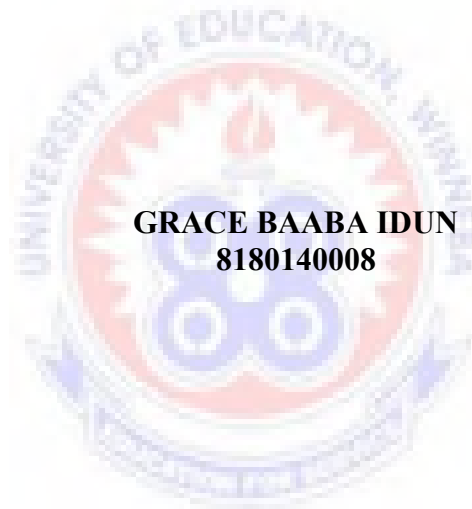


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES AND THE GOALS AND
OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL STUDIES: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY IN THE
NSAWAM MUNICIPALITY**



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**A thesis in the Department of Social Studies,
Faculty of Social Sciences, Submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Social Studies)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

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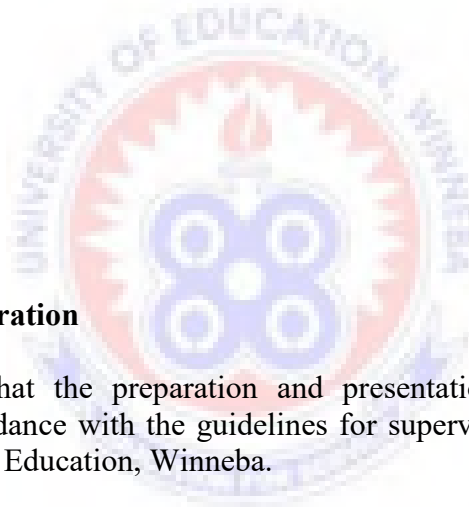
DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, **Grace Baaba Idun** declare that this thesis, with the exceptions of quotations and references contained in published works which have been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:



Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Simon Kyei

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my dear mother Janet Amissah for giving me hope to reach this far in my education. Thank you for your love, support and generosity.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Contents | Page |
|--|-----------|
| DECLARATION | iii |
| DEDICATION | iv |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | v |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | vi |
| LIST OF TABLES | ix |
| ABSTRACT | x |
| CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Background to the Study | 1 |
| 1.2 Statement of the Problem | 7 |
| 1.3 Purpose of the Study | 8 |
| 1.4 Objectives of the Study | 8 |
| 1.5 Research Questions | 9 |
| 1.6 Significance of the Study | 9 |
| 1.7 Delimitation of the Study | 10 |
| 1.8 Limitation | 10 |
| 1.9 Organisation of the Study | 10 |
| 1.10 Operational Definitions | 11 |
| CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW | 12 |
| 2.0 Introduction | 12 |
| 2.1 Theoretical Framework | 12 |
| 2.2 Empirical Review | 16 |
| 2.3 The Goals and Objective of Social Studies | 20 |
| 2.4 Perspective and Nature of the Social Studies Curriculum | 25 |
| 2.5 The Concept of Assessment | 36 |
| 2.6 Assessment in the Basic and Senior High Schools of Ghana | 39 |

