



Research Article

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Effects of Audio-Visual Aids on Junior High School Students' Academic Achievement in Social Studies in the Ho Municipality, Volta Region - Ghana.

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Abstract: The study examined how audio-visual aids affected junior high school students' academic achievement in Social Studies in the Ho Municipality of Ghana's Volta Region. A case study design which is qualitative in nature was employed in the study. The study was underpinned by theory of Dual-Coding which was propounded by Paivio (1971). There were 67 junior high school pupils in the research sample. For the study, a census-based methodology was used. Data from pupils was gathered using interview guides, and an observation guide. The frequency, percentage, and theme analysis were used to analyze the data. The study discovered that social studies instructors at junior high schools in the Ho Municipality employed a variety of strategies, including bringing pupils on field trips and engaging them in community learning. It was suggested that the Ghana Education Service and the Ministry of Education hold seminars, conferences, and workshops to educate Social Studies instructors about the value of utilizing audio-visual resources during the teaching-learning process. Additionally, it was suggested that the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) offer a course on the appropriate use of audio-visual materials in the Social Studies curriculum at colleges of education to train aspiring Social Studies teachers.

Keywords: Audio-Visual Aids, Academic achievement, Students, Social Studies, Ho Municipality

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INTRODUCTION

Instructional media was first used in the Stone Age period (World Encyclopedia, 2001). Ancient Egypt used hieroglyphics for visual communication of thoughts. Parents used them as symbols to teach their wards how to kill wild animals such as elephants and antelopes accurately during their hunting and farming (Britannica, 2018). Apart from that, parents taught their kids about the world position by using local maps drawn on the floor, and religion was taught using pictures drawn on the walls and caves (Kaswa, 2015). By looking at these cases, we can see how visual aids affected teaching in these periods. These findings are further reinforced by the fact that learning is more effective when sensory experiences are stimulated. This supposes that when audio-visual aids are used, learning becomes more effective.

In the 2019 Webster dictionary, audio-visual aids refer to instructional or educational materials aimed at both the ears and the eyes, like motion pictures, recordings, photos used in classroom manuals, library collections or the like. Audio-visual education, which uses supplementary teaching aids such as videos, transcripts, tapes, motion pictures and videotapes, radio, television, and computers, is under rapid growth to improve learning (Britannica, 2018). The success of audio-visual recordings, presentations, and specimens explain their continued use as teaching resources. John Comenius was one of the first educators to suggest a formal form of audio-visual education. It was illustrated in 1658 with full-page colour engravings, each of which

played a significant role in teaching the lesson at hand. Many great educators like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Locke, and J.H. Pestalozzi are following Comenius. Pestalozzi, a reformer, argued that sensory materials could help children learn (Aggarwal, 2001). Audio-visual aids were in common use by the United States armed forces during and after World War II. Current research indicates that these aids can substantially improve cognitive capacity (Akram, Sufiana & Malik, 2012).

Audio-visual aids enhance teaching efficacy by aiding the transmission of difficult concepts and ideas in an exciting way (De Sousa, Richter, & Nel, 2017 as cited in Tang & Intai, 2018; Zheng, Warschauer, Lin, & Chang, 2016). Shah and Khan (2015) observed that, the use of animation and visual aids provided during instruction enhanced learning through critical thinking development. According to Makewa, Role and Ngussa (2012) as cited in Tang and Intai (2018) media resources are an essential part of teaching and learning. They also contend that instructional resources are crucial to the teaching of any subject particularly in schools. The use of visual aids in teaching history to promote deep comprehension and active learning was recommended by De Sousa and Van Eeden (2009). Likewise, audio-visual aids have been documented to help promote the learning of Geography by displaying patterns, maps and events in vivid colour (Zheng et al., 2016).

From the above confab, it is clear that, the successful use of audio-visual aids would enhance the

learning process. Unfortunately, research studies indicate that, most teachers do not use audio-visual aids for the teaching process, although they highly appreciate this potential (Smeets, 2005, Zheng et al., 2016). This issue cuts across several disciplines even at the senior high school level but, the most predominant case from my experience as a teacher, is the negative attitude of students towards the study of Social Studies due to the pedagogical approaches of their teachers.

