

Frequently Used Teaching Learning Resources In Teaching Geography Lessons In Social Studies In Colleges Of Education, Ghana

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Abstract: Teaching learning materials or resources is considered or observed as a potent factor to quality education all over the world. The way and manner teaching learning materials or resources are used by teachers determines the behavior of the final products. When trainees are taught with good teaching and learning materials, they turn to understand concepts, ideas, facts and principles better and are capable of repeating their actions when the need arises. The dictum that “teaching is inseparable from learning but learning is separable from teaching” is that teachers do the teaching to make the students learn, but students cannot learn without the teachers. The study was non experimental and the descriptive survey design was employed to explain issues and concepts. The target population consists of sixty-two participants in seven public colleges of education and five private colleges. The study employed a self-developed questionnaire as the instrument for the data collection.

Index Items: Resources, teaching Aids, learning Aids, Instruction, dictum.

I. INTRODUCTION

THE CONCEPT OF TEACHING RESOURCES

According to Tamakloe (2005), a teaching resource is “a material which the teacher uses to facilitate the learners understanding or acquisition of knowledge, concepts, principles or skills by his students.” In short, it is what the teacher prepares or uses to make learning easier than it would have been without it. Calder (1997) believes that teaching aids are “educate agents” he considers them to be “inclusive of any specially designed comprehensive set of materials, techniques, equipment and even activities that will stimulate and encourage learning.” This means that any foreign materials introduced in a classroom which will “catch” the attention of the students and improve their willingness or maximise learning.

Again, Carlton (1968) states that “teaching materials are instructional resources that may be used to convey meaning without complete dependency upon verbal symbols of languages.” Goetz (1988) referred to instructional resources as “instructional media”. These are seen as mere aids rather than substitutes for the teacher. The teacher is, therefore, able to concentrate on the “central job” which is promoting understanding, intellectual curiosity and creative activity in the learner.

On the contributions of various forms of instructional materials, researchers emphasized that the availability, relevance and adequacy of educational resources contribute to academic achievement. It has been found that unattractive school buildings and surroundings, crowded classrooms and non-availability of playing ground can lead to poor academic performance (Hallack, 1990).

Teaching learning resources has been categorised into Visual Aids-Teaching Learning Materials; Audio Aids-

Teaching Learning Materials, Audio-visual Aids-Teaching Learning Materials and Community Resources teaching aids.

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS-TEACHING LEARNING MATERIALS

VISUAL AIDS-TEACHING LEARNING MATERIALS

These are instructional resources that communicate to learners through the sense of sight. Some visual materials that are useful to the teaching of geography component of social studies are:

- ✓ Still pictures.
- ✓ Boards such as chalkboard, bulletin board and magnetic board and smart boards.
- ✓ Graphic materials such as charts and diagrams.

Coppen (1969) divides pictures into those that are projected and those that are not projected. The projected devices are those that need help of equipment to project what they have before learners can make use of them. Examples of projected materials are pictures on slides, film strips, overhead projectors and opaque projectors. The non-projected ones are those that do not use any equipment before learners can use them. Examples are photographs and illustrations. Aggarwal (1982) states "a chart is a combination of pictorial, graphic, numerical or vertical materials which presents a clear-visual summary." In the words of Dale (1969), charts are "...visual symbols for summarizing, comparing, contrasting or performing other services in explaining subject matter. Erickson and Carl (1972) group most of the other visual resources under what they call graphic symbols "...hence we identify for consideration such teaching materials as maps, graph...diagrams and charts." Finally, Dell (1996) identifies the chalkboard, film charts, projectors and film stripes or slides as visual aids.

AUDIO AIDS-TEACHING LEARNING MATERIALS

Audio aids are instructional resources that communicate to learners through the sense of hearing. In teaching and learning of geography, the following examples of audio aids can be used:

- ✓ Tape recorder
- ✓ Radio
- ✓ The teacher's voice

Dell (1996) defines audio resources as instruments which is primary for hearing. "It aids in the production of accurate pronunciation of words and creates a good communication skill" Dell (1996). Tomlinson and Elis (1990) also classify the language laboratory, tape recorder and the radio as audio resources. The tape recorder is an audio resource with a magnetic material used for recording sounds or information for broadcast. This item enables the teacher and the learner to capture or record the information they want to teach and learn.

