

# Students' Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Techniques Used in Teaching and Learning of Social Studies in the Colleges of Education in Ghana

Eric Osei Yaw <sup>1,\*</sup>, Sylvia Takyiwaa Donkor <sup>2</sup>, Joseph Yeboah <sup>3</sup>, Collins Appiah <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Social Sciences, St. Louis College of Education, Kumasi, Ghana

<sup>2</sup> Department of Social Sciences, Wesley College of Education, Kumasi, Ghana

<sup>3</sup> Department of Social Sciences, Bia Lamplighter College of Education, Debiso, Ghana

<sup>4</sup> Department of Social Sciences, Berekum College of Education, Berekum Ghana

\*Correspondence: Eric Osei Yaw (ericosei77@gmail)

**Abstract:** The purpose of the study was to examine Colleges of Education students' attitudes toward the teaching and learning of Social Studies in the Ashanti region. Quantitatively, descriptive survey research design was employed for the study to examine the attitudes of Colleges of Education students toward the teaching and learning of Social Studies in the Ashanti region. The population for the study comprised all the second year (form 2) Social Studies students from the four (4) selected Colleges of Education in the Ashanti Region. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select four (4) Colleges of Education (St. Louis, Wesley, St. Monica's and Offinso Colleges of Education), and two-hundred seventy-seven (277) second year Social Studies students for the study. The main instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The quantitative data obtained was coded into Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) (version 26.0) and analyzed using descriptive statistics involving tables, frequencies and percentages for each item. "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Strongly Disagree", "Disagree" were all used in the analysis for easy presentation and understanding. The study revealed that students were able to dedicate much time to studying the subject in order to acquire relevant knowledge, positive attitudes and skills as well as solve societal problems stems from their ability to have good perception of the subject. The study also concludes that varying techniques of teaching is a key factor in enabling students to develop keen interest in Social Studies. It arouses and sustain students' interest in the subject, they must not neglect employing methods that are student-centered. It is recommended that teachers should vary their methods of teaching to focus more on the use of child-centered techniques of teaching. It is also recommended that, teaching universities and colleges of education should collaborate with Ministry of Education, T-TEL and other Non-governmental educational organizations to organise workshops, and seminars to help Social Studies teachers on the use of vary teaching techniques in evaluating students learning.

## How to cite this paper:

Osei Yaw, E., Takyiwaa Donkor, S., Yeboah, J., & Appiah, C. (2022). Students' Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Techniques Used in Teaching and Learning of Social Studies in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. *Universal Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(4), 259–272. Retrieved from <https://www.scipublications.com/journal/index.php/ujssh/article/view/567>

Received: August 2, 2022

Accepted: October 21, 2022

Published: December 12, 2022



**Copyright:** © 2022 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

**Keywords:** Students, Perceptions, Attitudes, Techniques, Social Studies, Colleges of Education Ghana

## 1. Introduction

Education the world over is seen as a powerful tool of enlightenment [1]. This enlightenment spans across several domains of the human life. It is geared towards the development of the individual holistically. This consequently has led to the development of several fields of study from Archaeology to Zoology [2, 3]. It is an undeniable fact that, among the myriads of the fields of study, Social Studies seems to be the only discipline

whose 'DNA' is uniquely designed to help students acquire relevant knowledge, positive attitudes, skills and values necessary to equip them to become competent, concerned, reflective and public problem solvers [4].

### *1.1. Perceptions Students toward the Teaching and Learning of Social Studies*

Students' perceptions of Social Studies have to do with how students view the subject, based on the information, senses received and how this information has been analyzed and interpreted [5, 6]. According to Gao (2020), a prime area of concern for Social Studies was the perception by students, parents and the wider community that Social Studies was of little value, frequently dull and boring and not related to future employment. He opined that abundant evidence was also put forward to indicate that the image of Social Studies as an effective curriculum component is less than desirable.

A study reported that students ranked Social Studies well below the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science. While students may not like these subjects, they are perceived by students as being important subjects in gaining future employment and therefore essential subjects to study. Such negative and indifferent attitudes toward the subject are bound to affect students' motivation to learn Social Studies. Since attitude may be causally related to achievement, the likely educational outcome would be reduced learning [7]. Moreover, given the current economic situation and the greater accountability demanded of schools, unless corrected, this negative view might lead to a lack of support and diminished resources for Social Studies [8]. With the move to greater flexibility in post compulsory education, there is a possibility that fewer students will choose Social Studies in upper school which will have a compounding effect on the status of Social Studies as a school subject [9]. This implies that there is also the need for a quality assurance mechanism to be instituted in the teaching profession to ensure that teacher preparation programmes in the country are designed to focus on the needs of society. The classroom practices of teachers, so far as Social Studies is concerned, must be centred on the current knowledge and understanding of what the subject is; issues centred and problem solving [10].

In 1990 a comprehensive review of the curriculum in Australian was commissioned by the Ministry of Education. The study carried out revealed that students who liked the subject had high self-perceptions of ability, took responsibility for their own learning, were motivated by receiving good grades and attributed their success to personal effort [11]. Students who did not like the subject perceived it to be difficult to understand and irrelevant to their future needs. These students differed in reasons for their lack of achievement which included external causes, such as difficult content and poor teacher strategies, and internal causes such as lack of effort. All students reported that low grades affected their perceptions of a subject and they all tended to like subjects in which they achieved well [11].