The Social Studies curriculum was adopted as one of the steps to resolve the preference for white-collar jobs and negative attitudes against agriculture and manual labour (Kankam, 2012). It was an initiative of the government to instill patriotism in the youth. Several researchers have found that, the Social Studies programme increases students' critical thinking, increases their ability to contribute to their nation's survival, and increases their patriotism, Kankam & Kendie, 2004; Aggarwal, 2001; Martorella, 1994 as cited in Kankam, 2012. Pryor, Ghartey, Kutor and Kankam (2005) argued that, studying Social Studies is essential to strengthening human relationships between individuals and groups in the physical and social environment. The significance and the role of Social Studies in Ghana's cultural diversity cannot be overlooked (Kankam, 2012).

A cursory look at the multidisciplinary content and child-centred pedagogical approaches to the Social Studies curriculum calls for creativity in delivering its content. This requires teachers to be very creative during the instructional process. Child-centred education has always been suggested by the Ministry of Education to be implemented in schools to ensure that the teaching and learning processes in the classroom are more effective. However, many teachers are still using the traditional approach, making Social Studies look like a dull subject for students. Khadijah and Shahrin (2006) as cited in Fatimah and Halim (2010) revealed that, many teachers are still applying traditional methods in their teaching lesson and not utilizing the teaching aids provided by their school. Lawson (2003) further posits that, students pay little or no attention during Social Studies lesson because they find the subject very boring, not exciting and an avenue for them to sleep and relax since they could not relate the issues taught under Social Studies to real life. Similarly, a study conducted by Governale (1997) on improving students' attitudes towards Social Studies revealed that teacher-centred and textbook-based Social Studies instruction negatively affected students' attitudes towards the subject. As a result, students demonstrated low interest in a Social Studies class, resulting in their low performance.

Lefrancois, as cited in Tamakloe (2004) stated that, effective teaching requires two basic competencies and skills. First, is the teaching process (method), which consists of a group of skills for organising content of a lesson and attaining instructional objectives. The second consists of a group of personal and social skills for

successful school functioning for relating with parents and administrators. Hence, an effective Social Studies teacher should have adequate knowledge in the various disciplines of Social Studies. In addition, the Social Studies teacher should employ varied teaching methods and resources in his teaching and develop positive attitudes towards the teaching of Social Studies to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning process.

McBer (2000) mentioned that, the success of every teaching and learning interaction depends on such factors as students' perception towards the learning of the discipline, teacher quality, teaching methods employed by teachers and some environmental factors such as the time allocation for the teaching and learning of the subject as well as teaching and learning aids. This signifies that, for effective teaching and learning of a subject such as Social Studies, teachers need to vary their approaches and adopt modern teaching methods to make their lessons livelier. Audio-visual aids in teaching are one way to develop lessons and provide students with additional ways to process subject content (Kunari, 2006). Audio-visual aids are used to visualise information by auditory stimuli to aid learning. They assist people in learning new things, and they make learning more convincing. They make the teacher's work simpler and make the books more fun to read (Singh, 2005).

Judging from the multifarious benefits of audio-visual aids to the teaching and learning, its integration into Social Studies lessons could be one remedy to the negative attitude students have advanced for Social Studies over the years and their abysmal performance in the subject over the years. (Basic Education Certificate Examination, 2010-2018) It is therefore against this background that, the researcher wants to investigate the efficacy of audio-visual aids in enhancing junior high school students' academic achievement in Social Studies in the Ho Municipality of Ghana.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the effects of audio-visual aids on junior high school students' academic achievement in Social Studies in the Ho Municipality in the Volta Region of Ghana.

Research Objectives

Specifically, the study seeks to:

- ascertain how the level of understanding of students taught using audio-visual aids differs from those taught without audio-visual aids.
- investigate how the level of class participation of students taught using audio-visual aids differs from those taught without audio-visual aids.