More so, the teacher's voice is the commonest audio aid in the teaching-learning process. This audio aid is, however, taken for granted since most teachers fail to see their voices as audio resource. As an aid, the teacher's voice must be clear and audible so that learners can hear him or her well in the classroom.

Farrant (1980) defines audio-visual resources as "aids to learning and teaching that communicate through the ear, the eye or both." For Tamakloe, Amedahe & Atta (2005) audio visual resources are those which cater for both audio and visual perception. According to Erickson and Carl (1972), audio-visuals are materials that may be used to convey meaning without complete dependency on verbal symbols or languages. Ayinde (1997) opines that an intelligent use of audio-visual aids will save time and stimulate students' interest. It increases the retention of knowledge and stimulates attitude. They help student to recognize a problem, provide solution and summarize discussion. More so, they facilitate independent studies, aid communication, create a variety of sensory and make instructions more powerful and immediate.

To support this assertion, Richard (1981), in his study found that human being remember 10% of what they hear, 50% of what is heard and seen, and over 80% of what is heard, seen and done. Dale (1969, p. 51) also used the old Chinese proverb to express the same view:

"I hear, and forget
I see, and remember
I do, and I understand."

The types of audio-visual resources expected to be made available to schools includes computers, televisions, overhead projectors and video players. These if available, will help students to understand the lesson and make the lesson very interesting. It will also help the teacher to talk less and therefore enhance classroom participation.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES TEACHING AIDS

Community resources refer to both human and material resources that are employed by teachers in instructional process. The human resources are the resource personnel or people who are knowledgeable and well vexed in an area of learning experience and who are willing and ready to come upon invitation or can be called upon by teachers to the school to give talks on a topic or hold discussion with the learners, Nacino-Brown, Oke & Brown (1982). The material resource refers to workshop, seminars and field trips to places of interest like museums, zoos and forest reserves. According to Stone and Jacobs (2006), a good teaching strategy for teaching and learning requires access to the world beyond the classroom so that students will see the relevance and usefulness of what they learn both in and out of school. Changing educational experience of students by moving beyond the classroom wall can diversify the array of learning opportunities and connect school lessons with daily life and real problems.

Also, Jekayinfa (n. d) carried out a study to find out the effects of instructional resources on the academic achievement of secondary school students in History in Ogbomosho North and Central Local Government areas of Oyo State. The questionnaire and History Achievement Test indicate that adequate supply of instructional resources had significant effects on students' performance in history. The study also revealed that schools with adequate teacher quality and

material resources in History showed superiority in achievements on the history test than schools without adequate teacher quality and material resources.

According to Eshiwani (1986), the availability of textbooks has been found to be the most consistently positive determinant of academic achievement. In a study on the quality of private secondary schools in Kenya, Eshiwani found that there is a clear relationship between the availability of textbooks and students' academic achievement in mathematics. He argues that the language of textbooks affects pupils' understanding and that, it is also common to find pupils memorising a whole page of a textbook and reproducing it perfectly in the examination. Consequently, this will make such student to perform well in the subject. The study also revealed that the availability of textbooks influenced the instructional styles used by teachers of mathematics. In a similar study, Walstad and Rebeck (2001) found that school economics students scored significantly higher on nationally normed tests than those who never had access to quality textbooks. All these findings underscore the positive relationship between textbooks as a form of instructional materials and students' academic performance.

Cobbold and Adabo (2010) note that access to textbooks and other instructional materials are linked to academic achievement: they are required for teaching and learning, they are necessary for students if they are to pass high stakes tests and to meet entrance requirements for colleges and universities. They studied assessment of resources and methods for teaching and learning History in Senior High Schools in the Central Region of Ghana. It is therefore, unfortunate that these critical educational inputs are not available in the schools. With the effective use of audiovisual resources in the classroom, Orstein and Lasley (2000) posit that display such as aids only when you talk about them; explain visuals to your audience; use a marker or highlighter when using an overhead to focus students on key points; use the K-i-s-s(keep it short and simple) principle –minimize detail. Make sure visuals are readable from the back of the room (p.178). This underscores the need to follow the principles governing a particular instructional resource. Failure to abide by these principles will definitely undermine and water-down the usefulness as well as the effectiveness of the resource.

