant differences in certain peculiar characteristics of these teachers and how they rated their own effectiveness in relation to social studies teaching based on the sample selected from among the population.

This design was adopted because it involved data collection in order to answer the research question concerning the current status of the subject of the study. The researcher described the characteristics of the population by directly examining the samples of that population through the use of questionnaires.

Population

The target population for the study covered all social studies teachers in senior high schools in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana during the 2010/2011 academic year. In all, there were 38 senior high schools (SHS) with a total population of 228 social studies teachers (G.E.S., 2011). The accessible population of the study was limited to 153 teachers in the region selected from 18 out of the 38 schools.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

According to Best and Khan (1995) “the primary purpose of research is to discover principles that have universal applications; but to study a whole population to arrive at generalizations would be impracticable, if not impossible” (p.13). This necessitates the use of a sample from which the required information was collected.

Multi-stage sampling procedure was employed to select participants for the study. The first stage involved clustering all the 38 senior high schools into the various districts. It was realized that most of the districts had two or three senior high schools. Simple random sampling method was employed to select a school from each district. Two clusters had more than three schools, these were, Tema and Accra metropolitan areas. They had 6 and 17 schools respectively. A sampling frame was developed to contain all the 6 schools in Temametropolitan area. To ensure proper representation, three schools wereselected through simple random sampling (lottery) method. The next stage of the sampling procedure involved Accra metropolitan area where there were 17 schools. The researcher developed a list of all the 17 Senior High Schools. The list wasaggregated into sex, (male, female and co-educational institutions). From the seventeen schools, two girls, two boys and thirteen co-educational institutions were obtained. To get a representative sample, the simple random sampling procedure (lottery method)was employed to select one school each from the girls and boys schools respectively. Ensuring proportional selection, six schools were selected using the lottery method from the thirteen co-educational institutions which were categorized into day and boarding schools. Three schools were selected from each category. Thus,

eight schools were therefore selected from Accra Metro. In all, 18 schools were selected for the study from the Greater Accra Region. All the Social Studies teachers in the 18 selected schools were the respondents, totalling 153. The numbers of teachers in the various senior high schools in the study area have been summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Selected Senior High School Social Studies Teachers in Greater Accra Region as at January, 2011

ITEM	SCHOOL NAME	TOTAL
1	Holy Trinity Cath. SHS	4
2	Accra High	5
3	Labone SHS	12
4	Achimota SHS	9
5	St. Thomas Aquinas SHS	7
6	St. Mary's SHS	7
7	Nungua SHS	5
8	Wesley Grammar SHS	8
9	Ada SHS	5
10	Ghanata SHS	9
11	Ngleshie Amanfro SHS	9
12	Christian Methodist SHS	5
13	Presby Boys SHS	15
14	West Africa SHS	14
15	Ashaiman Snr. High/Tech	12
16	Chemu SHS	12
17	OLAM SHS	5
18	Tema SHS	10
TOTAL		153

Source: Ghana Education Service, Greater Accra Regional Directorate.

Research Instrument

The instrument used for the purpose of gathering data for this research was questionnaire. It was a Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale which was developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998). In an earlier work they had suggested that a valid measure of teacher efficacy must consider both personal competence and an analysis of the task with certain resources and constraints in particular teaching contexts. Therefore, a 24-item Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale was developed extracting three variables, each with items, namely efficacy for instructional strategies, efficacy for classroom management and efficacy for student engagement. To produce a more practical and cautious scale, the researcher used some items from the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale as a guide to develop the questionnaire. A questionnaire was selected for this kind of study because it is a self-report measure which guarantees confidentiality and therefore more likely to elicit more openness in response, with regard to the kind of information required from the respondents.

The questionnaire administered was in sections focusing on the research question. It consisted of three sections: the first section elicited information about the respondents' demographic characteristics. Section B was the Likert-type with items that solicited information to determine the self-efficacy perceptions of social studies teachers in terms of social studies knowledge, selection and application of strategy, method and technique, material design and use, in-class communication and classroom management, effective measurement and evaluation applications, and interest in relation to social studies teaching. Data obtained through the questionnaire was measured on the Likert-scale. To each statement on the instrument, teachers' responses

ranged from “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “not certain”, “agree” to “strongly agree”. The third section composed of an open-ended question. The open-ended question included in the questionnaire allowed the respondents to be flexible and more objective to comment on any aspect of their teaching process. Data obtained through the questionnaire, which was prepared in line with the self-efficacies of teachers was described through direct excerpts from answers given by respondents to the open-ended question, thus it aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the findings of the study. Use of different data collection techniques not only increases the reliability of the study, but also creates the opportunity to correct and verify any mistakes that could arise in one data collection tool by data obtained through the other one (Patton, 1990).

Instrument Validity and Reliability

The instrument for the study was thoroughly vetted before its final approval by experts in the field of research and teacher education to establish its validity. It was then pilot-tested to ensure its reliability. For the pilot test, twenty teachers, selected from four senior high schools in the Central Region were used. The schools used were St. Augustine’s SHS, Efutu SHS, Oguaa Snr. High/Tech. and Adankwaman SHS. The Central Region was used for the pilot test because it shares similar characteristics with the Greater Accra Region with respect to the distribution of schools. Thus majority of schools are in the metropolitan areas and two or three schools in other districts in the two regions. In addition, the respondents’ demographic data in terms of their professional qualification, areas of specialization, just to mention a few, were similar. The establishment of reliability was accomplished by measuring the

internal consistency of the instrument using a reliability coefficient, obtained by means of Cronbach's alpha. A reliability coefficient of .8 was obtained, which according to De Vellis (1991), is considered very reputable for determining the appropriateness of the instrument.

Data Collection Procedure

In order to ensure a high return rate the instrument was administered personally by the researcher. Before administering the questionnaire, a letter of introduction collected from the Head of Department, Department of Arts and Social Science Education (DASSE), University of Cape Coast, was presented to all heads of the selected senior high schools. The purpose of this introductory letter was to seek permission, solicit for cooperation and also to create rapport between the researcher and teachers who served as respondents for the study.

A discussion was held with the heads and in some cases the assistant heads who then introduced me to the heads of the social studies department of the various schools selected for the study to agree on a convenient time to administer the instrument. Thereafter, the heads of the social studies department arranged for departmental meeting to enable the researcher explain the purpose of the data collection to the teachers after which the respondents were then guided to complete the instrument. Some of the teachers decided to complete their questionnaires outside the meeting area and after the explanation. This resulted in the loss of some questionnaires. Therefore, questionnaires retrieved added up to 130 representing 85% return rate.

Data Analysis

The data collected through questionnaire were put together and edited to ensure accuracy. The responses were then organized using Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS). Combinations of descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the responses to provide results. To describe the characteristics of respondents' data obtained on teachers background information has been presented in the form of marginal tabulation, that is, through frequency counts and then expressed as percentages to allow for comparisons to be made. Items 6 to 30 on the questionnaire sought to find out the self-efficacy perception of social studies teachers (see appendix B). Responses ranged from "strongly disagree", "not certain" to "strongly agree" and were measured on a five-point likert-scale. The weight for each item was computed and the score obtained denoted the level of efficacy teachers have. The scale used is presented as follows: items in the affirmative were given the following codes:

Strongly Disagree - 1, Disagree - 2, Not Certain - 3, Agree - 4, and Strongly Agree - 5.

Conversely, coding for negatively worded statements were as follow:

Strongly Agree - 1, Agree - 2, Not Certain - 3, Disagree - 4, and Strongly Disagree - 5.

Item 31 on the questionnaire sought to find out about comment from the social studies teachers on the curriculum they are implementing, the various aspects of the teaching process and the challenges the teachers face in the teaching of social studies. Teachers' responses were used as excerpts to complement some of the findings.

In lieu of the difference between male and female self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies, the mean ratings of both male and female social studies teachers were compared. A two-tailed independent samples t-test was then used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the self-efficacy perception of male and female social studies teachers. Differences were considered significant at the .05 alpha levels.

For the differences between the graduate professional and non-professional social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies, the mean ratings were compared. A t-test for two independent samples was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in the ratings of graduate professional and non-professional social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies. Differences were considered significant at the .05 level.

For the differences between the self-efficacy perception of specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers in teaching social studies, the mean ratings were compared. Again, a t-test for two independent samples was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in the self-efficacy perception of specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers in teaching social studies. Differences were significant at the .05 alpha levels.

Finally, the differences between experienced and less experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies was determined by comparing means. A t-test for independent samples was then conducted to determine the difference between experienced and less experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies. Differences were considered significant at the .05 alpha levels.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the efficacy of social studies teachers in teaching social studies. A Social Studies Teacher Efficacy Instrument which contained 31 items was employed for the study. Items which aimed at measuring teacher efficacy were measured on a five point likert-scale. A sample size of 153 teachers was used for the study; however 130 questionnaires were retrieved. Information obtained from the sampled teachers were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. This chapter presents information obtained and simultaneously discusses the findings of the study.