Research Questions

The following research questions have been formulated to guide the present study:

- how does the level of understanding of students taught using audio-visual aids differ from those taught without audio-visual aids?
- what is the difference between the level of class participation of students taught using audio-visual aids and those taught without audio-visual aids?

Significance of the Study

This is an attempt to shed more light on how audio-visual aids increase Social Studies students' academic performance. It will enhance the awareness of Social Studies teachers on the need to incorporate audio-visual aids into their lessons to strengthen and mould the negative image of Social Studies among students. It will also allow teachers of Social Studies and school authorities to fully understand the value of varying their pedagogical methods to cover all learning areas. The study will once again enable the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service to understand the need and value of providing audio-visual aid to different schools, thereby preparing ahead of time for the provision of audio-visual learning aids in public schools to help and ensure a quality and efficient delivery of education that will lead to higher academic achievement. Education specialists and curricula designers will find this study helpful to expand the frontiers expertise in the teaching and learning of Social Studies. Other researchers will find this material very useful as a guideline and resource material.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Dual coding theory

This study was underpinned by theory of Dual-Coding which was propounded by Paivio (1971). In 1971, Allan Paivio, at the University of Western Ontario, developed this cognition theory. He firmly believed that the creation of mental images helps to learn (Reed, 2010). According to Paivio, a person may increase the amount of learning material by means of verbal and visual associations. This is confirmed by Sternberg (2003) when he said that information is used both in terms of visual and verbal information. He clarified further that the human mind processes visual and oral information separately, through different and unique paths, which result in different representations in each medium. Input information which can be accessed, processed, and retrieved for future use is structured by the mental codes corresponding to these representations. When recalling details, visual and verbal codes are used (Sternberg, 2003). For example, if a person has stored a plane definition as the word 'plane' as well as a mental picture of the plane. If that person is asked to remember the term, both or one of them can be retrieved. If the individual remembers the word 'plane,' none of them will be lost if the plane picture can be identified later. The ability of a person to store a concept in two separate directions or ways improves the ability of the person to recognise this concept when it is stored only in one way.

Paivio (1990) firmly believes that images and words are interpreted in different minds; thus, for different type of knowledge the mind uses different memory systems. He clarified further that our verbal memories are related to our language system while our picture memory includes tastes and graphics. He said again that verbal information is taken to visual processors from our sensory minds.

This theory is important to this study because it makes it clear that a person's ability to store a concept in two distinct paths or ways increases one's ability to recall that concept as compared to when that individual store it in only one way. That is when students are taught Social Studies with audio-visual aids, they are able to store whatever they are taught both in the image concept and the word concept. This will increase and improve their level of understanding resulting in higher academic achievement.

Empirical Review

Audio-visual aids and the class participation level of students

Mathew and Alidmat (2013) conducted a study to learn the utility of a resourceful teacher of English who is fitted as a foreign language with eclecticism in English. The research was carried out in Suadi Arabia in a university. The study showed that audio-visual aids in teaching helped students in thinking and enhancement of the classroom's learning environment. The audio-visual courses were also exposed to students as they were specifically related to the course material and were helpful and useful. Their analysis was descriptive and was positioned in the English competition. However, this study used a case study design and focused on Social Studies.

The study of visual aids for the improvement of the learning process was also performed by Shabaralyani, Hasan, Hamad and Iqbal (2014). They employed the methodology of descriptive surveying and used questionnaires to collect data. The collected data were analysed and presented in graphs, diagrams, frequencies and percentages. From their research, audio-visual aids have revealed that they have reduced the blandness of the class and have a true experience with what has been learned. Therefore, during the course of the study, students were involved.

Sukma (2017) carried out a study on the effects of the participation of students in English classrooms through audio-visual media. His research used the descriptive survey design, interview and observation were used in data collection process. He has demonstrated how the use of audio-visual media in students' teaching allows students to learn new information and skills away from what they get. In addition, he said that students contribute actively and intentionally to the different courses. Audio-visual support thus increased the student level of class

participation. While the interview and observations were used as data collection instruments similar to Sukma, in this current study, the researcher used case study.