Aggarwal (1982) cited in Tamakloe (1994), stress that we should ponder to ask whether rooms which contain vital minimum facilities for effective education of Social Studies teachers do exist in our teacher training colleges, In his bid to make a case for the existence of Social Studies rooms in institutions, he posits: "This is a must for every school" (p. 142).

Das (1993) describe that charts are generally used during lecture and discussion about the relationships of the things. The author, then, counted some characteristics of chart. According to him, words are written neatly and perfectly in block letters in Charts. Likewise, each item may be written inside a box, lines are drawn, and if necessary, arrows are placed to indicate relationships and directions of flow. Colours may be used to make the chart attractive. The author also described that different items of food and their proper proportion to constitute a balanced diet can be shown in a

chart. Similarly, a chart may also be prepared to compare and contrast two things. In the same way, a flow chart may be prepared to show how a particular thing or products flows or moves through different steps or departments in an organization. Furthermore, the device that projects the small transparencies in to larger views on the board is called overhead projector. Through overhead projector, students are able to read, look and understand the text, graph, picture or anything other written or drawn on the transparencies. Overhead projectors are becoming common and popular, and are widely used in normal teaching, especially in the seminars and workshops. An overhead projector is provided only to the urban public secondary schools. However, it is rarely used as an instructional material in the classrooms of public schools in Pakistan.

Ahmad (1993) found that scholastic factors including basic facilities in school and academic facilities in schools were subjected to significant correlation with the examination results. These factors play a significant role in the improvement of educational standards. However, a positive effect on education standards may be obtained if appropriate conditions are created in relation to these factors.

Heyneman and Loxley (1980) found that there were inadequate and poor school facilities in the developing countries. These inadequate and poor school facilities affected the students to perform much below as compared to the student performance of the developed countries. This study pointed out that the achievement of standard eight students of Malawi in science and mathematics was low. This achievement was low as compared to that of Thailand, Iran, Chile and the developed countries such as Sweden, USA and UK. This study also presented some arguments about the developing countries, in general and Malawi, in particular. These arguments are: At the minimum a school is acceptable if it can provide a place for students to work without the danger of a roof collapsing; if neither wind nor rain sends students into a corner for protection; if there is a place for each to sit down, a place to write, material to write with, and a certain minimal number of maps, charts, and reference books from which to derive information. (p. 13)

A resourceful instruction needs to give all students the opportunity to grasp the content taught at a time. The production of well-informed citizens who will be useful to their respective local communities and nations is the ultimate goal of Social Studies. For instance, Barr (1999) considers Social Studies to be the integration of experience and knowledge concerning human relations for the purpose of Citizenship Education. Savage & Armstrong (2004) also contend that citizenship is a key element and a major justification for Social Studies education, so it is expected that a good Citizenship Education programme will produce young people who will leave school with a disposition to become actively involved in public affairs and contribute fundamentally to social progress.

The H.M. Inspectorate (1988) examine the effective use of audio visual resources in most History departments in Scotland. The study showed that film strips, videos and audio tapes were commonly used as a basis for class lessons to stimulate pupils' interest and develop their understanding. They concluded that the recent development is increasing

emphasis on resource-based learning and the consequent organization of learning and teaching at particular points in the course to enable the pupils themselves to have access to a wider range of resources and assignments.

Servey (1981) reveals that teachers do not use instructional materials that cater for different learning abilities of learners. Servey followed and observed a single school for a period of a year to find out if they used productive instructional materials for teaching Social Studies. The findings show that instructional materials used by teachers did not meet learners' needs in terms of their level of skills. No two individuals learn exactly the same way; the most appropriate means to learning appears to be highly individualistic and is directly related to the type of learning desired.

Killen (2006) has made the same observation on the shortage of instructional materials in schools by indicating that; "the issue of resources may not be easy to resolve, but the important thing is that teachers should not use lack of resources as an excuse for not teaching well (p.276)." The implication here is that alternatives are out there and teachers should refrain from being solely dependent on the local council for ready-made materials, they should reach out for local materials and improvise whenever need arises.

According to Eshiwani (1986), the availability of textbooks has been found to be the most consistently positive determinant of academic achievement. In a study on the quality of private secondary schools in Kenya, Eshiwani found that there is a clear relationship between the availability of textbooks and students' academic achievement in mathematics. He argues that the language of textbooks affects pupils' understanding and that, it is also common to find pupils memorising a whole page of a textbook and reproducing it perfectly in the examination. Consequently, this will make such student to perform well in the subject. The study also revealed that the availability of textbooks influenced the instructional styles used by teachers of mathematics. In a similar study, Walstad and Rebeck (2001) found that school economics students scored significantly higher on nationally normed tests than those who never had access to quality textbooks. All these findings underscore the positive relationship between textbooks as a form of instructional materials and students' academic performance.