According to a study by National Council for Social Studies students show less interest in studying Social Studies because they perceive the subject as being easy and therefore, do not see the need to study it and also pay critical attention to it [12]. This shows that students may have either positive or negative perceptions toward the study of Social Studies, and as such, they pay little or more attention to it. This further posits that teachers should be helped to be abreast with the nature of concepts in the subject and the techniques and methodology that will promote effective teaching and learning of the subject [13]. The responsibility lies with Social Studies teachers to acquire knowledge of the current research findings in their field and use this knowledge to promote their subject to school students. There is still much in Social Studies education about which little is known. Further, only a narrow range of research methodologies have been used by Social Studies educators prompting a researcher to call for additional models such as in-depth interviews, case-studies, participant observations and ethnographic studies to provide additional and different perspectives about issues in Social Studies [9]. Social Studies is

an integrated discipline which is full of concepts which required a resourceful teacher to handle it. The focus of the subject is to help improve learner attitude [14]. This is because Social Studies teachers' positive conception about the subject will make impact with regards to achieving the curriculum goals of the discipline to influence students' perception towards teaching and learning of Social Studies [15].

### ***1.2. Attitudes of Students toward the Techniques Used in Teaching and Learning of Social Studies***

The kind of environment in which students find themselves greatly influences their attitudes toward the concept of teaching and learning. Several studies reveal that the factors most likely to affect positively students' attitudes toward the teaching and learning of concepts is an open classroom climate - an environment whose signifying features are teacher respect for students' ideas and teacher use of democratic leadership behaviours [16, 17]. The beneficial effects of an open classroom climate are cited by virtually every researcher and reviewer who looked at the relationship between educational practices and students' results [17]. This implies that the manner in which Social Studies teachers assess their learners' learning outcomes in Social Studies lessons should be tailor contrary to the main goal and objectives of the subject, which is to develop a reflective, concerned, responsible and participatory citizen in civic life of a country to influence students learning [18]. Obviously, the nature of the learning environment has a direct impact on the attitude of students towards the teaching and learning of concepts. As disclosed by Harwood's view of a research that investigated the relationship between climate measures in Social Studies classrooms and students' attitudes towards political concepts, open classroom environments featuring student participation and free expression have a positive impact on students' attitudes toward the learning of concepts [19]. This results in producing students with superficial knowledge and which may also have implications on the attitude of the students towards social issues. Teachers should ensure that they assess the students on all their domains and levels of learning. The profile dimensions should serve as a guide in their assessment [20]. There is a positive relationship between open classroom climates and several civic concepts and attitude measures [21]. A study on Teachers Perspective on Redesigning Social Studies Curriculum for Student-Centered and Constructivist Learning: Empirical Study of Secondary Schools, Northern Region, published in *Social Education Research* revealed that Teachers should make Social Studies instruction inclusive and challenging to stimulate the acquisition of learning skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, leadership, communication, resilience and collaboration among learners. The researchers strongly called for redesigning the Social Studies curriculum to offer learners challenging content, instructional activities and assessment of learning outcomes; provide learners the opportunity to engage in reflective discussion as they listen carefully and respond to each other's views to find solutions to problems; emphasize on the core competences, values, and desirable attitudes needed for national development; and finally, integrate technology into teaching and learning to equip students with digital literacy [22]. Scientists have recorded a positive correlation between attitude and achievement, and between attitude and career preferences related to subjects [23, 24]. This is because students' attitudes eventually affect their performance and their success in the study of their courses or subjects. A number of factors influence students' attitudes. It stands to reason that, a careful study of these factors and how to vary and apply them in educational context and setting can go a long way to positively affect the attitudes of students for better performance. It is in this light that many researchers have conducted studies on attitudes and their effect in many disciplines and field of interest [24].

A study revealed that to promote active learning, the Social Studies curriculum should place learners at the center of teaching and learning; offer students opportunities to design a hypothesis, collect data, interpret the data, test the hypothesis and draw

conclusions supported by evidence; encourage learners to be involved in a variety of learning projects; be sufficient, flexible, varied and involve all categories of learners; and integrate activities that contribute to learners' perceptions of teachers as fellow inquirers [22]. This implies that, content knowledge of social studies teachers will develop the learners' attitudes, values, skills and giving them knowledge which will benefit the society and the nation at large [25].

A research on Mentees' Social Studies Curriculum Conceptions and Their Classroom Practices in the Junior High Schools (JHSs) in Ghana indicated that, mentees lack the teaching skills to impart Social Studies as a problem/issue-oriented subject to pupils. Mentees were found presenting facts to pupils than delivering concepts using ideal pupil-centred techniques like discussion, role-play, debate/argumentation, simulation, and other cooperative learning techniques that will bring on board how problems related to a given topic could be solved. Mentees were not at good standings in terms of methodology, content knowledge and skills in teaching Social Studies. The outcomes of what trainees said Social Studies ought to be taught were not seen in their classroom practices. Trainees lack teaching skills [26]. This implies that for the teaching of Social Studies to makeover, Social Studies teachers should hold it a duty to help students have better, more realistic ideas about the multiple realities of what constitutes Social Studies in the real world since they (teachers) influence what is taught [26]. This further posits that formative assessment techniques should be implemented in social studies lessons in helping learners to construct knowledge during the learning process; rather than receiving knowledge, and this inspires the notion of performance-based assessment [27]. A study on Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) of Teachers and Their Formative Assessment Practices in Social Studies Lessons published in *Universal Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* concluded that Teachers mostly assess the cognitive aspect of the child with little attention to the affective domain. Most of task demanded lower order thinking skills. This results in producing students with superficial knowledge and which may also have implications on the attitude of the students towards social issues [20].

A researcher reported that students in the Colleges of Education in Ghana encounter several concepts in the Social Studies curriculum such as production, nationhood, freedom and justice, rights and responsibilities, and democratic governance. Whereas experience and many events in the environment may provide direct and immediate situations for the teaching and learning of concepts in Social Studies, the classroom environment, on the other hand, tends to be more symbolic and abstract in nature [28]. The attitudes of students toward concept teaching and learning are related to the kind of environment in which they find themselves. Several studies support the view that, the factors that are most likely to affect positively students' attitudes toward the teaching and learning of concepts is an open classroom climate - an environment whose signifying features are teacher respect for students' ideas and teacher use of democratic leadership behaviours [29, 30]. The beneficial effects of an open classroom climate are cited by virtually every researcher and reviewer who looked at the relationship between educational practices and students' results [31, 32-33]. This implies that authentic assessment, as a classroom assessment strategy, does have a place in Social Studies as a tool to enhance teaching and learning [34].