The influence of audio-visual materials on the motivation and participation of students at the secondary education level has also been investigated in Seçera, Sahin and Alci (2015). In their analysis qualitative research was planned and data from respondents was obtained from a focus group discussion. From their survey, audio-visual materials have been shown to have a significant and relevant influence on the motivation of students and on classroom participation. Their study took place at the level of senior high school, but this study took place at the level of junior high school. Their study also used the qualitative research approach; interviews were used as the data analysis tool, while this present study employed case study approach.

In addition, Rasul, Bukhsh and Batool (2011) have conducted a study in an educational process to examine the efficacy of audio-visual aids. 200 participants, of which 150 students and 50 teachers, were used to collect the respondents' data as a standardized questionnaire, and the collected data were evaluated by average, standard deviation and Z-test. The study showed that audio-visual aids provide a deep comprehension and a detailed analysis of the subject being taught. Audio-visual aids were also shown to improve the teacher's and students' classroom environment when used during a lecture. This boosts students' engagement in a class.

Audio-visual aids and students' academic achievements

Studying the impact of teaching resources on the academic performance of secondary school students by Okhakhu, Oladiran and Omike (2016) showed that teaching resources played a very important role in improving students' academic achievement. Their research also showed that the teaching personnel and education services of schools were much greater than the teaching media and students. Their research was descriptive and the stratified sampling methods were used to sample their 281 participants. In the data collection process, a questionnaire was used for evaluating the collected data with a simple percentage.

Chindo (2011) has researched the performance of students at Junior Secondary Schools of Audio-visual Instructional Materials. Chindo used a quasi-experimental design not close to that of this study, both post and pre-test. data were obtained by class observation and randomly selected students during the study. The study found that when students were taught using audio-visual aids, the students had better performance. The study used interview and observation to collect data on how the use of audio-visual aids impact students' academic achievement in Social Studies has made this study unique and distinct from that of Chindo.

Similarly, Yusuf (2009) carried out a study to study the effect of audio-visual support on the education of primary schools in Social Studies. Yusuf used the quasi experimental style, as well. Yusuf research was very similar to this study but the only difference was that the study gave more details on how teachers' pedagogical methods influence students' Social Studies behaviour and achievement. Another key distinction between this study and Yusuf is that, although this study was done at the junior high school level, he studied in primary school. In this study, variables like participation and understanding were examined. Compared to Yusuf's work that made this work extremely unique. From his research, audio-visual aids have been revealed to enhance academic achievement of students.

In another study on the impacts of audiovisual aids on the success of students in mathematics carried out by Zainab (2010). The findings of this study showed that audio-visual aids and academic achievements of students were correlated positively. David (2008), who towed the same lines, carried out an empirical analysis on the effect of audio-visual aids on the geographical performance of students. He used the same design as Zainab's study. He operated on the experimental design and formed both a control and a treatment group. He evaluated the null hypotheses using T-test statistics. His research explored the impact on the performance of students by audio-visual content but concentrated on academic achievements of students.

Emmanuel (2010) has also carried out a study on the impacts of audio-visual support on the academic performance of students in integrated science at the junior secondary school. His research has shown that audio-visual support has a significant effect on academic performance of students.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 explains the conceptual framework of the study.

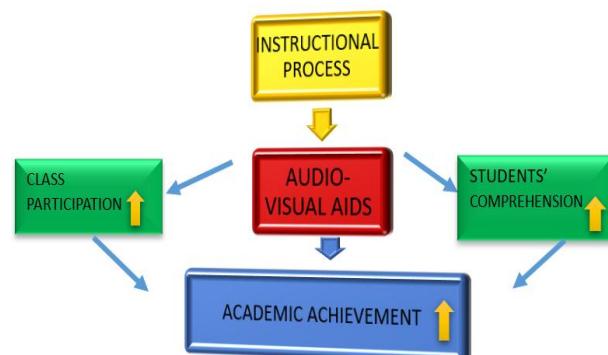


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Source: Researchers own construct.