| | | |
|--|---|-----------|
| 2.7 | The Concept of Formative Assessment and its Impact on Instruction | 44 |
| 2.8 | Quality Control Criteria for Effective Classroom Assessment | 55 |
| 2.9 | Teacher knowledge, Skills and Professional Development in Formative Assessment | 59 |
| 2.10 | Formative Assessment Tools in Social Studies | 62 |
| 2.11 | Appraisal of Reviewed Literature | 75 |
| CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY | | 80 |
| 3.0 | Introduction | 80 |
| 3.1 | Approach | 80 |
| 3.2 | Research Design | 81 |
| 3.3 | Population of the Study | 82 |
| 3.4 | Sampling Procedure | 83 |
| 3.5 | Data Collection Instruments | 84 |
| 3.6 | Validity and Reliability | 87 |
| 3.7 | Data Collection Procedure | 89 |
| 3.8 | Data Processing and Analysis | 90 |
| 3.9 | Ethical Consideration | 91 |
| 3.10 | Summary | 92 |
| CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION | | 93 |
| 4.0 | Introduction | 93 |
| 4.1 | Characteristics of Respondents | 93 |
| 4.2. | The State of Formative Assessment Practices in the Nsawam Municipality | 97 |
| 4.3 | The Ability of Social Studies Teachers in Designing and using Quality Formative Assessment Tools to Synchronise the Goals and Objectives of Social Studies. | 106 |
| 4.4 | How Social Studies Teachers Integrate Social Studies Goals and Objectives into their Formative Assessment Practices | 119 |
| 4.5 | Chapter Summary | 131 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS | 132 |
| 5.0 Introduction | 132 |
| 5.1 Summary of the Study | 132 |
| 5.2 Key Findings | 133 |
| 5.3 Conclusions | 136 |
| 5.4 Recommendations for Policy and Practice | 137 |
| 5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies | 138 |
| REFERENCES | 139 |
| APPENDIX A: Introductory Letter | 161 |
| APPENDIX B: Interview Guide for Teachers | 162 |



LIST OF TABLES

| Tables | Pages |
|--|-------|
| 4.1: Professional qualifications of respondents | 93 |
| 4. 2: Responses on teaching experience and in-service courses attended | 95 |



ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate the status quo regarding the formative assessment practices and the goals and objectives of Social Studies in selected schools of the Nsawam municipality. The study was structured basically within the framework of qualitative approach and employed the exploratory research design. Three instruments namely interview guide, observation protocol and document analysis guide were used to gather primary information from the respondents. The population of the study included Junior and Senior High School teachers from the Nsawam Municipality. Ten teachers were selected through non-probability sampling methods (purposive and convenience sampling techniques) for the study. Data was analysed through thematic procedure based on the themes arrived at during the data collection. The major findings include the fact that although social studies teachers involve formative assessment in instructions their formative assessment practices are generally not in line with the current thinking of assessment. The study revealed that Social Studies teachers assess their learners for external examination purposes and not to achieve the goals and objectives of the subject. The study observed that some social studies teachers do not have adequate knowledge in alternative formative assessment tool thus teachers use only traditional assessment tools in assessing learning. This implies that the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values needed for the development of effective citizens which lies the heart of social studies may be impossible to assess. It was also found that, not all teachers assigned to teach social studies are professional trained to teach social studies hence they lack the basic professional knowledge about the subject. It is therefore recommended that social studies teachers adopt better assessment practices such as using items that elicit the higher order thinking skills of students, and incorporating the alternative forms of assessment to achieve the goals and objectives of the subject.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Assessment is one of the critical components of classroom instruction. It has been widely used by educators to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, and skill acquisition of students throughout their learning in life as students from pre-school through college and adulthood. Assessment is carried out to see what students know, understand and are able to do. According to Brown (2011) assessment is any act of interpreting information about student performance, collected through any of a variety of means or practice. Rust (2002) on his part described assessment as making a judgment, identifying the strength and weakness, the good and the bad, and the right and the wrong in some cases of something. Educational assessment is an integral part of learning and the practice of teaching, and helps improve learners' achievement (Assessment Reform Group, 2009). Deducing from these authorities, assessment is about collecting and interpreting information about students' achievements in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Classroom assessment has been found to be a critical factor in promoting quality education and as such has become the pivot of various educational improvement efforts (Oduro, 2015). This is because it provides information on pupils' achievement, identify learning problems, and indicate the remedial actions that need to be taken (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall & Wiliam, 2004).