Clearly then, the nature of the learning environment has a direct impact on the attitudes of students toward the teaching and learning of concepts. A research that investigated the relationship between climate measures in Social Studies, classrooms and students' attitudes towards political concepts, open classroom environments featuring student participation and free expression have a positive impact on students' attitudes toward the learning of concepts [35]. Teachers often rely solely on text, lecturing, worksheets and traditional tests as methods of learning [36]. However, research concludes that students have more interest in a topic when a variety of teaching techniques are implemented [37, 38]. The ability to use various techniques and methods for instruction is

often neglected by educators [27]. Teachers tend to have students participate in activities that do not encourage critical thinking, but instead encourage rote memorization of names, dates, and places. The common preoccupation with having students commit one fact after another to memory based on history textbook, recitations and lectures does little to build capacity to think historically [39]. In addition, teachers need to connect the content to the individual interests of the students, thus, increasing students interest in the content and actively engaging students in the learning process [40]. This entails utilizing a variety of teaching techniques that help engage students in the learning process. Some examples of engaging instructional techniques include cooperative learning, role playing, and technology [41]. Using cooperative learning requires students to become active learners. The researcher further believed that, “cooperative learning provides opportunities for students to learn, practice, and live the attitudes and behaviours that reflect the goals of Social Studies education” [42].

Using various teaching techniques is considered by many a best practice, and numerous studies conclude positive results with regard to the use of various instructional techniques [27, 43]. For example, direct observation, data gathering, reading, role-playing, constructing projects, and watching films are all excellent ways to provide students with new information [43]. Using film to enhance Social Studies instruction has been found to be an effective instructional method [44, 45]. In 2006, researchers concluded that using simulations heightened students interest and increased understanding [46]. As well, researchers have found that the discussion technique is a valuable method for teaching Social Studies [46]. The use of these different techniques in teaching Social Studies by teachers also arouse and sustain their interest throughout the teaching and learning process [27]. The implication of this is that, appropriate teaching and learning methods which are learner-centred such as role play, dramatization and discussion will make students develop positive attitudes toward Social Studies, and they will be willing to learn it all the time.

The past five decades have witnessed a number of studies that have attempted to understand why students either like or dislike Social Studies. These studies have tried to identify and measure students' attitudes about Social Studies and predict what influence their performance related to this area of the school curriculum [47, 48]. Through the years, ongoing changes in curriculum design, teaching methodology, and administrative practices may have helped to improve students' performance in Social Studies [49]. However, most students still perceive Social Studies classes as dull, boring, and irrelevant to their lives which seem to affect their performance all the time.

If teacher trainees develop positive attitudes toward the subject, it will lead to onward transmission of learned values, skills and attitudes to their students at the basic level. From the above illustration concerning Social Studies, it is crystal clear that the subject has relevance in the advancement of society. Therefore, exploring the attitudes of Colleges of Education students toward the teaching and learning of Social Studies in the Ashanti region is very crucial. It is against this background that this study seeks to find out the attitudes of Colleges of Education students toward the teaching and learning of Social Studies. The study sought to answer these research questions - (1) What are the perceptions of Colleges of Education students toward the teaching and learning of Social Studies? (2) What are the attitudes of students in Colleges of Education toward the techniques used in teaching Social Studies?

## 2. Materials and methods

Quantitatively, descriptive survey research design was employed for the study to examine the attitudes of Colleges of Education students toward the teaching and learning of Social Studies in the Ashanti region. The population for the study comprised all the second year (form 2) Social Studies students from the four (4) selected Colleges of Education in the Ashanti Region. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques



were used to select four (4) Colleges of Education (St. Louis, Wesley, St. Monica's and Offinso Colleges of Education), second year Social Studies students for the study. These Colleges were purposely sampled in view of the fact that some Colleges do not offer Social Studies as a programme. Also, it was appropriate to adopt the purposive sampling technique as it allowed for the involvement of those with the specific required rich information. Second year Social Studies students were purposively sampled for the study in view of the fact that they had experienced two academic years of Social Studies teaching and learning than first year students. Simple random sampling technique used to select two hundred and seventy-seven (277) out of nine hundred and two (902) Second year Social Studies students from the four Colleges of Education. The major reason for adopting the random sampling technique was that it gives the respondents equal chances to be included in the study.

The main instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. A questionnaire was designed as an instrument for data collection from students because of its ability to limit inconsistency and also save time. The structured questionnaire was divided into sections. Section A comprised the demographic data, which sought to obtain respondents' details such as age, sex, and marital status. Section B was used to seek information on the perceptions of Colleges of Education students toward Social Studies. Section C was used to seek information on the attitudes of Social Studies students toward Social Studies. Section D was used to seek information on the methods used in teaching Social Studies. Section E was used to seek information on how Colleges of Education students compare Social Studies to other subjects. Section B, C, D and E had its items on a four-point Likert scale for accurate representation of data on the questionnaire. Likert scale is seen as a tool that assists the respondents to identify the degree of agreement or disagreement and how they feel about an issue with a number of statements [50]. Items were coded, Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2, Strongly Disagree 1. It was the most preferred instrument because it is easy to construct, administer and score [51].

The quantitative data obtained was coded into Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) (version 26.0) to analyze the information that was obtained. First, the demographic data in section A was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Section B was analyzed using descriptive statistics involving tables, frequencies and percentages for each item. "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Strongly Disagree", "Disagree" were all used in the analysis for easy presentation and understanding. Summaries and conclusions were drawn from the findings and supported with literature.