NB: The yellow arrows showing upward movements in each box it has been drawn indicates a rise or an increase in that element due to the use of audio-visual aids.

It is evident from Figure 1 that, the ultimate academic achievement of students is improved when audio-visual aids are integrated in the teaching and learning process. Now that audio-visual aids are used in teaching, students' comprehension of the topic strengthens their understanding of any concept they are taught. It makes it easier for them to remember the lessons taught leading to high academic accomplishments during a test or exam. Similarly, when audio-visual aids are employed in the instructional process, students' interests are stimulated, and they become motivated. This will eventually increase their class participation level and if that happens, they tend to get more involved in the lesson. Since according to the Dale's cone of experience more information is retained when an individual is actively involved in a lesson, students will then retain most of what has been taught hence they will find it easy when the time comes for them to recall during a test or examination, thereby increasing their academic achievement. Finally, since audio-visual aids engages more than one sensory organ, in reference to the dual coding theory, students will be able to recall with ease since the information was stored in more than one channel in the brain. This will then increase students' academic achievements.

The researcher used varied audio-visual aids together with some pedagogical techniques to examine the link between students' class participation level, their comprehension, and their academic achievement. Their class participation level was assessed through the observation technique.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a case study designed. Case study research is a qualitative research design that investigates and analyzes a single occurrence, situation, or group of people in their real-life environment (Yin, 2018). Case study research is "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (Merriam, 2009, p. 46). The researcher uses interviews, observations, records, and artifacts to gain a deep grasp of the case (Creswell, 2013). Case studies might be exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, or intrinsic (Yin, 2018). Case study research can illuminate complicated, multifaceted processes that cannot be studied quantitatively (Creswell, 2013). It allows a careful investigation of the case in its natural surroundings, which can reveal new notions and theories (Merriam, 2009). First, case studies might analyze how audio-visual aids have been employed in junior high Social Studies classes and how they affect students' academic achievement. A researcher could investigate a school that used audio-visual aids in its social studies curriculum and evaluate the results. Second, case studies can examine how audio-visual aids affect academic achievement. A researcher could analyze various schools that use audio-visual aids in their Social Studies curriculum to determine how teacher training,

availability of resources, and student participation affect their efficacy.

Population and Sample Size

Census as used in this work implies collection of data from a whole population rather than just a sample. One of the advantages of census surveys over the other types of surveys is accuracy. However, it has been criticized for being time consuming (Creswell, 2003). In selecting the students for the focus group interview, the researcher used the stratified sampling technique. That is, the males were grouped at one side as well as the females. The simple random sampling was then used to sample two students from each strata making a total of four students. The distribution of samples for the study is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Population by Schools

Name of school	Sample Male	Sample Female	Total
Ho Technical University	14	19	33
Junior High School			
Presbyterian Junior High School, Ho	13	21	34
Total	27	40	67

Source: Field data, 2025.

Data Collection Instrument

The study adopted observation techniques and an interview guide as the instrument for data collection from the respondents. The simple reason for adopting a combination of this instrument is that, when carefully constructed and administered, it gives an objective and reliable information.

The interview guide and the observation technique were used to solicit data on the class participation level of both groups as well as the level of understanding of both students from both groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data of Respondents

Background data on the respondents was sought. This included their sex and age. Figures 2 present the results of the data obtained on their sex and age respective

Gender of Respondents

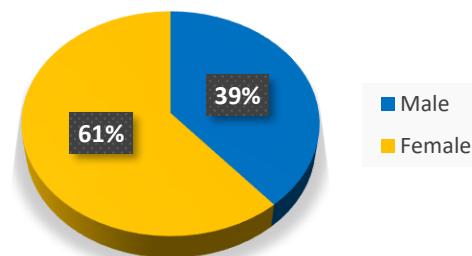


Figure 2: Gender of respondents

Source- Field Survey, 2025.