Kirman (1991) argues that, Social Studies is not about the accumulation of selected facts for later recall but should aim to: Produce a responsible person who able to cope with change, capable of making reasonable decisions, who is an intelligent consumer

and controller of science and technology, able to live with and appreciate human diversity, and support and defend human dignity. Such a person should be able to settle differences honorably, avoid the use of violence, be cognizant of, and active in, the stewardship of our planet, and have the skills necessary to maintain a functional economic system and democratic government. The goals and objectives of Social Studies is broad and requires a much more sophisticated approach to assessment. Thus designing and implementing appropriate assessment to cover the goals and objectives of social studies is a complex endeavour for all teachers. Social Studies includes many ways of thinking and knowing, and its assessment cover a wide range. Banks (1990) asserts that Social Studies is the only school subject that is devoted to the inculcation of positive attitudes, values, skills and relevant knowledge that are needed to make citizens perform citizenship roles effectively in the society. In the views of Jarolimek (1971) there are three categories of the objectives of social studies for the achievement of citizenship education. First, understanding which deals with knowledge and knowing; second, attitude which relate to value, appreciation, ideals and feeling; third, skills which relate to using and applying social studies learning and ability to gain new learning. This is to say that the objectives of social studies cut across the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. Emphatically, complex goals such as the development of responsible citizenship, may not be evident until after students have left school and engaged in tasks such as informed voting, social action, and other forms of civic participation. Many key Social Studies learning objectives such as critical thinking, social responsibility, and informed decision-making are also hard to define compared to outcomes from other subjects. As a result of these varied and contested outcomes, the field of Social Studies has had great

difficulty reaching consensus on its key concepts and purposes, including what constitutes sound assessment and evaluation.

Stipek, Salmon, Givvin, Kzemi, Saxe and MacGyvers (1998) supported by Myers (2004) cited by Adam, Bekoe and Poatob (2018) recommend that teachers in the process of assessment should emphasize process and motivate students to identify diverse solutions instead of identifying a single correct solution. Also Kitta (2014) posited that the relationship between learning and assessment is positive and very strong. Kitta was of further view that students learn more in classes where assessment is an integral part of instruction than in those where it is not. These arguments of Stipek, *et al.* (1998), Myers (2004) and Kitta (2014) clearly shows that formative assessment has a crucial role to play in students' learning.

Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievements of intended instructional outcomes (William, 2011). Similarly, Erickson (2007) viewed formative assessment as the continual 'taking stock' that teachers do by paying firsthand observational attention to students during the ongoing course of instruction careful attention focused upon specific aspects of a student's developing understanding in order to make decisions about next steps in instruction. Formative assessment is often claimed to be rooted in Bloom's concept of "mastery learning," an instructional approach that espouses the use of assessments to gauge students' progress toward mastering a learning goal (Bloom, Hastings & Madaus, 1971 cited by Trumbull & Lash, 2013, p: 235). Bloom suggested that, rather than waiting to assess students at the end of a unit (common practice at the time), teachers use assessments as an integral part of the instructional process to identify individual learning

difficulties and prescribe remediation procedures”. Central to formative assessment is the provision of quality feedback. This feedback consists of information that tells us how we are doing and what we need to do next in the light of our intentions and goals. It gives precise information about where someone is in relation to the goals they are trying to attain and what they might do in the future to make progress towards those goals. Social Studies is a problem solving subject and draws ideas, themes, values and concepts from many subjects. It breaks the boundaries between subjects by identifying problems and solving them by using concepts and principles from various disciplines. Hence, Social Studies, more than any other subject, demands a well prepared, conscious teacher of sound knowledge (Aggarwal, 1993). The assertion of Aggarwal calls for a sound professional training in the theory and art of assessment for the teachers to be able to meet the goals and objectives of effecting change in the individual's life, values and attitudes which are perceived to contribute to good and responsible citizenship.

To ensure that the aims of teaching Social Studies is achieved, the Social Studies syllabus provides an assessment procedure through which what is taught and learnt can be assessed. It is expected that this procedure is adhered to, to reflect the general application of Social Studies ideas in the daily activities of learners. Consequently the 2010 Social Studies Syllabus is designed on the concept of profile dimension which describe the underlying behaviours of subjects and are useful as the focus for teaching, learning and assessment. In Social Studies, the three profile dimensions includes:

- Knowledge and Understanding
- Use of Knowledge

- Attitudes and Values (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Teachers are expected to teach and assess students in accordance with the dimension indicators in order to meet the six general aims of helping students to:

1. develop the ability to adapt to the developing and ever-changing Ghanaian society.
2. acquire positive attitudes and values towards individual and societal issue
3. develop critical and analytical skills in assessing issues for objective decision making.
4. develop national consciousness and unity.
5. use enquiry and problem-solving skills for solving personal and societal problems
6. Become responsible citizen capable and willing to contribute to advancement (MOE, 2010).