### 3. Results and discussion

#### 3.1. Background Information of Students

This section of the chapter focused on the background information of student respondents who were in the four (4) Colleges of Education used for the study. The background information collected includes; gender and age. These background data are represented in Table 1 and Table 2.

**Table 1. Gender of students**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	74	26.7
Female	203	73.3
Total	277	100

*Source: Field Data, 2021*

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of students' respondents involved in the study. The Table shows that 74 (26.7%) of the respondents were males whilst 203 (73.3%) of the

respondents were females. This means that more females were involved in the study than males. This outcome is more so because of the involvement of single sex (female) colleges involved in the study.

**Table 2.** Age of students' respondents

Age of Students	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 20 years	8	2.9
20-25 years	243	87.7
26-30 years	26	9.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Data, 2021*

Table 2 shows that only eight (8) of the respondents accounting for 2.9% were below the ages of 20 years whilst majority 243(87.7%) of the respondents were between the ages of 20-25 years and 26(9.4%) of the respondents were between the ages of 26-30. This shows that majority of respondents involved in the study were between the ages of 20 to 25.

### 3.2. The Perceptions of Colleges of Education Students Toward the Teaching and Learning of Social Studies

Research question one sought to find out from students' respondents how they perceive the teaching and learning of Social Studies to be. Data were collected by means of a 4-point Likert-scale format. Frequency and percentages were used for the analysis. The views of the students on how they perceive the teaching and learning of Social Studies are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Perceptions regarding teaching and learning of social studies

Statements	SA f(%)	A f(%)	D f(%)	SD f(%)	Total f(%)
Social Studies contributes to solving societal problems	211(76.2)	45(16.2)	13(4.7)	8(2.9)	277(100)
Social studies is the only subject engineered to provide citizenship education	119(42.9)	106(38.3)	47(17.0)	5(1.8)	277(100)
College students show less interest in Social Studies	29(10.5)	50(18.1)	114(41.1)	84(30.3)	277(100)
Social Studies is the easiest field of study	47(17.0)	79(28.5)	104(37.5)	47(17.0)	277(100)
There should exist no Social Studies as a field of study and no Social Studies teacher	23 (8.3)	19(6.9)	45(16.2)	190(68.6)	277(100)
Students dedicate much time to studying Social Studies	47(17.0)	114(41.1)	90(32.5)	26(9.4)	277(100)

*Source: Field Data, 2021*

Table 3 shows the perceptions of Colleges of Education students' regarding teaching and learning of Social Studies. The results indicate that, majority of the students 211 (76.2%) strongly agreed that Social Studies contributes to solving societal problems whilst only 13 (2.9%) of the students strongly disagreed. This implies that students in Colleges of Education are aware of the problem-solving nature of the subject. Hence, they are ready to acquire such skills of problem-solving taught in Social Studies. Basically, possessing the knowledge about the concept of problem solution is not enough to solve a problem [52]. A human with developed problem solution abilities can use knowledge effectively in encountered problems. A human being with underdeveloped problem-solving abilities just carry the knowledge without using it functionally. Since problem solving is a learned behavior and ability, it can be considered that every individual possesses this ability at a

different level but problem solving is a skill which requires learning and developing continuously [53].

The subject, Social Studies makes children effective members of the society in the socialization process and helps them overcome their problems by following their development closely [54]. The subject, Social Studies is of particular importance in terms of having students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes to help them in their individual and social lives [55]. Social Studies is the study that equips the learner with the tools necessary for solving his personal and societal problems.

Furthermore, from table 8, the students were also asked if Social Studies is the only subject engineered to provide citizenship education. Results indicate that 119 (42.9%) of them strongly agreed to the assertion, 106(38.3%) of them agreed, whilst 47(17.0%) and 5(1.8%) of them disagreed and strongly disagreed to the assertion, respectively. Depicting that the majority of the students 225 (81.2%) see social subject as a tool for citizenship education. This result is in line with a similar study that student teachers see Social Studies as a subject meant to provide citizenship education [57]. The study also suggests that tutors in the Colleges of Education need to shift from the traditional approach to democratic and participation. The Social Studies drafted syllabus of Ghana Education Service for Senior High Schools simply states that Social Studies is "citizenship education" [58]. Social Studies is citizenship education when they stated that the Social Studies are concerned exclusively with the education of citizens [59]. In the same way, Social Studies is that part or the school general education programme which is concerned with the preparation of citizens for participation in a democratic society [60]. Blege in 2001 shares this view when he asserts that, Social Studies is citizenship education. He regards citizenship education as an instructional preparation of the youth by making them good and effective persons in their society [61].

In addition, students were also asked if College students show less interest in Social Studies. Results show that 29(10.5%) strongly disagree 84(30.3%) disagree to the assertion that "College students show less interest in Social Studies", whereas only few of them 29(10.5%) and 50(18.1%) "strongly agreed" and "agreed" to the assertion. This implies that, students have interest in the subject and therefore attach much seriousness towards the learning of the subject. This refuted the claims by a previous study that when majority of students perceived the subject to be uninteresting, unimportant and insignificant [62]. Results are also contrary the opinion of other researchers that often consider Social Studies to be dull and boring [37].

Concerning the statement, Social Studies is the easiest field of study, results from respondents indicate that, 104(37.5%) of respondents disagreed whilst 47(17.0%) strongly agreed. Results show that majority of students disagree with this assertion. This implies that, College students dedicate time to studying Social Studies since the subject is not that easy. The results do not tally with a study by National Council for Social Studies that, students show less interest in studying Social Studies because they perceive the subject as being easy and therefore, do not see the need to study it and also pay critical attention to it [12].