Analysis of the Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the distribution of teachers by gender, professional status, area of specialization and number of years of teaching social studies. It is to give the general overview of the demographic data of the respondents in the study area.

Gender of Teachers

The study sought to find out whether there was any significant difference in Social Studies teachers' gender and their teaching efficacy. The distribution of Social Studies teachers by gender is presented in Table 5.

From Table 5, out of the total number of 130 senior high school social studies teachers selected for the study, 91 (70%) were males, whereas 39 (30%) were females.

Table 5: Teachers Distribution by Gender

Gender	No.	%
Male	91	70
Female	39	30
Total	130	100

This is a clear indication that there were more male teachers than female teachers involved in the study. This discrepancy in the distribution of teachers by gender could be ascribed to the fact that, generally, there are more male teachers in Ghanaian senior high schools than female teachers.

Professional and Academic Qualification of Teachers

The data collected from respondents to the questionnaire items 2 and 3 were analysed to find out from the respondents their highest professional and academic qualification. The information is presented in Table 6.

Table 6 reveals that majority of the respondents, 97(74.6%), were professional teachers out of which 69(53.1%) held Bachelor of Education Degree, 18(13.8%) were Post Graduate Diploma in Education Degree holders and 10(7.7%) held Teachers Certificate 'A'. The study also discovered 33(25.4%) non-professional teachers. Table 6 illustrates that majority of the teachers in SHS in the study area possessed the professional qualifications required for effective teaching of social studies.

Table 6: Highest Professional Qualification of Teachers

Qualification	No.	%
Teachers Cert. 'A'	10	7.7
PGDE	18	13.8
B.Ed.	69	53.1
Non-Professional	33	25.4
Total	130	100.0

Nevertheless, the revelation made by the study that 25.4% of social studies teachers were non-professionals indicated that not all teachers in the Ghanaian Pre-University education have the required professional qualification to teach social studies. Again, with reference to the questionnaire, item 3 asked for highest academic degree level completed. Descriptive statistics of the teachers' responses to their academic qualification clearly indicated that majority of the teachers possessed Bachelor's Degree 123(94.6%), with 7 (5.3%) teachers completing a Master's Degree. In ensuring the need for efficiency in teaching social studies, Aggarwal (2004) stressed that scholarship and professional training are the first two essential requirements for the social studies teacher. He added that "social studies more than any other subject requires well prepared conscientious men and women of sound knowledge and training whose personalities rank high among men" (p. 228).

Tamakloe (1991) shared Aggarwal's (2004) views when he pointed out that the teacher must be well grounded in a variety of teaching methods and also possess adequate knowledge in several disciplines. In a similar vein,

Gudmundsdottir (1991) asserts that content knowledge is specifically important for secondary school teachers who view themselves as subject-matter specialists, and many of these teachers may have majored or minored in the subject during their pre-service education. It is important to point out that the social studies teacher should have a sound academic knowledge in addition to good professional training. Therefore for any quality education to be manifested at the SHS level, teachers must have the requisite academic and professional qualification for exhibits.

Teaching Experience of Teachers

The study also sought to find out whether there was a difference between less experienced and experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies. The responses are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Social Studies Teaching Experience of Teachers

No. of Years	No.	%
1-6yrs (Less Experienced)	66	50.8
7yrs + (Experienced)	64	49.2
Total	130	100.0

As can be observed from Table 7, majority of the respondents, that is, 66 representing 50.8% had taught social studies for intervals of years ranging between 1 – 6 years, whereas 64 representing 49.2% had taught social studies for 7 years and above. It can be deduced from the results that a substantial number of the social studies teachers had experience in the teaching of social

studies and are therefore quite familiar with the presentation of concepts. Mertler (2004) in a study that compared pre-service and in-service teachers on ‘assessment literacy’ found out that the experiences that in-service teachers have accumulated in handling different challenging situations in schools and classrooms will make the experienced teachers develop strong positive feelings towards achieving their assigned tasks successfully all other things being equal.

Distribution of Teachers by Area of specialization

Area of specialization was another factor that was considered to influence the teaching efficacy of social studies teachers. The distribution of teachers by the orientation the teachers had to teach social studies is presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Area of Specialization

Orientation (Specialization)	No.	%
Interest in Social Studies	21	16.2
In-Service Training in S.S.	11	8.4
Course of study in Social Studies	38	29.2
No Orientation	60	46.2
Total	130	100.0

From Table 8 it can be generally inferred that 70(53.8%) teachers in the area of study had some form of orientation to teach the subject. Out of this number there were 21 (16.2%) who indicated that they had interest in the subject, 11 (8.4%) had in-service training, and 38(29.2%) read social studies with Education (i.e. B.Ed. Social Studies) as a teaching subject in an institution of higher learning. Whereas 60(46.2%) teachers indicated that they

had no orientation at all to teach the subject. Some of these teachers contended that they were asked to teach the subject in order to make up the number of periods required for teaching in SHS. One teacher in response to item 31 for comments, on the challenges of the subject remarked, “No orientation is given yet in order to make up number of periods, teachers are given Social Studies to teach in addition to their main subjects. Hence teaching is solely based on available textbooks, no knowledge update, no use of different sources, and no material diversity which is not motivating enough. At least there should be mentors that can help new teachers in the field”.

To put the teachers into specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers' categories, out of the 130 respondents, 70(53.8%) teachers by the tenets of this study were considered as specialists. Whilst, 60(46.2%) were graduate teachers but were non-specialists in social studies. Some of these teachers indicated that they had B.A. (Economics), B.A. (Geography), B.A. (Political Science), B.Ed. (Home Economics), or B.A. (History), as their academic qualifications. They were in the senior high schools teaching social studies but for the purposes of this study were not specialists in the subject.

Analysis of the Rating of Teachers Self-Efficacy

The main thrust of this study was to determine the self-efficacy perception of social studies teachers in terms of social studies knowledge, selection and application of strategy, method and technique, material design and use, in-class communication and classroom management, effective measurement and evaluation applications and interest in relation to social studies teaching. Self-efficacy denotes individual's perception of the

performance that he or she can demonstrate against different situations. To this end, the existing situation is presented in frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations.

Content Knowledge

To find out the self-efficacy perceptions of the social studies teachers in terms of their content knowledge in relation to the teaching of social studies respondents were asked to rate their self-efficacy perception. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Self-Efficacy Perceptions of Teachers' Knowledge

Content Knowledge	SD		D		NC		A		SA		M	Sd
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I have sufficient knowledge of the social studies subject.	6	5	8	6	8	6	49	38	59	45	4.1	0.6
I convey different sources and opinions about the subject to my students.	10	8	9	7	25	19	55	42	31	24	3.7	1.1
I update my knowledge of social studies by keeping abreast with scientific developments.	4	3	12	9	38	29	45	35	31	24	3.4	1.0

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NC = Not Certain, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, M = Mean, Sd = Standard deviation.

According to the findings of the study, majority of the social studies teachers, 108 (83%) that participated in the study stated that they have sufficient knowledge of the social studies subject with ($M= 4.10$; $SD=0.6$) within the curriculum of the school. Percentage of those who do not believe they have sufficient knowledge of the social studies subject was found to be approximately 11%. These percentages imply that, in general, even though in-service teachers find their knowledge of the social studies subject sufficient, a considerable portion of the teachers feel themselves inefficient in this respect.

This view was confirmed by Gudmundsdottir (1991) as he says that content knowledge is specifically important for secondary school teachers who view themselves as subject-matter specialists, and many of these teachers may have majored or minored in the subject during their pre-service education. Even more intriguing is the fact that in the face of technological advancement the study reveals 38 (29%) of the respondents who were not certain ($M=3.4$; $SD=1.0$) whether they update their knowledge of the subject through scientific developments. In the view of Shulman (1986), content knowledge refers to the deep understanding a teacher has regarding the subject matter, including facts, concepts, and structures within the subject. Content knowledge includes knowing the accepted truths of a discipline, why the discipline is worth knowing, and how it relates to other theories or disciplines; it is the knowing what "it" is and why "it" is so (Shulman, 1986). This knowledge is usually attained during teacher preparation studies, but may also be reinforced through content specific professional development opportunities (Jurmu, Jurmu &

Meyer 1999). This means that those who were not certain as to whether they updated their knowledge or not might not have considered the various options open to them in upgrading their knowledge.

Selection and Application of Strategy, Method and Technique

Self-efficacy perceptions of the in-service social studies teachers in terms of selection and application of strategy, method and technique in relation to teaching social studies was also investigated. The summary of the results are presented in Table 10.