The feasibility of the aims for which the syllabus was designed depend on effective formative assessment practices in the teaching and learning process. The National Council for Social studies-NCSS (2010) maintains that to effectively assess learning in Social Studies, it is incumbent on Social Studies teachers to relate the rationale, general aims, and the instructional objectives of each lesson to appropriate and effective methods of formatively assessing student progress as well as their own teaching strategies. It is further maintained that the profile dimension of the Social Studies (knowledge and understanding, application of knowledge as well as attitudes and values as the underlying behaviours) and the rationale for teaching the subject at the SHS level are evidence of how learners should be made to recognise their active role during instruction as bonafide owners of instruction and thus lie at the heart of constructivism (NCSS, 2010). In addition, studies have conclusively demonstrated

that the use of formative assessment facilitates improvement in instructional practices, identifies “gaps” in the curriculum, and contributes to increased student performance (Asare, 2015; Dunn & Melvenon, 2009).

However, Stiggins (2002) cited by *Adam, et al.* (2018 p. 15), bemoans that teachers rarely use or have the opportunity to learn how to use formative assessment as a teaching and learning tool. Stiggins opines that could be that teacher preparation programs have taken little note of competence in formative assessment. *Adam, et al* (2018) added that many programs also fail to give assessment literacy needed to empower teachers to engage in formative assessment for all this while. They further posited that teachers incorporate aspects of formative assessment into their teaching, but it is less common to find it practiced systematically and that if formative assessment is used as a framework for teaching, teachers change the way they interact with students, how they set up learning situations and guide students toward learning goals.

Several studies have been conducted to investigate formative assessment practices of teachers in different subject areas and at different levels of our educational ladder (*Adam, et al.*, 2018; *Anderson & Palm*, 2017; *Armah*, 2013; *Bokoe, et al.*, 2013; *McIntosh*, 2010). Evidence of studies conducted on formative assessment in social studies, have shown that formative assessment is practiced among Social Studies teachers. However, when it comes to the goals and objectives of social studies it appears not much studies have been done to find out if the formative assessment practices of social studies teachers are towards the achievement of the goals and objectives of the subject. In this respect this study is conducted to investigate the

formative assessment practices of social studies teachers and the goals and objectives of Social Studies.

The researcher have observed through personal experience as a teacher and documental evidence from internal question papers and students' exercise books that in general, what social studies teachers seek to achieve through formative assessment has little to do with the goals and objectives of the subject hence, the need to draw the attention of stakeholders of education for necessary actions.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Social studies was introduced in the Ghanaian school curriculum to shape values, attitudes and equip individuals to become useful citizens well vested in critical thinking and problem solving skills needed in developing the country. Assessment can provide a framework for sharing educational objectives with students and for mapping their progress and can also be used to reinforce the efficacy of teaching and learning. For these reasons there is strong support for assessment to be part of the learning process. There is no doubt formative assessment is most instrumental means through which the teachers can explore their learners' learning and thinking processes and the quality of assessment among other things are the most important factors that shape the learning and growth of students. Formative assessment is the medium through which teachers can explore their learners' learning and thinking. Formative assessment is used by teachers and students during instruction to provide feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning and to improve students' achievement of intended instructional goals.

Evidence from empirical literature (Adam, *et al.*, 2018; Bordoh, *et al.*, 2013; Bokoe, *et al.*, 2013; Eshun, *et al.*, 2014) show that formative assessment is assimilated and practiced in social studies classrooms to gather information about students' performance. However, the use of formative assessment, in the Social Studies classroom still remains a bigger challenge to many teachers.

Having considered the fact that social studies teachers do assess their students formatively as some studies have shown, the main problem is that are teachers doing so with regards to the goals and the core objectives of the subject such as critical thinking, social responsibility, and informed decision-making which allow students in the Nsawam Municipality to acquire the necessary skills to maintain the status quo of the core objectives of the subject? The study therefore looks at how formative assessment is done to maintain the status quo regarding the goals and core objectives of the subject, in the study area.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate how the formative assessment is done to maintain the status quo regarding the goals and core objectives of Social Studies, in the Nsawam municipality.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to:

1. Describe the state of formative assessment practices in selected schools in the Nsawam municipality.
2. Assess the ability of social studies teachers in the Nsawam municipality in designing quality formative assessment tools to synchronize the goals and objectives of Social Studies.