As reflected in figure 2, the number of female students 41 (61%) were more than the number of male students 26 (39%). This was due to the fact that female students in both the control and experimental group

outnumber their male counterparts. Therefore, it implies that there will be more female responses than that of males.

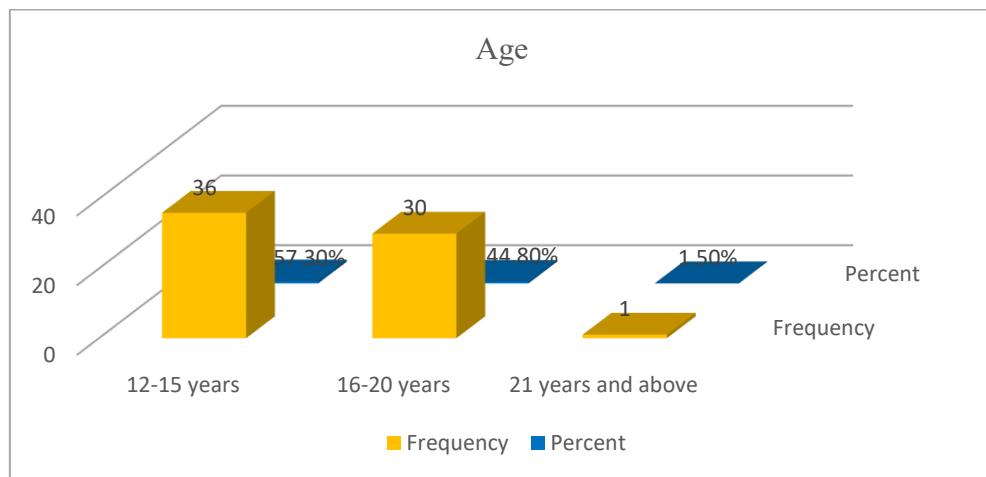


Figure 3: Age of respondents

Source- Field Survey, 2025.

The graph in Figure 3 showed that 36 (57.3%) of the students were between 12 and 15 years old and 30 (44.8%) were aged between 16 and 20 years. Just one (1.5%) of the students was 21 years and above. The average age of the participants was approximately fourteen years due to the transition from the middle school to the high school system in Ghana in 1987 (1987 educational reform). This modification cut the total number of years of pre-tertiary education from 17 to 12. As a result, those who complete junior high schools appear to be in the age group of twelve to sixteen. It can also be shown that most of the students belong to an age group referred to as "mature". This means that the responses come from the students who have had a little practice to help them make choices on their own without outside interference.

How does the level of understanding of students taught using audio-visual aids differ from those taught without the use of audio-visual aids?

The research sought data that could be used to differentiate between the level of understanding of students who are taught with audio-visual aids and those taught without the use of audio-visual aids. In seeking out the data, a focus group interview was conducted after the completion of all the various topics and selected and administered under the three thematic areas in Social Studies to check how students relate and understand what was taught. Each group consisted of four students who were randomly selected and the results of the interview are discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

During the interviews both the control and treatment group were asked some questions that revolved around the environment, governance and politics, social and economic development. Students in the treatment group, in as much as they were able to explain all the

concepts they were asked, they even demonstrated and added more examples to it. For instance, one student after differentiating between customs and festivals went ahead to practice how people in Hausa, Savanna region, the Ashanti region and the Ibo land greeted one another. This was probably due to the fact that they had the opportunity to watch it on a projector as the lessons were in progress. Students in the control group did not give examples of whatever they explained and seemed not to go further with the sharing of experiences. During the interview, it was observed that the interest of students in the treatment group was high as compared to that of the control group. Students in the treatment group were eager to learn more. Below is the definition given by two students, one in the control group and the other in the treatment group. They were asked to differentiate between material and non-material culture. Below are their responses:

Student (treatment group), '*Material culture is the aspects of culture that can be seen, felt and handled. Examples are food, dressing etc. whiles non material culture is the aspects of culture that cannot be felt and handled but can be demonstrated. Examples are songs, languages, and festivals'*

Student (control group), '*Material culture are things we can see and touch while non-material culture are things we cannot feel and experience*'.