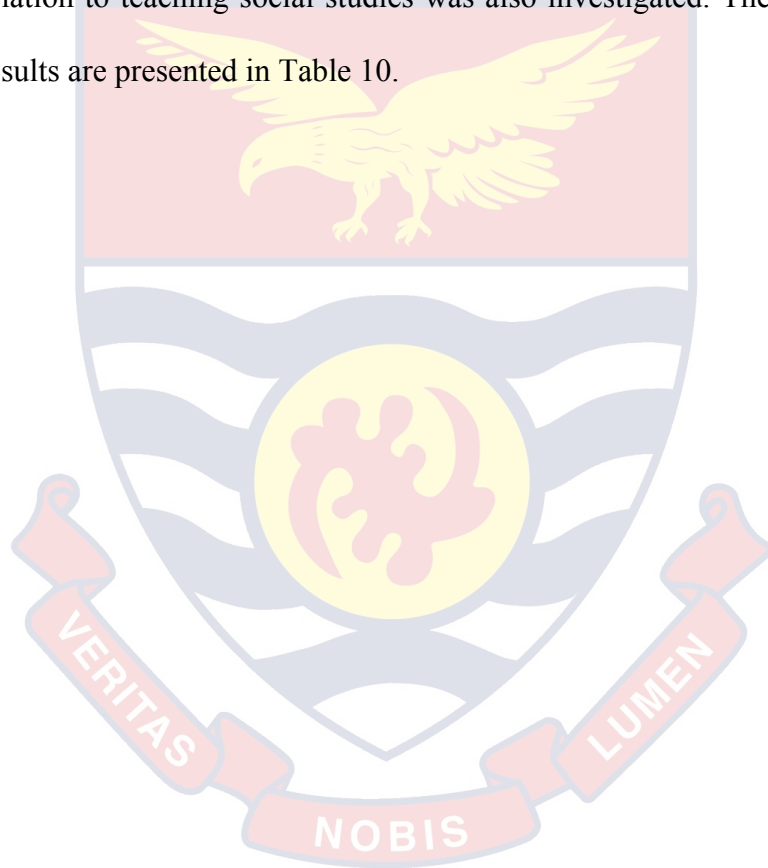


Table 10: Self-Efficacy Perceptions of Teachers' Selection and Application of Strategy, Method and Technique

Selection and application of strategy, method and technique	SD		D		NC		A		SA		M	Sd
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I use practical examples and illustrations to promote understanding of concepts.	4	3	8	6	20	15	63	49	35	27	3.9	0.7
I effectively make use of concepts and relate them to the needs and realities of the society to help students understand what is being taught.	2	2	12	9	8	6	57	44	51	39	4.1	0.7
I give tasks that help students look for information other than what has been taught in the classroom.	2	2	11	9	18	14	69	53	30	23	3.8	0.9
I help students to apply the knowledge they have acquired from other subjects to understand social studies concepts.	5	4	20	15	27	21	55	42	23	18	3.5	1.1
I experience difficulties in using excursion and observation activities for efficient social studies teaching.	0	0	3	2	21	16	73	56	33	25	4.0	0.7
I experience difficulties in planning activities aimed at developing skill	22	17	33	25	35	27	29	22	11	9	3.2	1.2

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NC = Not Certain, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, M = Mean. Sd = Standard deviation

In general, it can be observed that the self-efficacy perceptions of the in-service teachers with regard to selection of method and technique are high. Some of the social studies teachers 98 (76%) that participated in the study stated that they believed they understand social studies concepts well enough ($M=3.9$; $SD=0.7$) to be effective in teaching. This piece of information indicates that the teachers at least theoretically rely on themselves in this sense. It can also be said that the teachers, 99(76%) see themselves competent ($M=4.1$; $SD=0.7$) in using concepts and relating them to the needs and realities of the society to help students understand what is being taught. In addition, one point that draws attention among the findings of the study, and perhaps the one that should be deliberated upon deeply, is the high rate of the teachers who either experience difficulties or were not certain in using excursion and observation activities for efficient social studies teaching. Approximately 106(81%) of the teachers that participated in the study indicated that they experience difficulties ($M=4.1$; $SD=0.7$) and 21 (16%) were not certain in using excursion and observation activities for efficient social studies teaching. There were many reasons for teachers' making such choices at such high rate. Some teachers in their comment on any issue in item 31 indicated that the policies of their schools did not allow students to go on long journey for excursion. Another reason was that, students had to contribute financially towards the fuelling of their school buses to enable them embark on such trips. Also the core nature of the subject, resulting in the large number of students to include in the study trip, and the heavy workload on teachers could be some of the reasons why teachers indicated that there difficulties associated with the use of excursion and observation activities for resourceful social

studies teaching. This situation debunks the experiential learning theory that explains how students learn from the experiences they have within and outside of the classroom (Dewey, 1938 cited in Mohan 2009). This means that even though learning can take place through experiences outside the classroom, the teachers with high level of efficacy are restricted by various situations to make the necessary impart.

It can be deduced from these statements of the in-service social studies teachers that the education they are giving in the social studies classroom is insufficient. Particularly some teachers complained about the insufficiency of the number of periods for the subject, the large class sizes, workload among others and for which reason even though they have high self-efficacy perception is not reflected in the right behaviour of learners in the outside world. Teachers with high self-efficacy perception can endeavour to create an effective educational life using a variety of strategies, methods and techniques in the classroom (Alderman, 1999). Also, Gibson and Dembo (as cited in Hansen, 2005) conducted a study on teacher efficacy. They found that the relationship between teacher-efficacy ratings and observable teacher actions indicate highly efficacious teachers do not shy away from students who are struggling with challenging coursework but develop novel ways of dealing with the complicated situation.

Material Design and Use

The study also explored the self-efficacy perceptions of the social studies teachers in terms of material design and use in relation to teaching. The results are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Self-Efficacy Perceptions of the Social Studies Teachers' Material Design and Use

Material design and use	SD		D		NC		A		SA		M	Sd
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I have the theoretical knowledge regarding use of teaching and learning resources in teaching social studies.	5	4	12	9	41	32	63	49	9	7	3.6	0.5
I experience difficulties in providing the material diversity in social studies teaching.	20	15	35	27	48	37	22	17	5	4	3.3	1.1
I design the teaching and learning materials myself and use them in activities to help students understand lessons better.	8	6	9	7	53	41	45	35	15	12	3.4	0.9
I experience difficulties in deciding when and how to use teaching and learning resources.	22	17	49	38	48	37	11	9	0	0	3.6	0.8

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NC = Not Certain, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, M = Mean. Sd = Standard deviation.

Approximately 72(56%) of the social studies teachers that participated in the study stated that they have the theoretical knowledge regarding use of materials in teaching the subjects ($M=3.6$; $SD=0.5$). The rate of those who believe they can design materials themselves and use them was determined to be approximately 60(47%). These findings show that approximately half of the social studies teachers have a high self-efficacy perception with respect to design and use of materials. However, there are about 53(41%) teachers who were uncertain ($M=3.4$; $SD=0.9$) in designing teaching and learning materials themselves and using them to enhance their lesson delivery. This may be due to the high number of teachers who by the tenets of the study had no orientation to teach social studies, that is the non-specialist teachers. It must be emphasized that the role of the teacher, collectively and individually, is crucial in teaching since teachers' unfamiliarity with what social studies education is can influence their ability and for that matter their self-efficacy to carry out effective teaching in the classroom. This is particularly true when there is a general notion that everybody can teach social studies. It is common knowledge that untrained teachers or trained teachers who do not have any background in social studies could use their experience and knowledge in other subjects to teach social studies. It is important to note that an effective teacher of social studies needs to be well-grounded in the academic expertise that cuts across several related disciplines to be able to integrate knowledge satisfactorily for effective teaching and learning process.

In-Class Communication and Classroom Management

Self-efficacy perceptions of the social studies teachers in terms of in-class communication and classroom management in relation to the teaching of social studies are summarized in table 12.

Table 12: Self-Efficacy Perceptions of Teachers’ In-class Communication and Classroom Management

Classroom management	SD		D		NC		A		SA		M	Sd
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I see myself competent in creating the classroom environment required for effective social studies teaching.	4	3	9	7	21	15	76	59	20	15	3.8	0.7
I experience difficulties in giving special attention to students who face problems in learning social studies.	47	36	60	46	15	12	7	5	1	0.8	4.1	0.8
I effectively involve my students actively in lessons in social studies teaching.	0	0	3	2	9	7	63	49	55	42	4.3	0.7
When teaching social studies, I usually welcome students’ expressions.	6	5	9	7	10	8	59	45	46	35	4.1	0.8

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NC = Not Certain, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, M = Mean. Sd = Standard deviation.