Again, majority 190(68.6%) of respondents strongly disagreed that, there should exist no Social Studies as a field of study, and no Social Studies teacher. The outcome indicates that, out of the 277 students involved in the study, only 19(6.9%) agreed that there should exist no Social Studies as a field of study, and no Social Studies teacher. This means that, students see Social Studies as a subject that will advance their careers and allow them to play useful roles as adult citizens.

The last item on table 8 was to survey if Social Studies students dedicate much time to studying Social Studies. Results show that, out of the 277 students involved in the study, 114(41.1%) agreed that they dedicate much time to studying Social Studies, only 26 students representing 9.4% strongly disagreed that students at the Colleges dedicate much time to studying Social Studies. This means that, students attach much seriousness to the



studying of Social Studies. Social Studies curriculum should engage students in the formulation of educational goals, selection of instructional strategies and assessment of learning outcomes; focus on the psychological and developmental needs of students; place emphasis on the social world, its challenges, strengths, and its prospects; and finally, it should put emphasis on contemporary, enduring and pervasive social problems and link them to students' real-life situations [22].

### 3.3. The Perception of Colleges of Education Students Toward the Techniques Used in Teaching Social Studies

As part of the study objectives, it was imperative to examine the attitudes of students in Colleges of Education toward the techniques used in teaching Social Studies. Data were collected by means of a 4-point Likert-scale format, and analysed using mean and standard deviation. the students' perception towards the techniques used in teaching social studies was analysed and presented in Table 4 depicting a fair illustration of the respondents' level of agreement or disagreement with each the statement asked. Whereas the standard deviation measures the precise extent or how concentrated the data (observation) vary around the mean; the more concentrated, the smaller the standard deviation. To interpret the results, where the mean is:

- Under 2.5 = Disagreed to the assertion;
- Between 2.5 and 2.9 = Agreed to the assertion;
- Over 3.0 and Higher = Strongly agreed to the assertion.

The table below present the result.

**Table 4.** Perception towards techniques used in teaching and learning Social Studies

Statements	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Child centered techniques enhance understanding in Social Studies	277	2.88	0.88
An ideal Social Studies classroom should be dominated with teacher centered techniques	277	2.18	0.73
Lecture technique makes Social Studies class boring	277	2.59	0.75
Dramatization technique arouses students' interest in Social Studies	277	2.94	0.81
Role play technique arouses students' interest in Social Studies	277	3.01	1.35
Fieldtrip technique arouses student interest in Social Studies	277	2.78	0.94
Students feel happy when a tutor invites a resource person	277	2.98	1.29

*Source: Field Data, 2021*

Table 4 elicited responses from the students on their attitudes toward the techniques employed by teachers to teach Social Studies at the Colleges. The Table shows that good proportion off the students agreed to the assertion that an ideal Social Studies classroom is child-centred. This is shown by the mean score of 2.88 and a standard deviation of 0.88. This means that social studies teachers should employ techniques that are child-centred to boost learning. Teacher are the keys and most important factor to what Social Studies will be for the student [63]. Students were also asked if an ideal Social Studies class should be dominated with teacher-centred techniques. The results show that majority of the students disagreed to the assertion. This is shown by the mean score of 2.18 and a standard deviation of 0.73, denoting that a good proportion of the student view the assertion otherwise. Thus, to them, social studies class should not be dominated with teacher-centred techniques. In other words, this implies that tutors should employ techniques that favour students learning. When instruction tends to be dominated by lecture, textbooks or worksheets techniques, Social Studies does not inspire students to learn. Again, a good number of the students disagreed that the discussion technique makes the class rowdy, any time it is employed in the lecture hall. This is shown by the mean score of 2.26 and a

standard deviation of 0.75. This result denotes that the students do not agree to the assertion that the class becomes noisy when teachers employ the discussion technique. The researcher also shares the same view with that of the respondents, since any competent Social Studies teacher can employ the discussion technique and maintain a great level of classroom atmosphere which promotes the teaching and learning of the subject. This is also consistent with the findings of an earlier study that the discussion as technique stimulates mental activity, develops fluency and ease in expression, clarity of ideas in thinking and training in the presentation of one's ideas and facts. This is very useful for Social Studies teaching, since the subject is full of issues that are confronting people in the society [64, 27]. It also concurs that discussion is the most popular technique that should be used in teaching Social Studies because it ensures democracy in the classroom and also helps in achieving affective ends especially in Social Studies teaching [27, 30-64].

Furthermore, from the table, few above the average number of the affirmed the assertion that using the lecture technique makes Social Studies class boring. This is shown by the mean score of 2.59 and a standard deviation of 0.75. This data suggests that the students are of the view that when Social Studies teachers employ the lecture technique the lesson becomes teacher-centred. Students' participation is minimized and the lesson becomes boring to the students. This is directly in line with another study that the lecture technique places emphasis on rote learning in teaching Social Studies [65]. Teachers should not rely on lecture technique to improve thought, change attitude or behavioral skills [66]. The lecture technique is very useful and appropriately good for situations where the ratio of the learner-teacher is too high and a lot of topics have to be covered in the syllabus during a specific time [67]. In addition, the data in the table 9 shows that a significant number of the students affirmed that dramatization technique employed by Social Studies teachers arouses students' interest in Social Studies. This is shown by the mean score 2.94 and a standard deviation of 0.81. that results suggest that the use of dramatization technique can sustained students' interest in the Social Studies class. This syncs with the views of other researchers that the techniques the teacher employ when teaching Social Studies has a unique influence on the curriculum and students, and that, students have much interest in Social Studies when teachers use dramatization technique [68, 69].