A careful look at their responses points to the fact that students in the treatment group really understood what they were saying. The answers given by the other students in the treatment group were the same as the one stated above. However, with regards to that particular question three of the students in the control group said they had no idea about the difference between those terms. This was a similar experience with the other themes. Students in the control group could not

remember what they were taught during lessons. They found it very difficult to recall the definitions for some concepts. This was not the case for the treatment group. All the four students remembered vividly what they were taught and the various examples cited during class/lessons. This revelation supported the findings of Tang Kuok Ho and Intai (2017) who asserted that audio-visual aids were very effective in enhancing the understanding of students and that when students are taught with audio-visual aids they become more attentive, their interests are heightened and they find it very easy to remember what they were taught.

Another significant thing worth noticing during the interview was the fact that the students in the treatment group were able to share their experiences during the interview. When students in the treatment group were asked to differentiate between Excursion and Tourism, one student gave this answer,

'Excursion is a trip by a group of people, usually going for leisure, education, or health purposes whiles Tourism is a travel for recreational or leisure purpose'.

After giving this answer this particular pupil went on to further share his experience on his visit to the Kakum National Park and the Royal Palm Beach resort in Accra for a number of days and he made it clear that his parents took him there purposely for leisure. Another student also gave an example to differentiate between the two using their class as an example. He said,

'When our Social Studies teacher takes us on a field trip to learn about a natural phenomenon that we studied in class, it can be termed as an excursion. However, when we decide as a group to contribute money together to visit and stay at maybe the Tagbo falls or the Labadi beach resort for a couple of days during a holiday for leisure and fun, that will be termed as tourism'.

On the other hand, when students in the control group were asked the same thing some of them were able to give the right answer but did not give an instance to buttress their answer and others gave completely wrong answers. Below is an answer that a student in the control group gave,

'Tourism is travelling to places to see beautiful things and learn something new, while excursion is to experience something you have not experienced before'.

In explaining this, one could say that when students are taught with audio visuals, they feel motivated to share their experiences as perhaps the video they watched on people visiting tourist attraction site may trigger their own personal experiences. This was precisely so in this case as during the lessons on tourism, the researcher made the students watch videos and

presentations on tourism and excursion. One is also able to share an experience only when they understand what they are dealing with. This was in line with the study conducted by Chandra (2016) who posited that the use of audio-visual aids stimulated and increased the interest of students about a particular subject and also it promoted and enhanced the understanding of students making them able to share their experiences with their colleagues.

To this end, it could be said that students who were taught with audio-visual aids showed that they really understood what they were taught whiles, students who were taught without the audio-visuals demonstrated that they did not fully comprehend what they were taught. Students in the treatment group who exhibited high interest during the discussion, were motivated to contribute to the discussion, found it easy to remember and shared experiences with their other colleagues. The students in the control group did not exhibit these attributes

What is the difference between the level of class participation of students taught using audio-visual aids and those taught without the use of audio-visual aids?

Research question two sought data that could be used to differentiate between the level of class participation among students who are taught with audio-visual aids and those taught without the use of audio-visual aids. Both the control and experimental group were observed whiles lessons were in progress. The researcher's observations are discussed under three themes namely; the rate at which students participated in class activities, students' composure and finally students' interest in the lesson.

The rate at which students participated in class activities

When both groups were carefully observed, the students in the treatment group appeared to have received new information to what they have read in their textbooks. This made them appear to want to learn and know more about the subject that was being discussed. Most of the students were therefore active and eager to participate in demonstrations and group activities during lessons. There was an instance that in one lesson, about 80% (27 students) in the treatment group asked questions. In contrast, students in the control group did not ask many questions. Asking of questions was limited to only a few students. When students were asked to demonstrate or volunteer, they seemed reluctant and only a few students responded actively.