In general, it is seen that the in-service teachers have high self-efficacy perceptions in matters such as achieving motivation during lessons and involving students in lessons. Approximately 118(91%) of the in-service social studies teachers that participated in the study stated they ensure active participation of students in lessons ($M=4.3$; $SD=0.7$). Ashton (1985) conducted a study on motivation and the teacher's sense of efficacy. He found that high efficacy teachers agreed that if a teacher tried really hard, he or she could get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students. He stated that high efficacy teachers are more at ease in the classroom, they smile more, provide students with more positive interactions and manage their classrooms more successfully, are less defensive, more accepting of student disagreement and challenges and more effective in producing student achievement gains. They spend more time teaching curriculum and interacting with students on academic content. This is supported by McBer (2000) when he pointed out that outstanding teachers create an excellent classroom climate and achieve superior pupil progress largely by displaying more professional characteristics at higher levels of sophistication within a very structured learning environment. However, the fact that some 34(25%) of the in-service social studies teachers see themselves incompetent in creating the classroom environment required for effective social studies teaching draws attention. Ashton (1985) in his study identified these teachers as low efficacy teachers who expressed lower expectations and focused on rule enforcement and behaviour management.

Measurement and Evaluation Strategies

Effective measurement and evaluation in relation to teaching cannot be exaggerated. Formative and summative evaluation are essential parts of any teaching and learning process since both the teacher and learner are informed of the processes they are engaged in. Self-efficacy perceptions of social studies teachers in terms of measurement and evaluation in relation to social studies teaching were also examined. The results are presented in table 13.

Table 13: Self-Efficacy Perceptions of Teachers' Measurement and Evaluation Techniques

Measurement and Evaluation	SD		D		NC		A		SA		M	Sd
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I experience difficulties in spreading measurement and evaluation over the process in social studies teaching.	21	16	55	42	18	14	31	24	5	4	3.5	1.1
I experience difficulties in using the student personal and societal issues in the measurement and evaluation process.	14	11	37	28	24	18	45	35	10	8	3.1	1.1
Increased effort in social studies teaching produces little change in some students' social studies achievement.	17	13	44	34	17	13	34	26	18	14	3.1	1.1

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NC = Not Certain, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, M = Mean. Sd = Standard deviation.

The results from Table 13 show that 76(58%) in-service social studies teachers from among those that participated in the study stated they would perform effective measurement and evaluation in social studies teaching ($M=3.5$; $SD=1.1$), while 40% stated they could use the student personal and societal issues in the measurement and evaluation process. It can be observed that the teachers consider themselves competent in spreading measurement and evaluation over the entire teaching process. This observation is in congruence with Mertler (2004) study when he compared pre-service and in-service teachers on ‘assessment literacy’ and in-service teachers scored significantly higher than pre-service teachers. Such results might be due to the experiences that in-service teachers have accumulated in handling different challenging situations in schools and classrooms. As mentioned, with more years of teaching experience, teachers are able to see, experience and handle different situations and thus critically reflect on these situations, which can help them grow and handle similar situations better or in more mature ways the next time they occur.

Interest and Experiences in Social Studies Teaching

There are many informal experiences with social studies that are undoubtedly influential in teachers’ lives, such as having a personal interest in social studies, reading texts and other nonfiction books, perusing the internet, and other related issues that may influence the perception of teachers and their ability to be effective in handling that subject. Teachers’ self-efficacy perceptions in terms of interest and experiences in social studies teaching were investigated. The results are presented in Table 14.

Table 14: Self-efficacy Perceptions of Teachers' Interest and Experiences

Interest and Experiences.	SD		D		NC		A		SA		M	Sd
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I enjoy learning social studies.	1	0.8	12	9	18	14	58	45	41	32	4.0	0.9
My personal interests and experiences with social studies have positively influenced my ability to teach social studies.	0	0	12	9	42	32	40	31	36	28	3.7	0.9
My experiences have positively influenced my content knowledge of social studies.	3	2	14	11	49	36	38	29	28	22	3.5	1.0
My personal interests and experiences with social studies have positively influenced my student's enthusiasm to learn social studies.	1	0.8	6	5	37	28	49	38	37	29	3.9	0.9

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NC = Not Certain, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, M = Mean
Sd = Standard deviation.

Table 14 indicated that approximately 99(77%) of the social studies teachers that participated in the study stated that they enjoy learning social studies ($M=4.0$; $SD=0.9$). The rate of those who believe their personal interests in the subject and experiences with social studies have positively influenced their ability to teach social studies hence their self-efficacy was determined to be approximately 76(59%). These findings show that more than half of the social studies teachers have a high self-efficacy perception with respect to personal interests and experiences with social studies. Studies on experiential learning showed that learning occurs through both concrete experiences and critical reflection on these experiences (Hui & Cheung, 2004; Zuber-Skerritt, 2002 cited in Khan, 2011).

Nonetheless, there were about 42(32%) teachers who were uncertain in deciding whether their personal interests and experiences with social studies have positively influenced their ability to teach social studies. This may be due to the high number of teachers who by the tenets of the study were out-of-field teachers teaching social studies. This and other researches have shown that teachers need in-depth content knowledge and interest in the subject area to ensure their efficacy. Efficacy as a task is the self-perceived ability to be effective. While interest is not a requisite for efficacy, this study shows that having a strong personal interest in social studies is related to personal teaching efficacy in social studies. Teachers, who enjoy learning social studies and have an affinity for the subject, have higher teaching efficacy in social studies.

The Nature of Social Studies Teachers Efficacy

From the above discussion, it is evident that social studies teachers generally have high self-efficacy perception in the teaching of social studies. There is therefore the need to look at the nature of their responses juxtaposing to the postulated hypothesis. This section of the chapter takes a critical look at how certain teacher characteristics (such as gender, professional qualification, etc.) influenced the responses the social studies teachers gave to their level of efficacy in teaching.

Teachers' Rating of the level of Efficacy in Social Studies

Items 6 to 30 sought to measure the self-efficacy perceptions of social studies teachers in terms of social studies knowledge, selection and application of strategy, method and technique, material design and use, in-class communication and classroom management, effective measurement and evaluation applications and interest in relation to social studies teaching. The means of these items were weighted together to help analyse the self-efficacy perceptions of social studies teachers in relation to social studies teaching.

Gender and Teachers' Rating of their level of Efficacy in Teaching Social Studies

Self-efficacy of the social studies teacher is the self-perceived ability to perform a task successfully. These internal thoughts teachers have in their own abilities are manifestations of their actual effectiveness in teaching. How teachers perceive themselves in the role of teaching may be influenced by their demographic characteristics culminating in their classroom decision, and therefore their effectiveness. In order to understand this relationship better

data was collected from teachers' on gender to compare to teacher efficacy. The study sought to find out whether there would be differences in rating by male and female social studies teachers. Table 15 presents the means of teachers rating of their level of efficacy by gender.

Table 15: Gender and Teachers' Rating of the level of Efficacy in Social Studies

Gender	Level of Efficacy		
	N	M	SD
Male	91	92.80	8.37
Female	39	91.15	10.37
Total	130	92.31	9.01

From Table 15 a relatively higher mean rating of 92.80 for male teachers and a relatively lower mean rating of 91.15 for female teachers, indicate that male teachers rated their level of efficacy higher than female teachers.

A test for differences using the two-tailed independent sample t-test was used to determine the differences between the rating of social studies teachers' level of efficacy by male and female social studies teachers. The descriptive statistics obtained, as shown in Table 16, indicate that the mean rating of male social studies teachers was higher than the mean rating of female social studies teachers. This gives the impression that male social studies teachers rated their level of efficacy higher than female social studies teachers. The Levene's Test for Equality of variances indicated that the

variances for the two groups – male and female social studies teachers were equal ($F = 1.444, \rho > 0.05$), hence a test for equal variances was used.

Table 16: Teachers’ Rating of the level of Efficacy by Gender

Gender	M	SD	t	dfp
Male	92.80	8.374		
Female	91.15	10.369	.956	128 .341

From Table 16, the mean rating of male social studies teachers ($M = 92.80, SD = 8.374$) is not significantly higher ($t = .956, df = 128, 2 - \text{tailed probability} > 0.05$) than the mean rating of female social studies teacher. From the t-test of Equality of Means, since the p-value (sig. value) of 0.341 is greater than ($>$) the alpha value of 0.05 indicating that there was some level of error associated with the claim. There is therefore enough evidence to fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). This implies that there was no significant difference between male and female social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

The preceding finding clearly supports the assertions made by Khan (2011) when he investigated the sense of efficacy between male and female teachers of secondary schools of WahCantt., in Pakistan. The study reflects that male and female teachers are efficacious and able to help the students in their learning and that there are no statistical differences in the self-efficacy beliefs of male and female teachers. This situation could be ascribed to the fact that gender differences do not have anything to do with efficacy beliefs of teachers. Since as a natural phenomenon it cannot determine the inherent

ability of the teachers to achieve their assigned task. Both sexes are equitably able to execute their jobs.

Professional Qualification and Teachers’ Rating of their level of Efficacy in Teaching Social Studies

Another interesting occurrence worth discussing is teachers’ professional status and their responses to items relating to their level of efficacy in the teaching of Social Studies. The study sought to find out whether there would be differences in the rating of level of efficacy by professional and non-professional social studies teachers. Table 17 presents the mean differences of teachers rating of their level of efficacy by professional status.