Moreover, overwhelming majority of the students agreed that role play technique employed by Social Studies teachers arouses students' interest in Social Studies. This is also showed by the mean score of 3.01 and a standard deviation of 1.35. This result denotes that teachers are able to sustain students' interest in social studies when the employ role play technique in teaching the subjects. Utilizing varieties of teaching techniques help engage students in the learning process. An example of engaging instructional technique is the role play technique [41]. This technique of teaching Social Studies actually encourages the learners of Social Studies to study the subject by expressing themselves especially in words. It also provides for the learners a special fun during the lesson and makes them use their initiative and opportunity to develop their cognitive abilities. Role playing is used in the classroom to teach Social Studies in order to train the students in effective way of solving problems as students pick social problems for study. It is described as a spontaneous acting out of a situation to show the emotional reaction of a real situation [70]. The African Social and Environmental Studies Programme (ASESP) in 1994 contends that the role playing as a technique used in Social Studies teaching enables the students to remember as much as eighty percent (80%) of what has been learnt. It could be concluded that, if role play is effectively adopted by a Social Studies teacher, it could provide meaningful opportunity for students to explore issues in groups and individually for themselves.

Furthermore, A significant number of the students affirmed that fieldtrip technique employed by Social Studies teachers arouses students' interest in Social Studies. This

statement is supported by the mean score of 2.78 and standard deviation of 0.94, denoting that fieldtrip technique sustain students interest in the teaching and learning Social studies. Results of the study align with previous research that, students want to use technology, go on field trips, work in cooperative learning groups, and be actively engaged with content. Passive learning, such as lecture, note-taking, busy work, worksheets, and rote memorization is what students dislike about Social Studies [44]. Lastly, a substantial proportion of the students strongly settled that students feel happy when a teacher invites resource person. Results show a mean score of 2.98 and a standard deviation of 1.29. This means that students are comfortable when teachers bring in resource persons to teach some aspects of the content in Social Studies.

#### 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study revealed that students were able to dedicate much time to studying the subject in order to acquire relevant knowledge, positive attitudes and skills as well as solve societal problems stems from their ability to have good perception of the subject. Again, the ability of the subject to have good reputation as relevant in the school curriculum hinges on the ability of Social Studies students to perceive the subject positively. The study also concludes that varying techniques of teaching is a key factor in enabling students to develop keen interest in Social Studies. It arouses and sustain students' interest in the subject, they must not neglect employing methods that are student-centered. This implies that, student-centered techniques such as discussion, fieldtrips, dramatization, role play etc. is very significant in realizing that the classroom atmosphere is interest driven. The study further indicates that tutors' ability to vary their techniques of teaching is a fundamental ingredient in evaluating their competence. This posits that teacher-centered techniques like lecture, are necessary but must be limited in usage. This is because using it all the time creates a culture of boredom in the classroom environment.

It is recommended that teachers should vary their methods of teaching to focus more on the use of child-centered techniques of teaching. They should be critical in deciding which techniques work best and for which lesson such techniques are needed. Social Studies teachers should engage resource persons in areas where they find difficulties since inviting resource persons stimulate students' interest. It is also recommended that, teaching universities and colleges of education should collaboration with Ministry of Education, T-TEL and other Non-governmental educational organizations to organise workshops, and seminars to help Social Studies teachers on the use of vary teaching techniques in evaluating students learning.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization EOY, STD, , JY and CA; methodology, EOY, STD, , JY and CA; validation, EOY, STD, , JY and CA; formal analysis, EOY, STD, , JY and CA; investigation, EOY, STD, , JY and CA.; resources, EOY, STD, , JY and CA.; data curation, EOY, STD, , JY and CA; writing—original draft preparation, EOY, STD, , JY and CA; writing—review and editing, EOY, STD, , JY and CA; visualization, EOY, STD, , JY and CA; supervision, EOY, STD, , JY and CA.; project administration, EOY, STD, , JY and CA; All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** “This research received no external funding”

**Data Availability Statement:** Data is available on request from the corresponding author.

**Acknowledgments:** we acknowledge the participants in this study.

**Conflicts of Interest:** “The authors declare no conflict of interest.” “No funders had any role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results”.