3. Ascertain how Social Studies teachers integrate Social Studies objectives into their formative assessment in their practices.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What is the state of Social Studies formative assessment practices in the Nsawam Municipality?
2. How capable are Social Studies teachers in designing and using formative assessment tools to synchronize the goals and objectives of Social Studies?
3. How do social studies teachers integrate social studies goals and objectives into their formative assessment practices?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study of how formative assessment practices influence the attainment of the goals and objectives of Social Studies has not been completely exalted, especially in the Ghanaian basic and high schools. The findings of the study is expected to provide strategies for monitoring teachers. This can be done by ensuring effective moderation of questions and also by giving teachers the necessary support to improve their skills in designing effective formative assessment tools.

The findings may further provide a basis to give in-service training to teachers or enrich the training given to the new teachers of Social Studies by their pre-service training institutions. The study is also to inform policy makers in education to improve formative assessment practices for the benefit of both teaching and learning. Finally, it is also expected that the research will bring to light the defects of assessment practices adopted by teachers of Social Studies.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The focus of the study was to evaluate formative assessment practices on the goals and objectives of social studies in selected Senior High Schools of the Nsawam Municipality. It looked at formative assessment practices in Social Studies. Other form of assessments in relation to this purpose was not of interest to the study.

1.8 Limitation

The sample size and sampling method made it difficult to generalize the results to the whole population of teachers and schools in Ghana. However, the results are generalizable to the schools within the District.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter contains the introduction to the study, background information related to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study and delimitation of the study.

Chapter two deals with the review of literature related to the research topic. It looked at the theoretical underpinnings of formative assessment with special reference to the Ghanaian context, overview of formative assessment and its practice in Social Studies. It takes a brief look at the nature of the Social Studies curriculum, aims and objectives of the Social Studies syllabus of the Junior and Senior High Schools, the goals and objectives of social studies.

In chapter three, the researcher presents methods employed for the study. It deals with population and sample size, sample and sampling procedure, research design, instrument for data collection, procedure for data collection, and data analysis.

The findings from the analysis of data collected from the field are presented in chapter four. It also includes the discussion of the findings. Finally, chapter five contains the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.10 Operational Definitions

Assessment: It is the process of gathering information for making decisions about the teaching and learning process and other related activities.

Assessment Practice: A manner of conducting assessment. These are teachers' actual application or use of idea, belief, or method of assessment as opposed to what is meant or believed to happen.

Formative Assessment: is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievements of intended instructional outcomes

Social Studies goals: refer to the long term expectations of social studies education.

Social Studies objectives: refers to the specific and short term expectation of learning social studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature that relates to the formative assessment practices of Junior and Senior High School teachers in Social Studies. It captures issues including the theoretical framework, the Junior and Senior High School Social Studies curriculum, formative assessment - the profile dimensions, forms of formative assessment, features of formative assessment, purpose of formative assessment, importance of formative assessment, formative assessment in social studies, empirical review of teachers' classroom formative assessment practices.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The concept of formative assessment is a fundamental part of teachers' practice. Classroom teachers are now expected to use classroom assessment strategies in a variety of ways to enhance the quality of teaching and learning (Cheng, Rogers & Hu, 2004). The teacher's skills and ability, and the student's achievement of instructional objectives can be improved by improving the practices such as instructional strategies, teaching techniques, and measurement of learning (Theall & Franklin 2010). Current approaches to classroom assessment have shifted from a view of assessment as a series of events that objectively measure the acquisition of knowledge toward a view of assessment as a social practice that provides continual insights and information to support student learning and influence teacher practice. Consequently, Social Studies teachers are expected to incorporate formative assessment strategies in their lessons in order to effectively monitor the levels of progress made by students and inform instruction.