Table 17: Professional Qualification and Teachers’ Rating of the level of Efficacy in Social Studies

Professional Qualification		Level of Efficacy	
N	M	SD	
Professional	9793.528	27	
Non-Professional	3388.761	21	
Total	130	92.31	9.01

From Table 17 a relatively higher mean rating of 93.52 for professional teachers and a relatively lower mean rating of 88.76 for non-professional teachers, indicate that professional teachers rated their level of efficacy higher than non-professional teachers.

A test for differences using the two-tailed independent sample t-test was used to determine the differences between the rating of social studies teachers' level of efficacy by professional and non-professional social studies teachers. The descriptive statistics obtained, as shown in Table 18, indicate that the mean rating of professional social studies teachers was higher than the mean rating of non-professional social studies teachers. This gives the impression that professional social studies teachers rated their level of efficacy higher than non-professional social studies teachers. The Levene's Test for Equality of variances indicated that the variances for the two groups – professional and non-professional social studies teachers were equal ($F = 2.124, p > 0.05$), hence a test for equal variances was used.

Table 18: Teachers' Rating of the level of Efficacy by Professional Qualification

Professional Qualification	M	SD	t	dfp
Professional 93.52	8.27			
Non-professional 88.76	10.21	2.683	128	.008

From Table 18, the mean rating of professional social studies teachers ($M = 93.52, SD = 8.27$) is significantly higher ($t = 2.683, df = 128, 2 -$ tailed probability < 0.05) than the mean rating of non-professional social studies teacher as indicated by the t-test of Equality of Means. Since the p-value (sig. value) of 0.008 is less than ($<$) the alpha value of 0.05 indicating that the level of error associated with the claim is almost zero (0) and that there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). This implies that there was statistically significant difference between professional and non-

professionalsocial studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies. This means that professional social studies teachers perceive their efficacy levels to be higher thannon-professional social studies teachers in the study area.

Investigating teacher efficacy and levels of education, some researchers found that teachers with higher levels of education had higher levels of both personal and general teaching efficacy(Hoy &Woolfolk, 1993).

Among teachers in Kentucky implementing a nongraded primary schoolprogram, no significant differences were found in mean efficacy between teachers with different steps of development in education and training intheir teaching careers (DeMesquita& Drake, 1994 cited in Tschannen-Moran &Hoy, 2007). However, differences across career steps of development in education and training werefound for efficacy in implementing specific aspects of the change, such as the ability to balance teacherandchild-directed activities, for teaching mixed-age ranges, and for fostering parent involvement. Further investigation of the progress of efficacy beliefs throughout the span of teachers' careers, using more finely tuned measures of efficacy, would be useful.

Cheung (2008) conducted a comparative study on Hong Kong and Shanghai in-service primary school teachers. He employed an independent t-test to examine the teacher efficacy levels of Hong Kong and Shanghai in-service primary school teachers. In addition, he compared the highest educational qualification obtained between the Hong Kong and Shanghai in-service teachers. The results obtained indicated that Shanghai in-service teachers had a significantly higher score than their Hong Kong counterparts.

Moreover, there were no significant differences in their teaching efficacy with respect to the highest educational qualification. Research studies have shown that “qualified” teachers are not necessarily “effective” teachers (ECS, 2007).

The finding of this study contradicts other results with similar study. This situation may be due to the fact that in Ghana and for that matter in the Greater Accra Region, whether teachers qualify to teach a particular subject or not they are recruited to teach that subject, like social studies. Hence the statistical difference between professional and non-professional social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies. To make matters worse, the teaching of Social Studies has suffered very much from poor teaching especially at the SHS level. It is generally held that anyone could teach social studies. All that was necessary was a textbook and the ability to read it. The teaching task was merely to see that the pupils knew the facts presented in the book. This attitude towards social studies still permeates our institutions. A social studies class is frequently given to a physical education teacher or a music teacher in order that he may complete the schedule. When one considers the aims and objectives of the education and the role that the social studies is destined to play in accomplishing these aims, one wonders why the teaching of social studies has been neglected and dealt with very indifferently in so many of our schools.

Again the non-professional teachers have not gone through the training to be equipped with pedagogical skills. They are therefore not at ease with the tenets of teaching hence their low level of efficacy.

Social Studies Teaching Experience and Teachers’ Rating of the level of Efficacy in Social Studies

The study, again sought to ascertain the differences between less experienced and experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies. The mean ratings of the teachers are presented in Table 19.

From Table 19, it can be seen that teachers who have taught social studies for a period above 7 years gave a relatively higher mean rating of 94.26 to the level of efficacy than those who have taught social studies for a period below 7 years, who gave a relatively lower mean rating of 88.50. This implies that experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies is relatively higher than the less experienced social studies teachers.

Table 19: Teaching Experience and Teachers’ Rating of the level of Efficacy in Social Studies

No. of Years	Level of Efficacy		
N	MSD		
1-6yrs (Less Experienced)	44	88.50	11.27
7yrs + (Experienced)	86	94.26	6.90
Total	130	92.31	9.01

This difference in the teachers rating could be attributed to the fact that the well experienced teachers have overcome the challenges they might have faced in teaching and have mastered most of the techniques in teaching. The less experienced teachers are still grappling with how to manage the subject and need to be directed by others. They may not be well grounded in the

teaching strategies, methods, measurement and evaluation techniques, design and use of teaching and learning resources and other necessary areas.

The significant difference in the rating between less experienced and experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies was determined using the two-tailed independent sample t-test. The descriptive statistics obtained, as shown in Table 20, indicate that experienced social studies teachers rated their level of efficacy (M=94.26; SD=6.90) higher than less experienced social studies teachers (M=88.50; SD=11.27). The Levene's Test for Equality of variances was used to determine whether the difference in rating was significant. The test indicated that the variances for the two groups – less experienced and experienced social studies teachers were unequal ($F = 14.163, p < 0.05$), hence a test for unequal variances was used.

Table 20: Teachers' Rating of the level of Efficacy by Teaching Experience

No. of years	M	SD	t	df	p
1-6yrs (Less Experienced)	88.50	11.27			
7yrs + (Experienced)	94.26	6.90	3.104	59.933	0.003

From Table 20, the mean rating of experienced social studies teachers (M = 94.26, SD = 6.90) is significantly higher ($t = 3.104, df = 59.933$, Two – tailed probability < 0.05) than the mean rating of less experienced social studies teachers. This implies that there was a significant difference in the rating of social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in terms of the number of years of teaching social studies. The finding is in line with the

assumption made by the researcher that teachers' self-efficacy perception is influenced by the number of years of teaching social studies.

Brophy, (1991) supports this view when he asserts that understanding how to teach is a skill that teachers develop over years of practice and experience. Even though, teachers might learn content and pedagogy in their pre-service classes, it is during in-service teaching that teachers fully develop pedagogical content knowledge. Fitzhugh, (1992) shares this view as he observes that with few opportunities for training in social studies beyond pre-service teacher preparation, teachers often feel uncomfortable teaching social studies in their classrooms. The idea of pedagogical content knowledge stemmed from the realization that teacher preparation programs were not linking subject knowledge to the actual teaching of the subject in the classroom (Brophy, 1991). Several studies have shown that beginning teachers tend to struggle transforming their own understanding of content into an appropriate teaching method (Abd-el-Khalick & Boujaoude 1997; Gregg 2001 cited in Khan, 2011).

In another development Cheung (2000) identified another factor that determined teacher efficacy of in-service primary school teachers in Hong Kong and Shanghai was the number of years of teaching experience. Similar to other studies (Imants & De Brabander, 1996; Lin et al., 2002, cited in Cheung, 2008), the study demonstrated that teaching experience is related to teachers' perceived self-efficacy and school efficacy. The number of years of teaching experience appeared to have a significant relationship to teacher efficacy.

In contrast, to the above views of some researchers it has been determined in another study that years of teaching have no relationship with teacher efficacy (Raundenbush, et al., 1992 cited in Hoy, 2004 & Watson, 2006 cited in Khan, 2011). For them, the number of years in teaching a particular subject has no influence on the level of teachers' efficacy beliefs.

The plausible reason for this kind of outcome could be that, as teachers gain more experience they develop a relatively stable set of fundamental beliefs about their abilities. Even when teachers are exposed to new methods and ideas through professional development courses or workshops, efficacy beliefs are resilient to long-term changes. When teachers gain new skills, they tend to hold their efficacy beliefs in 'provisional status' attempting to test their newly acquired knowledge and skills before venturing to make predictive competence judgements.