## References

- [1] Jorgenson, D. W., & Fraumeni, B. M. (2020). Investment in education and US economic growth. In *The US savings challenge* (pp. 114-149). Routledge.
- [2] Almazova, N., Bylieva, D., Lobatyuk, V., & Rubtsova, A. (2019, October). Human behavior as the source of data in the education system. In *Proceedings of the 2019 International SPBPU Scientific Conference on Innovations in Digital Economy* (pp. 1-7).
- [3] Fazey, I., Schöpke, N., Caniglia, G., Hodgson, A., Kendrick, I., Lyon, C., & Saha, P. (2020). Transforming knowledge systems for life on Earth: Visions of future systems and how to get there. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 70, 101724.
- [4] Meier, L. T. (2021). Social Studies Education in a Multicultural Society (Elementary Education).
- [5] Gao, J. (2020). Asian American Students' Perceptions of Social Studies. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 22(3), 76-95
- [6] Mathé, N. E. H. (2019). Democracy and politics in upper secondary social studies: Students' perceptions of democracy, politics, and citizenship preparation.
- [7] Alazzi, K., & Chiodo, J. J. (2004). Students' perceptions of social studies: A study of middle school and high school students in Jordan. *International Journal of Scholarly Academic Intellectual Diversity*, 8(1), 3-13.
- [8] Bekoe, S. O. & Eshun, I. (2013a). Curriculum feuding and implementation challenges: The case of Senior High School (SHS) social studies in Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(5), 39-45.
- [9] Eshun, I. (2013). Appraisal of colleges of education social studies curriculum vis-à-vis the Junior High School (JHS) social studies curriculum implementation in Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(1), 12-18.
- [10] Quashigah, A. Y., Dake, Y. G., Bekoe, S. O., Eshun, I., & Bordoh, A. (2014). Evaluation of Colleges of Education (CoE) social studies curriculum vis-à-vis the Junior High School (JHS) social studies curriculum in Ghana. *European Journal of Training and Development Studies*, 1(2), 1-13.
- [11] Print, M. (1990). *Curriculum Review of Social Studies and Social Science education*. Perth: Studies Ministry of Education.
- [12] National Council for Social Studies. (2014). College, career and civic life (C3) framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for enhancing the rigor of K-12 civics, economics, geography and history. *NCSS Bulletin* (113).
- [13] Bordoh, A., Eshun, I., Brew, E., Osman, S., Kofie, S., & Kwarteng, P. (2019) Evaluation of Attitudes and Factors Toward Practicing of Concepts in Social Studies Curriculum in Senior High Schools in Ghana. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Studies*, 1(3), 34-47.
- [14] Bordoh, A., Eshun, I., Kwarteng, P., Osman, S., Brew, E., & Bakar, A. (2018). Professional qualification of teachers in teaching and learning of Social Studies concepts in the Senior High Schools in Ghana. *American Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(2), 25-28.
- [15] Nyantakyi, F., Bordoh, A., Anim, C., & Brew, E. (2020). Social Studies Curriculum: Teachers' Conception and Efficacy Beliefs in Junior High Schools in Ghana. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 6 (4), 297-308.
- [16] Eshun, I. & Mensah, M. F. (2013). Investigation of pedagogical content knowledge of graduate social studies teachers in Senior High Schools in the Western Region of Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(4), 176-184.
- [17] Quashigah, A. Y., Eshun, I., & Mensah, M. F. (2013). Influences of the pedagogical content knowledge of graduate social studies teachers on questions they set in Senior High Schools in Ghana. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(6), 76-86.
- [18] Bordoh, A., Brew, E., Otoo, K. A., Owusu-Ansah, P., & Yaw, O. E. (2021). Use of Teacher's Profile Dimensions to Assess Social Studies Student's Learning Outcomes at The Senior High Schools in Ghana. *Innovare Journal of Education*, 9(4), 14-21.
- [19] Eshun, I., Bordoh, A., Bassaw, T. K., & Mensah, M. F. (2014). Evaluation of social studies students' learning using formative assessment in selected Colleges of Education in Ghana. *British Journal of Education*, 2(1), 39-48.
- [20] Bordoh, A., Eshun, I., Ibrahim, A. W., Bassaw, T. K., Baah, A., & Yeboah, J. (2022). Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) of Teachers and Their Formative Assessment Practices in Social Studies Lessons. *Universal Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(4), 201-209.
- [21] Jibililu, O. S. (2021). Assessing How Social Studies Teachers in Senior High Schools Use Out-of-Door Activities in Their Teaching in Ho Municipality of Ghana. *Social Education Research*, 185-204.
- [22] Bariham, I., Yirbekyaa, K. E., & Bordoh, A. (2022). Teachers Perspective on Redesigning Social Studies Curriculum for Student-Centered and Constructivist Learning: Empirical Study of Secondary Schools, Northern Region. *Social Education Research*, 3(2), 307- 321.
- [23] Omolara, S. R., & Adebukola, O. R. (2015). Teachers' attitudes: a great influence on teaching and learning of Social Studies. *JL Pol'y & Globalization*, 42, 131.
- [24] Uge, S., Neolaka, A., & Yasin, M. (2019). Development of Social Studies Learning Model Based on Local Wisdom in Improving Students' Knowledge and Social Attitude. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(3), 375-388.
- [25] Bordoh, A., Eshun, I., Quarshie, A. M., Bassaw, T. K., & Kwarteng, P. (2015). Social Studies Teachers' Knowledge Base in Authentic Assessment in Selected Senior High Schools in the Central Region of Ghana. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 1(3), 249-257.
- [26] Quashigah, A. Y., Kankam, B., Bekoe, S. O., Eshun, I., & Bordoh, A. (2015). Mentees' Social Studies Curriculum Conceptions and Their Classroom Practices in the Junior High Schools (JHSs) in Ghana. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 1(3), 69-78.
- [27] Bekoe, S. O., Eshun, I., & Bordoh, A. (2013). Formative assessment techniques tutors use to assess teacher-trainees' learning in Social Studies in Colleges of Education in Ghana. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(4), 20-30.