This is consistent with the study by Seçer, Sahin and Alci (2016) which sought to investigate the impact of multimedia-based instruction on motivation and participation in high school. It was shown in their analysis that use of audio-visual content was positively and significantly correlated with students' motivation and classroom participation level.

Students' Composure (Placeholder1)

Students in the control group were unusually quiet. Most of the students appeared to be active during the start of the lesson but as the lesson advanced they appeared dull. The researcher on some occasions had to make students get up and stretch a little bit to get them active. Some of the students in the control group did not pay attention and were easily distracted by the slightest noise outside the classroom. This was not the case with the students in the treatment group. Just the presence of the projector, laptop and other audio-visual aids made the students so active in the classroom. The atmosphere during lessons that involved audio-visuals was lively. There were occasions where some documentaries and videos the students were exposed to generated conversation between the students, this made them very active in class during lessons and as such they were not easily distracted by external factors (things outside the classroom). This supported the findings of Shabaralyani, Hasan, Hamad and Iqbal (2015) who posited that audio-visual aids reduced the dullness in class and make students have a real experience with what is taught. Students therefore remain active throughout the entire course of the lesson.

Students' interest in the lesson

A glaringly obvious fact that any observer could notice about the students in the treatment group was their heightened interest in the topics during lessons. Students in the treatment group developed interest since they received new information about the topic they were being taught. An instance was when students were being taught ethnic groups and culture. They were shown documentaries on some cultural practices of certain ethnic groups in Ghana, Africa and the world. After the documentary, the classroom was flooded with questions. This showed that, when students are taught using audio-visuals, they develop much interest for the subject at hand. On the part of the students in the control group, some appeared not interested in the topics that were being taught. This explained the reason why they were not frequently asking questions during lessons. This also supported the findings of Sukma (2017) who established that the use of audio-visual media in teaching students stimulated students in gaining new information and knowledge aside what is served to them. This therefore influences students to contribute to the various activities actively and purposefully in the classroom.

In conclusion, it can be said that there was a clear difference between the level of participation of students in the treatment group and that of the students in the control group. Students in the treatment group asked more questions, were very lively during lessons and showed more interest in the topic that were being taught.

CONCLUSION

The study conducted a thorough analysis of the effects of audio-visual aids on the academic achievement of students in social studies at junior high schools

situated in the Ho Municipality of the Volta Region in Ghana. The research has revealed that educators of Social Studies in junior high schools within the Ho Municipality have implemented diverse pedagogical approaches, such as organising excursions and involving students in communal education. The scholarly investigation suggested that the Ghana Education Service and the Ministry of Education should organise seminars, conferences, and workshops to enlighten Social Studies educators on the significance of incorporating audio-visual aids in the pedagogical process. Furthermore, it has been proposed that the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) provide a programme that focuses on the judicious application of audio-visual resources in the Social Studies curriculum, which can be offered to prospective Social Studies educators in tertiary institutions.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations were made, considering the findings of the study:

- in the first place, since the study revealed that teachers who used audio-visual aids promoted active student participation, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service organise seminars, conferences, and workshops to raise awareness among Social Studies teachers of the need to use audio-visual aids in the teaching-learning process.
- second, since the study found that students learn better when taught with audio-visual aids, there is a need for the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) to incorporate a course in the curriculum of Social Studies at the colleges of education on the use of audio-visual aids to train prospective Social Studies teachers on how to make effective use of audio-visual aids.
- third, from the study, it was found that, in the two schools that the researcher visited in the Volta region, they did not have adequate audio-visual aids that belonged to the schools with which teachers can use during the instructional process. The school's management and Parent's Teachers Association (PTA) should look into the possibility of securing new audio-visual aids for the school and also seek to generate funds in repairing broken down instructional materials (audio visual aids) in the schools.

Suggestions for Further Research

- A similar study could be undertaken at the senior high school level.
- Research can be conducted to explore the difference in the performance of male and female students who are taught with audio-visual aids and those who are taught without audio-visual aids.

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