New challenges, however, such as having a new class, teaching a completely new element in the curriculum, or working in a new school environment, can lead to a re-evaluation of efficacy beliefs. Experienced teachers develop a relatively steady sense of their teaching competence that is combined with their analysis of a new task to produce judgements about expected efficacy on the task. When the assignment is seen as routine and has been repeated successfully many times before, there is little analysis of the task. Inexperienced teachers rely more heavily on their analysis of the task and on vicarious experience (what they believe other teachers could do) to predict their likely success, that is their efficacy in the given task. The researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis and concludes that experienced teachers

perceive their level of efficacy in teaching social studies to be higher than less experienced teachers.

Orientation and Teachers' Rating of the level of Efficacy in Social Studies

Another remarkable phenomenon worth deliberating on, is the orientation the social studies teachers in the study area had to teach the subject (to make them specialist or non-specialist) and their responses to items relating to their level of efficacy in the teaching of Social Studies. The study sought to find out whether there would be differences in the rating of level of efficacy by specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers. Table 21 presents the mean differences of teachers rating of their level of efficacy by the orientation they had to teach social studies.

Table 21: Specialization and Teachers' Rating of the level of Efficacy in Social Studies

Specialization Level of Efficacy			
N	M	SD	
Specialist	70	94.27	6.74
Non-Specialist	60	90.02	10.69
Total	130	92.31	9.01

From Table 21 a relatively higher mean rating of 94.27 for specialist teachers and a relatively lower mean rating of 90.02 for non-specialist teachers, indicate that teachers who are specialists rated their level of efficacy higher than non-specialist teachers.

The two-tailed independent sample t-test was used to determine the differences between the ratings of social studies teachers' level of efficacy by specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers. The descriptive statistics

obtained, as presented in Table 22, indicate that the mean rating of specialist social studies teachers was higher than the mean rating of non-specialist social studies teachers. This gives the impression that specialist social studies teachers rated their level of efficacy higher than non-specialist social studies teachers. The Levene's Test for Equality of variances indicated that the variances for the two groups – specialist and non-specialist studies teachers were unequal ($F = 9.424, p < 0.05$), hence a test for unequal variances was used.

Table 22: Teachers' Rating of the level of Efficacy by Specialization

Specialization	M	SD	t	df	ρ
Specialist	94.27	6.74			
Non-specialist	90.02	10.69	2.662	96.450	.009

From Table 22, the mean rating of specialist social studies teachers ($M = 94.27, SD = 6.74$) is significantly higher ($t = 2.662, df = 96.450, 2 - \text{tailed probability} < 0.05$) than the mean rating of non-specialist social studies teacher as specified by the t-test of Equality of Means. Since the p-value (sig. value) of 0.009 is less than ($<$) the alpha value of 0.05 demonstrating that the level of error associated with the claim is almost zero (0) and that there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). This implies that there was significant difference between specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

This study is in concurrence with the findings of Ross et al. (1999) as they investigated the effects of out-of-field teaching assignments on teacher efficacy. These researchers found that secondary school teachers had high

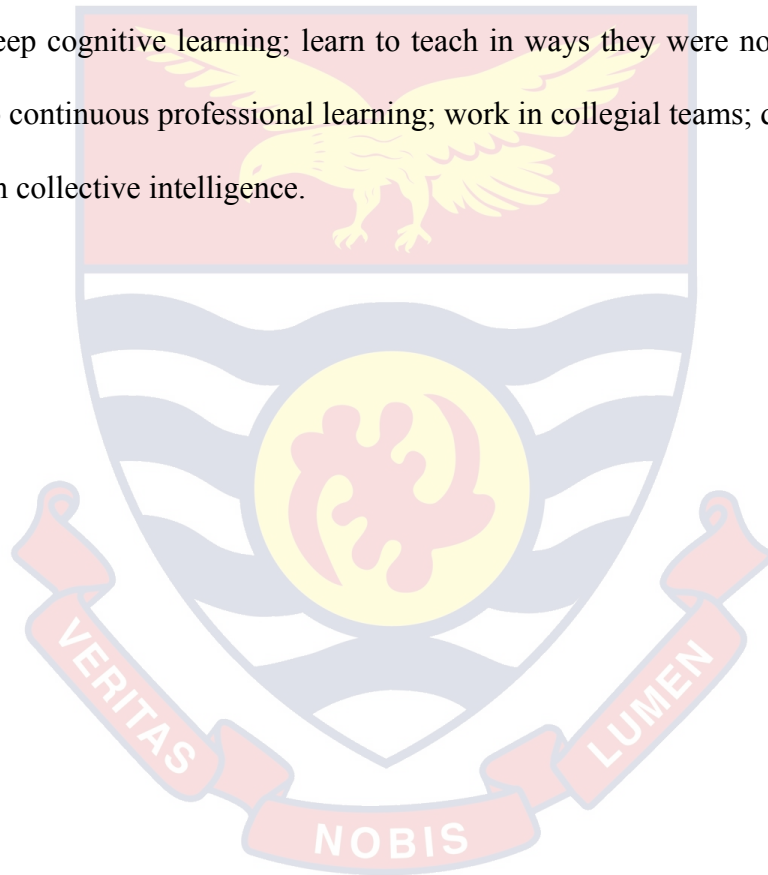
efficacy when teaching courses in which they felt academically prepared. They point out that while “academically-prepared” is usually measured by the number of content courses the teacher has taken or his/her academic major or certification, the problem arises in measuring subject area expertise when teachers’ courses assignment and speciality areas change over the course of their careers (Ross et al. 1999). However, the research did conclude that teaching outside one’s area of expertise did have a negative effect on efficacy. Thus teachers that teach out-of-field were found to have lower efficacy than those teachers that were teaching within a subject area in which they were prepared to teach (Ross et al. 1999).

In a similar vein, the present study supports the finding of Schwarzer and Hallum (2008). They found that efficacy beliefs become more stable over time and are fairly stable once set, this stability is due to the wealth of experiences. The present study reveals that teachers are convinced that, as they engage in various professional development programmes, they will continue to become more and more capable of helping to address their student's need. Other studies show that in-service programmes that focus on a specific area increase the teacher’s confidence as well as implementation (Telljohann et al., 1996 and Watson, 2006 cited in Khan, 2011).

Teachers may take an introductory social studies course to satisfy undergraduate degree requirements; it is likely this course would not be the most valuable for instilling the pedagogical methods or content knowledge that is necessary for the social studies classroom teacher (Gregg 2001). Other research establishes that teachers need coursework that directly matches the

curriculum they are expected to teach at the high school level (Brophy 1991; Gilsbach 1997; Gregg 2001; Shulman 1987, 1986).

This implies that teachers need to become life-long learners in their chosen career, for, no individual teacher can boast of the fact that teaching is technically simple, and that once you are qualified to teach, you know the nitty-gritty of teaching forever. This means that teachers must be able to build a special kind of professionalism where they, among other things, promote deep cognitive learning; learn to teach in ways they were not taught; commit to continuous professional learning; work in collegial teams; develop and draw on collective intelligence.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of the Study

Teacher efficacy is an important issue in the field of education, especially when a society wants to elevate its quality of education and the future of its citizens in the long run. By investigating the teacher efficacy of the social studies school teachers of Ghana, it is to ensure that the subject by its core nature is handled carefully and effectively. This is to achieve the overarching goal of making the individual learner a responsible citizen in a democratic society. However, a critical assessment of the West African Examination Council's Chief Examiner's reports over the years indicates that many senior high school candidates are unable to apply social studies concepts to explain situations satisfactorily or to produce acceptable answers in their examinations; and also are unable to imbibe what has been studied to make them better citizens.

It is therefore important to note that merely strengthening the place of social studies in the school curriculum and providing the requisite resources for its implementation, do not guarantee teacher efficacy for effective teaching that yields high levels of literacy among learners. As intimated by Gudmundsdottir (1991), knowing how to teach what is to be taught in relation to both the quantity and quality of classroom instruction are critically important in the teaching and learning of social studies in schools. The

emphasis of the study was to find out the efficacy of the classroom practices of social studies teachers, since it could as well contribute to poor performance of students.

In addition, the research study was required to determine the general level of social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in the teaching of the subject. It also sought to ascertain the extent to which certain factors such as gender, professional status, area of specialization and number of years of teaching social studies. Thus, the overarching research question that guided the study was: What are the self-efficacy perceptions of social studies teachers in terms of social studies knowledge, selection and application of strategy, method and technique, material design and use, in-class communication and classroom management, effective measurement and evaluation applications and interest in relation to social studies teaching?

The hypotheses that were formulated to help determine the nature of social studies teachers' self-efficacy in teaching social studies were as follows:

1. Ho: There is no significant difference between male and female social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

H₁: There is a significant difference between male and female social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

2. Ho: There is no significant difference between graduate professional and non-professional social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

H₁: There is a significant difference between graduate professional and non-professional social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

3. Ho: There is no significant difference in the self-efficacy perception of specialist and non- specialist social studies teachers in teaching social studies.

H₁: There is a significant difference in the self-efficacy perception of specialist and non- specialist social studies teachers in teaching social studies.