- [28] Boadu, K. (2012). Citizenship education in colleges of education in Ghana: An exploratory study of the perceptions of teacher trainees and tutors of Social Studies. (Unpublished thesis), University of Cape Coast.
- [29] Celikkaya, T., & Filoglu, S. (2014). Attitudes of social studies teachers toward value and values education.
- [30] Ayaaba, D. A., Eshun, I., & Bordoh, A. (2014). Achieving the citizenship education goal of the social studies curriculum in Ghanaian Senior High Schools: Challenges and the way forward. *Open Science Journal of Education*, 2 (6), 61-65.
- [31] Siburian, J., Corebima, A. D., & Saptasari, M. (2019). The correlation between critical and creative thinking skills on cognitive learning results. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 19(81), 99-114.
- [32] Mahler, D., Grossschedl, J., & Harms, U. (2018). Does motivation matter?—The relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and enthusiasm and students' performance. *PloS one*, 13(11), e0207252.
- [33] Bølling, M., Otte, C. R., Elsborg, P., Nielsen, G., & Bentsen, P. (2018). The association between education outside the classroom and students' school motivation: Results from a one-school-year quasi-experiment. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 89, 22-35.
- [34] Kankam, B., Bordoh, A., Eshun, I., Bassaw, T. K., & Fredrick Yaw Korang, F. Y. (2014). Teachers' perception of authentic assessment techniques practice in Social Studies lessons in Senior High Schools in Ghana. *International Journal of Educational Research and Information Science*, 1(4), 62-68.
- [35] Law, K. M., Geng, S., & Li, T. (2019). Student enrollment, motivation and learning performance in a blended learning environment: The mediating effects of social, teaching, and cognitive presence. *Computers & Education*, 136, 1-12.
- [36] Ellis, A., Fouts, J. & Glenn, A. (1992). *Teaching and learning social studies*. New York: Harper-Collins Press.
- [37] Chiodo, J. & Byford, J. (2006). Do they really dislike social studies? A study of middle school and high school students. *The Journal of Social Studies Research*, 28(1), 16-26.
- [38] Byford, J. & Russell, W. (2006). Analyzing public issues: Clarification through discussion: A case study of social studies teachers. *Social Studies Review*, 46(1), 70-72.
- [39] VanSledright, B. (2004). What does it mean to think historically and how do you teach it? *Social Education*, 68(3), 230-233.
- [40] Hoagland, M. (2000). *Utilizing constructivism in the history classroom*. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies / Social Science Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction No. ED 482436).
- [41] Driscoll, M. P. (2005). *Psychology of learning for instruction* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- [42] Stahl, R. (Ed.). (1994). *Cooperative learning in Social Studies: A handbook for teachers*. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- [43] Dow, P. (1979). MACOS: Social studies in crisis. *Educational Leadership*, 43, 1, 35-39.
- [44] Russell, W. B., & Waters, S. (2021). *Essentials of elementary social studies*. Routledge.
- [45] Russell, W. (2007). *Using film in the social studies*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- [46] Russell, W. & Byford, J. (2006). The evolution of man and his tools: A simulation from the MACOS project. *The Journal for the Liberal Arts and Sciences*, 10(3), 17-21.
- [47] Asante, K. O. (2012). Secondary students' attitudes towards mathematics. *IFE Psychologia: An International Journal*, 20(1), 121-133.
- [48] Ozlem, K. A. F., & Yilmaz, O. U. (2017). Effects of creative drama method on students' attitude towards social studies, academic achievement and retention in Turkey. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 6(3), 289-298.
- [49] Hwang, G. J., Chiu, L. Y., & Chen, C. H. (2015). A contextual game-based learning approach to improving students' inquiry-based learning performance in social studies courses. *Computers & Education*, 81, 13-25.
- [50] Bryman, A. (2008). *Social research methods*, (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [51] Mukui, M. R. (2013). *The influence of media on behaviour among secondary school students in Kitui central sub-county, Kitui county*. University of Nairobi: Nairobi Press.
- [52] Altun, M. (2013). *Teaching mathematics for faculties of education and classroom teachers* (18th ed.). Bursa
- [53] Ulusoy, Y. Ö., Varlıklı, G. Ö., Dağ, F., Sahranç, Ü., & Turan, H. (2014). Personal, educational and vocational needs profiles of Kocaeli University students: problems and solution suggestions. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 116, 1059-1063.
- [54] Celikkaya, T., & Filoglu, S. (2014). Attitudes of social studies teachers toward value and values education.
- [55] Güleç, S. (2020). Problem solving skills in Social Studies education and problem solving skills of social studies teachers. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 8, 48 10.11114/jets.v8i3.4686.
- [56] Quartey, S. M. (2003). The 1987 J.S.S. Social studies syllabus in Ghana: An Analytical Content Review. In *International Journal of Educational studies (IJESt)*, 2, ISSN 1119-8451.
- [57] Almaamari, S. & Menter, I. (2013). Citizenship education: The perceptions of social studies Omani student teachers. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies [JEPS]*, 7, 446..
- [58] Ghana Education Service. (2010). *Senior high school Social Studies draft syllabus*. Accra: Curriculum Research and Development Division.
- [59] Ersoy, A. F. (2014). Active and democratic citizenship education and its challenges in social studies classroom. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 55(55), 1-19.
- [60] Shaver, J. P. (1991). *Handbook of research on social studies teaching and learning*. New York: Macmillan.
- [61] Blege, W. (2001). *Social studies: Theory and practice*. Accra: Wallyblege Publications.



- 
- [62] Smilowitz, S. D. (2011). *Social Studies for the Twenty-First Century: Methods and Materials for Teaching in Middle and Secondary Schools*: Zevin, Jack. 2008. New York: Routledge. 432 pp., \$59.03, paperback. *The Social Studies*, 102(2), 94-94.
- [63] Mensah, R. O. (2020). The attitude of students towards the Learning of Social Studies and their performance: The case of Accra Metropolitan Assembly in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. *Mensah, Ronald Osei, The Attitude of Students Towards the Learning of Social Studies and Their Performance: The Case of Accra Metropolitan Assembly in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana* (Feb 20, 2020).
- [64] Aggarwal, J. C. (2001). *Teaching of social studies: A practical approach* (4 edn.). New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House. PVT Ltd.
- [65] Agyeman-Fokuo, A. (1994). *Social studies teaching: Issues and problems* Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- [66] Bligh, D. (2002). What is the use of lectures? *Raraarch an introduction* (4th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- [67] Ayaaba, D. A. & Odumah, L. K. (2013). *Skills and techniques of teaching Social Studies*. Cape Coast: Yaci Publications.
- [68] Sung, P. F., & Yang, M. L. (2013). Exploring disciplinary background effect on social studies teachers' knowledge and pedagogy. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 106(1), 77-88.
- [69] Datto, A. K., & Chagani, Z. M. (2011). Street theatre: Critical pedagogy for social studies education. *Social Studies Research and Practice*.
- [70] Martorella, P. (1994). *Elementary Social Studies: Developing reflective, competent and concerned citizens*. Boston, Little Brown & Co.
- [71] African Social and Environmental Studies Programme. (1994). *Asesp Social Studies: Curriculum and teaching resource book for Africa*. Nairobi.