Lack of use of appropriate materials for the intellectual level of the students denies them active participation in their learning. Jotia (2006) has observed this and posits that, "lack of student involvement in the teaching process makes teachers the subjects of the learning process while students are dissolved to the level of objects that are just receiving deposits and their critical awareness is compromised" (p.92). Teachers should bear in mind that the effective teaching of Social Studies which can help them achieve the goals of Citizenship Education is learnt through participating, doing, and experiencing. It was also declared during the site observations that some instructional materials were not used because of lack of power to operate them. During the interviews, one concerned Lejwana teacher relayed: Radio lessons are part of the day-to-day Social Studies teaching but students never receive such programmes. We have long been supplied with radios and were supplied with batteries only once. We cannot

even play the recorded cassettes. These programmes are very important as they were made in accordance with the syllabus objectives.

Merryfield and Maryanda-Mutebi (1991) stressing the importance of teaching/learning materials to the development of Social Studies in Africa remarked that over the past 20 years, the adoption of Social Studies has become synonymous with the development of new syllabi (the scope and sequence of courses) teacher guide (instructional methods and content to help teachers teach the syllabi) student texts and other teaching aids and resources. They add that some countries endowed with Social Studies expertise develop methods books and content books for teacher education programmes at variety of levels (certificate, diploma, degree). Unfortunately, most of the African countries moved more quickly in telling teachers to teach Social Studies than in providing them the instructional materials with which to teach. Since the inception of the African Social Studies movement, teachers have consistently complained about the quantity of materials for African Social Studies programme (1985).

Warschauer (2006) conducted a study in a 10 diverse one-to one laptop programs in California and Maine in a mixed-methods multi-site case study. The laptop programs took place in urban, suburban, and rural schools, in high-SES and low-SES neighborhoods, and in regular education, gifted and alternative education programs, as well as in programs targeted to second language learners. The study confirmed prior research indicating that teaching and learning changes markedly in the laptop classroom (Silvernail & Lane, 2004; Walker, Rockman, & Chessler, 2000). With students having constant access to a computer and the Internet, teachers can much more easily integrate technology into instruction without having to be concerned about when computers may or not be available. Teachers can also move quickly past instructing students on hardware and software operations (because children, with their own laptop, learn these matters quickly) and focus on underlying instructional content. In schools where students are allowed to take laptops home, the laptops become what one student in our study called a "portable study guide,"(Warschauer, 2006, p. 135), providing children a place and means to organize all their school work; take, review, and edit their notes; search for, maintain, and incorporate educational resources; and bring all these resources back and forth between school and home.

Nwachukwu (1984) discovered in her survey of the resources for the teaching and learning of Biology in some of the new secondary schools in Lagos that there was a general inadequacy of resources. She also found out among other things that (a) out of 80 per cent of the old schools that accepted as having laboratories, none had a well-equipped laboratory and (b) 40 per cent of the schools had no laboratory at all, while the remaining 60 per cent had rooms labeled "laboratory" without adequate apparatus, she concluded that teaching of Biology practical by teachers would be difficult and that students learning experiences would be limited. The various teaching learning materials should be capable of building in students clear, accurate and promote active participation of students in the teaching learning situation. It is therefore important that teachers who are the foot soldiers of implementing the curriculum realise the key role they play in

the selection, use and maintenance of instructional resources in the classroom to ensure that effective learning is achieved through seeing, hearing, feeling and manipulation.