4. Ho: There is no significant difference between experienced and less experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

H₁: There is a significant difference between experienced and less experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies.

A teacher sense of efficacy questionnaire designed by the researcher was the main instrument used for data collection. The instrument was divided into three main sections. Section “A” contained items on demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section “B”, had statements on a five-point likert scale regarding how the teachers rated their own efficacy in teaching social studies at the Senior High School level. Section “C” requested comments from teachers on any aspect of social studies teaching and learning. A sample of 153 teachers drawn from the Greater Accra Region was involved in the study. Data obtained were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics to define the characteristics of respondents. The mean and standard deviation were obtained and discussed. The responses teachers gave to their level of efficacy were presented by means of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation and the results discussed. Items 6 to 30 on the

questionnaire sought to find out the efficacy level of social studies teachers (see Appendix B). Responses ranged from “strongly disagree”, “not certain” to “strongly agree” and were measured on a five-point likert-scale. The weight for each item was computed and the score obtained denoted the level of teacher efficacy.

Summary of Key Findings

1. The study revealed that majority 97(74.6%); of the SHS social studies teachers possessed at least the minimum professional and academic qualification which is a pre-requisite for the teaching of social studies. However, the study revealed some 33(25.4%) non-professional teachers who were teaching social studies. The respondents also had some understanding and experience in the teaching of social studies concepts and were therefore quite familiar with the presentation of these concepts. It also disclosed that these teachers do not only possess degrees in social studies but also have undergone some in-service training and have interest in the teaching of the subject. Nonetheless, there were some 60 (46.2%) out-of-field teachers who did not have any orientation at all to teach social studies. The research work revealed that there were less experienced and experienced teachers who displayed various efficacy levels which can enhance the teaching and learning of social studies.
2. The overall rating of teachers’ level of efficacy ($M = 3.8$; $SD = 0.7$) indicated that a majority of the teachers believed that they had the ability to handle their teaching task more effectively. This implies that the majority of social studies teachers, irrespective of gender,

professional status, area of specialization and number of years of teaching social studies perceive themselves as having high levels of efficacy in the teaching of social studies.

3. A further analysis was conducted to find out how certain teacher characteristics (such as gender, professional status, area of specialization and number of years of teaching social studies) influenced their rating of their self-efficacy. The items on the questionnaire sought to ascertain teachers' content knowledge of social studies, selection and application of strategy, method and technique, material design and use, in-class communication and classroom management, effective measurement and evaluation applications and interest in relation to social studies teaching. All the items put together denoted teachers' level of efficacy. The weighted means of these items were computed and discussed.

- a. The means obtained on items relating to the level of efficacy of male and female teachers indicated that the male respondents rated their self-efficacy in teaching social studies relatively higher ($M = 92.80$) than female social studies teachers ($M = 91.15$). The independent t-test conducted to find out the statistical difference in the gender of teachers and their level of efficacy indicated that there was no significant difference in the rating of male and female teachers and their level of self-efficacy.

- b. With respect to teachers' professional status, a relatively higher mean rating of 93.52 for professional teachers and a relatively lower mean rating of 88.76 for non-professional teachers, indicate

that professional teachers rated their level of efficacy higher than non-professional teachers. A test for differences using the two-tailed independent sample t-test was used to determine the differences between the rating of social studies teachers' level of efficacy by professional and non-professional social studies teachers. The results obtained indicated that there was significant difference in the level of efficacy of the teachers considering their professional qualification.

c. Furthermore, teachers who have taught social studies for a period above 7 years gave a relatively higher mean rating of 94.26 to the level of efficacy than those who have taught social studies for a period below 7 years, who gave a relatively lower mean rating of 88.50. This implies that experienced social studies teachers' self-efficacy perception in teaching social studies is relatively higher than the less experienced social studies teachers. A test for differences using the two-tailed independent sample t-test was used to determine the differences between the rating of social studies teachers' level of efficacy by experience and less experienced social studies teachers. The results obtained indicated that there was significant difference in the level of efficacy of the teachers in view of the number of years of teaching social studies.

d. Teachers who had had some form of orientation to teach social studies rated their level of efficacy relatively higher ($M = 94.27$), than those who did not have any form of orientation to teach social studies ($M = 90.02$). The two-tailed independent t-test conducted to

find out the statistical difference between the specialist and non-specialist social studies teachers and their level of efficacy indicated that there was significant difference in the rating of specialists who had some form of orientation to teach social studies and non-specialists who did not have any form of orientation to teach social studies.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, a number of conclusions have been drawn. Majority of teachers involved in the study rated their level of self-efficacy to be higher in terms of subject-matter knowledge, selection and application of strategy, method and technique, material design and use, in-class communication and classroom management, effective measurement and evaluation applications and interest in relation to social studies teaching. Thus, social studies teachers, irrespective of gender, professional status, area of specialization and number of years of teaching social studies gave higher rating to their efficacy levels. This implies that social studies teachers generally perceive their ability to execute the teaching of the subject effectively.

In respect to certain factors that influenced social studies teachers' rating of self-efficacy levels, gender did not influence their rating. The likely reason for such congruence in teachers' response in the rating could be attributed to the belief they have in their own abilities to be able to perform creditably due to their level of academic and professional qualification. In addition as a natural phenomenon, gender does not have influence on the teachers' ability to perform their set targets.

Again, professional social studies teachers rated their level of efficacy relatively higher in respect of teaching ability than non-professional social studies teachers. This difference in rating by teachers of different professional status could be attributed to the exposure the professional teachers have in pedagogy. They have been well equipped with all the categories of knowledge required of every teacher. No wonder their disposition towards the teaching of the subject and hence their higher efficacy levels.

Teachers who have taught social studies for 7 years and above rated their level of efficacy relatively higher than those who have taught social studies for a period below 7 years. This may be due to a high level of prior interest for the subject. Again teachers who have taught the subject for a considerable period of time become more inclined to it and put more effort and time into the study of the subject and may therefore be exposed to more information to rate their level of efficacy higher than their counterparts who do not have enough experience.

Finally, specialist social studies teachers rated their level of efficacy relatively higher in respect of teaching efficacy than non-specialist social studies teachers. This difference in rating by teachers of different orientation could be attributed to the exposure the specialist teachers have in terms of the courses of study and staff development programmes they have undertaken. This implies that they have been taken through the requisite awareness for the execution of the job. The assumption is that they are inclined to the nitty-gritty of the subject.

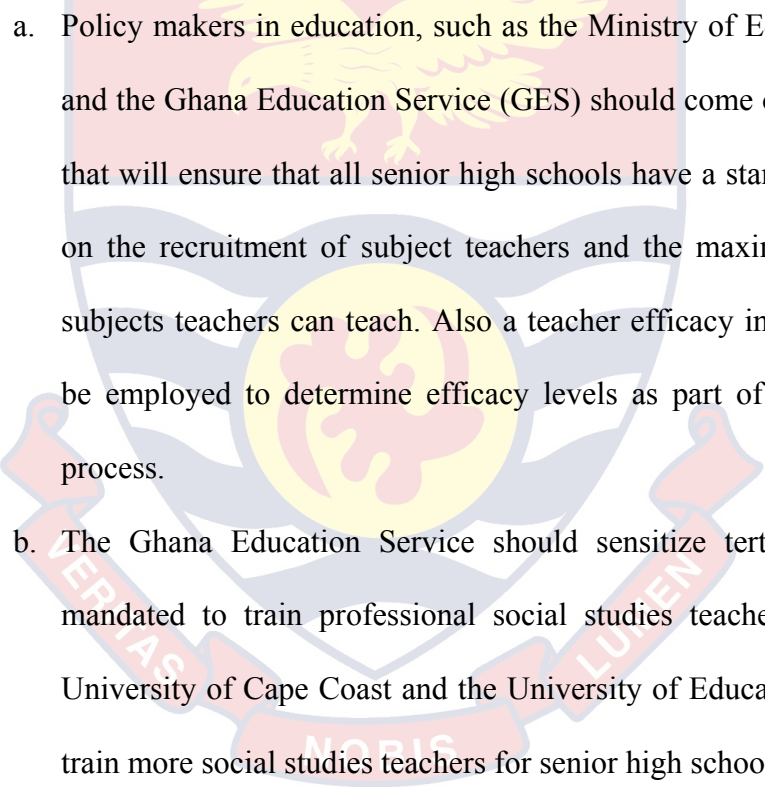
The independent sample t-test was used to test for differences in teachers' rating. The results indicated a statistically significant difference in

the rating of social studies teachers' level of efficacy between professional teachers and non-professional teachers. This implies that social studies teachers' level of efficacy is not independent of professional qualification. The same can be said of the ratings of social studies teachers' with different years of teaching experience, for which the test indicated a statistically significant difference in ratings of experience social studies teachers' and less experienced social studies teachers'. Again, the test indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in the rating of social studies teachers' efficacy by male and female teachers. The implication of this is that social studies teachers' rating of their efficacy was independent of teachers' gender. There were also statistically significant differences in the rating of social studies teachers' level of efficacy by teachers with different orientation towards the teaching of social studies. This implies that social studies teachers' level of efficacy is not independent of the kind of orientation teachers had to teach social studies.

Recommendations

Linking teacher content knowledge and pedagogy to teacher efficacy is an important relationship to understand so that teacher education programmes and professional development providers can better understand how to tailor educational opportunities to increase teacher efficacy in social studies. The results from this research have several implications and recommendations. It is envisaged that the following recommendations based on the findings of this study will provide useful information to improve the use of self-efficacy instrument as a measure for assessing teacher efficacy and also improve the level of teacher efficacy in the teaching of social studies in senior high schools.

1. The study revealed that there were out-of-field teachers teaching social studies in the SHS who perceived their level of efficacy to be low. It is recommended that teacher development and education programmes must ensure that teachers have access to high-quality content coursework in social studies and opportunities to engage in teaching and conduct classroom observations of social studies teachers. This will help to equip the out-of-field teachers to be well versed in the content and methodology even as they are engaged in the field. Mentorship can also be the watch word. Developing a mentoring relationship during pre-service and in-service education could be beneficial for both mentor teachers and mentee teachers. Pairing pedagogy, content, and curriculum is optimal in helping teachers truly understand how these three types of knowledge work together to boost the efficacy levels of teachers.
2. The study revealed that non-professional teachers perceived their level of efficacy to be low compared with professional social studies teachers. Professional development in social studies must reinforce content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in social studies. There is also the need to connect teachers to a professional organization that values their growth as social studies teachers. Social Studies teachers need to collaborate with one another, either in mentoring relationships or professional learning communities. Professional development should seek to increase efficacy in teaching social studies by ensuring that teachers are provided with skills that will expand their success in the classroom.
3. Also there were teachers who did not have any form of orientation to teach social studies. It must be emphasized that informal education in social

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- a. Policy makers in education, such as the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) should come out with policies that will ensure that all senior high schools have a standardized policy on the recruitment of subject teachers and the maximum number of subjects teachers can teach. Also a teacher efficacy instrument should be employed to determine efficacy levels as part of the recruitment process.
- b. The Ghana Education Service should sensitize tertiary institutions mandated to train professional social studies teachers, such as the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba to train more social studies teachers for senior high schools.
- c. The Ghana Education Service in collaboration with teacher training institutions, especially the universities, should come out with a standard criterion for certification and credentialing of teachers, subsequent to their recruitment into senior high schools to teach. This is to ensure that teachers selected to teach possess an acceptable level

of competence. It will also help to streamline the influx of non-professional social studies teachers into the profession.

- d. Social Studies teachers should build and maintain a cordial but professional teacher-teacher relationship. This will help promote a collegiality, conducive, healthy and friendly environment to enhance their efficacy levels for effective teaching and learning of the subject in the classroom.

Suggestions for Further Research

The findings of the study have given certain indications with regard to possible directions for further research. This current study was delimited and subject to certain limitations. It is therefore recommended that certain dimensions of the study be looked at again to provide a more comprehensive picture with regard to the teaching and learning of social studies in senior high schools in Ghana. The following areas can therefore be looked at:

1. Simply comparing the differences between the efficacy levels of various variables is just the first step to investigate teacher efficacy. A more in-depth qualitative study could be done to understand more about the links between specific variables and teacher efficacy.
2. A further study could be conducted to examine the link between student achievement levels and teacher efficacy
3. Teacher qualification has been identified as one of the factors that influence the efficacy levels of teachers and hence the teaching and learning of social studies in senior high schools in Ghana. A study could

4. The area of coverage of the study could be expanded in similar studies and the findings compared.



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APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

QUESTIONNAIRE

**Teacher Efficacy in Teaching Senior High School Social Studies in the
Greater Accra Region of Ghana**

This questionnaire seeks to determine how teachers feel about teaching social studies. Please answer the following questions as frankly as possible to enable you contribute immensely towards effective teaching and learning of the subject. Your responses will be used solely for academic purposes and will be treated with the confidentiality it deserves. Please do not write your name on any part of the questionnaire. Thank you.

Please tick where appropriate.

1. What is your sex:

Male

Female

2. What is your highest professional qualification?

Teachers' Cert. 'A'

PGDE

Bachelor Degree in Education

Other, please specify.....

3. What is your highest academic qualification?.....

4. Including the current year, how many years have you taught social studies?

.....

5. What orientation have you had to teach social studies as a school subject?

Interest in social studies []

In-service training in social studies []

Course of study in social studies []

Other, please specify.....

SECTION B:

Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the statements on the following scale: “Strongly Disagree” (1), “Disagree” (2), “Not Certain” (3), “Agree” (4), “Strongly Agree” (5).

(Please **circle** only one).

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. I have sufficient knowledge of the social studies subject. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I convey different sources and opinions about the social studies subjects to my students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I update my knowledge of social studies by keeping abreast with scientific developments. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. I understand social studies concepts well enough to be effective in teaching. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. I use practical examples and illustrations to promote understanding of concepts. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. I effectively make use of concepts and relate them to the needs and realities of the society to help students understand what is being taught. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I give tasks that help students look for information other than what has been taught in the classroom. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

13. I help students to apply the knowledge they have acquired from other subjects to understand social studies concepts. 1 2 3 4 5
14. I experience difficulties in using excursion and observation activities for efficient social studies teaching. 1 2 3 4 5
15. I experience difficulties in planning activities aimed at developing skill. 1 2 3 4 5
16. I have the theoretical knowledge regarding use of teaching and learning resources in teaching social studies. 1 2 3 4 5
17. I experience difficulties in providing the material diversity in social studies teaching. 1 2 3 4 5
18. I design the teaching and learning materials myself and use them in activities to help students understand lessons better. 1 2 3 4 5
19. I experience difficulties in deciding when and how to use T/L resources. 1 2 3 4 5
20. I see myself competent in creating the classroom environment required for effective social studies teaching. 1 2 3 4 5
21. I experience difficulties in giving special attention to students who face problems in learning social studies. 1 2 3 4 5
22. In effectively involve my students actively in lessons in social studies teaching. 1 2 3 4 5
23. When teaching social studies, I usually welcome students' expressions. 1 2 3 4 5
24. I experience difficulties in spreading measurement and evaluation over the process in social studies teaching. 1 2 3 4 5
25. I experience difficulties in using the student personal and societal issues in the measurement and evaluation process. 1 2 3 4 5

26. Increased effort in social studies teaching produces little change in some students' social studies achievement. 1 2 3 4 5
27. I enjoy learning social studies. 1 2 3 4 5
28. My personal interests and experiences with social studies have positively influenced my ability to teach social studies. 1 2 3 4 5
29. My experiences have positively influenced my content knowledge of social studies. 1 2 3 4 5
30. My personal interests and experiences with social studies have positively influenced my student's enthusiasm to learn social studies. 1 2 3 4 5

SECTION C:

31. Are there any additional comments you would like to make as a social studies teacher? You may comment on curriculum or assessment aspects of social studies teaching and learning.

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APPENDIX C

TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY INSTRUMENT

1. When a student does better than usual in a subject, it is often because the teacher exerted a little extra effort.
2. I am continually finding better ways to teach my subject.
3. Even when I try very hard, I don't teach my subject as well as I do to other subjects.
4. When the subject grades of students improve, it is most often due to their teacher having found a more effective teaching approach.
5. I know the steps necessary to teach my subject's concepts effectively.
6. I am not very effective in monitoring my subject projects.
7. If students are underachieving in my subject, it is most likely due to ineffective subject teaching.
8. I generally teach my subject ineffectively.
9. The inadequacy of a student's subject background can be overcome by good teaching.
10. When a low achieving child progresses in my subject, it is usually due to extra attention given by the teacher.
11. I understand my subject concepts well enough to be effective in teaching.
12. Increased effort in teaching my subject produces little change in some students' achievement.
13. The teacher is generally responsible for the achievement of students in my subject.
14. Students' achievement in my subject is directly related to their teacher's effectiveness in teaching.

15. If parents comment that their child is showing more interest in my subject at school, it is probably due to the performance of the child's teacher.
16. I find it difficult to explain the subject concepts to students.
17. I am typically able to answer students' questions in my subject.
18. I wonder if I have the necessary skills to teach my subject.
19. Effectiveness in teaching my subject has little influence on the achievement of students with low motivation.
20. Given a choice, I would not invite the principal to evaluate the teaching of my subject.
21. When a student has difficulty understanding a concept in my subject area, I am usually at a loss as to how to help the student understand it better.
22. When teaching, I usually welcome student questions.
23. I don't know what to do to turn students on to my subject.
24. Even teachers with good teaching abilities cannot help some kids learn the subject.

Source: Tschannen-Moran, Hoy and Hoy (1998)