II. METHODS

This research which was non-experimental in nature sought to explore and describe the frequently used teaching and learning resources that are used by tutors who teach geography component of the social studies curriculum at the Colleges of Education, in the Central, Eastern and Ashanti Regions of Ghana. The descriptive survey design was employed to help observe and describe the state of affairs regarding the teaching of the geographical aspect of the social studies curriculum. This descriptive study was a cross-sectional survey in which aggregated data were collected from different respondents at different points in time. A survey design was used because of its flexibility as expose by Babbie (2007); He states that surveys are flexible and hence allows many questions to be asked on a given topic. Descriptive studies look at individuals, groups, institutions, methods and materials in order to describe, compare, contrast, classify, analyse and interpret the entities and the events that constitute their various fields of inquiry” (p. 205). Similarly, other researchers (Pilot & Hungler, 1995; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000) hypothesise that descriptive studies describe a given state of affair of phenomenon as fully and carefully as possible by asking the same set of questions from a large number of individuals. This design helps to produce a good amount of responses from a wide range of people. The target population for the study comprised 62 social studies tutors in the 12 Colleges of Education in the Ashanti and Central Regions of Ghana. Out of the total number of 62 tutors, 10 social studies tutors were teaching in three private institutions while the remaining 52 social studies tutors were teaching in nine public Colleges of Education. The target group was made up of both male and female social studies tutors who have been teaching the subject in their various colleges for a number of years and hence possessed relevant information on factors that affect the teaching and learning of the geography component of the social studies curriculum at the college level. The sample size that was used to conduct this study consisted of 62 social studies tutors in the Colleges of Education

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study sought to find out the available teaching learning materials used by tutors in teaching geography. To find out the availability, tutors were asked to respond by agreeing or disagreeing to each statement. The mean score (M) and Standard deviation (SD) scores were computed for the four point likert-type scale was used to provide an in-depth understanding of tutors responds. It is evidence from the study that tutors agree that there are enough books, pamphlets and other available materials for them to consult in order to study general and specific objectives, content and teaching learning activities.

The study also revealed that internet facilities and community resources (resource persons and places of interest) are available to support the teaching and learning of geography component of social studies curriculum. However, the study shows that the geography component of social studies is likely to suffer from lack of important teaching learning materials .thus it has been realized that a greater number of the needed instructional materials are not available. Among the materials that were identified as unavailable are students’ textbooks, teachers guide, geography syllabus, specimen and audio –visual materials. The results from the study imply that substantial amount of the necessary teaching learning materials are not available for use by tutors in the study colleges. This presupposes that effective teaching and learning of the subject is likely to be challenged by unavailability of these teaching and learning materials. This finding contradicts a study by Eshiwani (1986) who stated that the availability of textbooks has been found to be the most consistently positive determinant of academic achievement. Eshiwani found out that there are clear relationship between the availability of textbooks and students’ academic achievement in mathematics.

With mean of means score of 3.50, average standard deviation of 0.73. The values assigned to the various mean scores are as follows; 1.0-1.4 strongly disagree, 1.5-2.4, disagree, 2.5-3.4 agree, and 3.5-4.0= strongly agree. The overall opinion of geography tutors shows by the mean of means of 3.50, and SD=0.73; indicate clearly that teaching learning materials play a vital role in the teaching of geography. In their view, these materials help them to teach the subject well and also assist students to learn. Most college tutors strongly agree that with the statement that teaching learning materials promote students understanding of geographical facts and knowledge; (M=3.45, SD=0.84). Tutors supported the idea that the use of instructional teaching learning materials encourages students centered learning and help students to gain additional knowledge of geographical concepts as indicated by (M=3.50, SD=0.80) and (M=3.61, SD=0.64) respectively.

IV. SAMPLE SIZE AND INSTRUMENT

The sample size that was used to conduct this study consisted of sixty-two (62) social studies tutors in 12 Colleges of Education. These individuals were used as the sample for the study because they have been teaching the subject and would be the appropriate respondents to provide the needed information concerning the topic under investigation. Thus, the sample possessed knowledge in the geography component. I employed a self-developed questionnaire as the instrument for the data collection.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper concludes that
✓ The materials making up the content of geography are so large that it becomes impossible for tutors to complete

their topics within the period allotted to them on the time table.

- ✓ Recommended textbooks, pamphlets, maps and globes, are available for tutors to consult in their teaching and learning process.
- ✓ Tutors lack the needed requisite knowledge, facts and ideas to operate and manipulate the available materials in their colleges.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

The ministry of education in collaboration with Ghana education service should adequately provide all colleges that offer geography with the necessary teaching learning materials. Teaching learning materials such as students textbooks, teachers guide, geography curriculum, globes, compasses, charts, maps, specimen among others should be timely provided to all deserving colleges. When this is done, the theoretical efforts college tutors put in to explain concepts to students would reduce drastically whereas their practical gained knowledge in geography is improved.

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