Formative assessment is rooted on the sociocultural constructivist theory, Skinner's theory of operant conditioning and is supported by the Framework of Formative Assessment by Wiliam and Thomson (2007).

The sociocultural constructivist view of learning and assessment borrows ideas from the cognitivist, constructivist and sociocultural theories (Gipps 1994; Lund 2008; Shepard, 2000). From a sociocultural constructivist perspective, learners are seen as actively constructing knowledge and understanding, through cognitive processes within a social and cultural context. Thus learners building new knowledge on what they already know (i.e., prior knowledge) and develop metacognitive skills necessary to regulate their own learning. Students are seen to develop knowledge and understanding in a domain over time, not only as individuals but in an interactive social context, guided by others with greater expertise (e.g., teacher, parent, peer etc.).

One assumption of socio-cultural theory is that learning is enhanced by "joint productive activity" within a social setting, such as in a classroom where students and teachers collaborate as community of learners. The "zone of proximal development" (ZPD), an example of joint productive activity is a concept developed by Vygotsky (1978) and has been used by many theorists to evoke the understanding of formative assessment. It refers to the developmental space between the level at which a student can handle a problem or complete a task independently and the level at which the student can handle the same task with assistance from a more competent other, such as a teacher. In teaching, the role of the teacher in this direction is a mediator between the student and the learning goal providing learning support to aid attainment of the goal (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Walqui & van Lier, 2010). This concept has been

invoked by formative assessment theorists as useful for understanding the gap between a student's actual understanding and the student's targeted or potential learning. In this process, the teacher uses classroom assessment information to give feedback to the student and/or modify instruction so as to improve the performance of the pupils. Heritage (2010) asserts that, the socio-cultural point of view about formative assessment includes the role of interaction between and among teacher-student(s) and students-students as well as joint collective action in the learning process. Heritage (2010) was of the view that, assessment is not unidirectional but diverse in nature that rather involves both teachers and students in reciprocal activity to take learning forward and meet the desired goal within a community of practice (Adam, *et al.*, 2018). Ash and Levitt (2003) elaborated the views of Vygotsky by arguing that learners learn best not only as individuals but in a collaborative manner with teachers in a social setting. In this wise, teachers and students are working jointly to ensure that the learning goal is accomplished (Ash & Levitt, 2003). Differently put, students learn better through interaction with other students and their teacher. Interaction helps students to improve critical thinking skills and use other students' as well as teacher's comments on their work to enhance their learning. As Holt and Wilard-Holt (2000) put it, in a social constructivist classroom there is a dynamic interaction between teacher, learner and task. This means that learners construct their own version of reality and then compare it to that of the teacher and their peers in order to get their own socially version of reality Sardareha and Saad (2012). In this wise, the learning task acts as an interface between the teacher and the learner. Scaffolding is described as teachers' support given to the learner when they are in the ZPD so that they can move to the next step in their learning. Researchers argue that AFL should identify students' current level of knowledge relative to the desired goal

in the ZPD. Formative assessment collects and uses information about students' knowledge and performance to close the gap between students' current learning state and the desired state of pedagogical action. Researchers consider formative assessment and scaffolding as complementary concepts (Shepard, 2005).

The study is also underpinned by Skinner's theory of operant conditioning. According to Skinner, operant conditioning is the use of consequences to modify the occurrence of a particular behaviour (Pitts, 1971). The use of formative assessment promotes the use of consequences through dialogue and feedback. Social Studies teachers can use consequences to monitor students' progress towards the targeted learning outcomes. This approach to the use of formative assessment can help students to identify the links between different Social Studies concepts and make generalizations thereby achieving their predicted goals. Skinner further augured that through constant dialogue and use of feedback, the desired behavior can be achieved by learners (Isaksen & Holth, 2009). To Jones and Jones (2013) this theory supports the use of assessment for learning and differentiated learning in the classroom. Through this approach complex tasks can be broken down into simpler ones where regular interventions and support are provided to monitor progress. In addition, praises and rewards may be provided as a means of providing incentives for achievement of smaller tasks and a motivator for higher tasks.

The study was supported by the Framework of Formative assessment by Wiliam and Thomson (2007). The formative assessment framework of Wiliam and Thomson (2007), presents the five key formative assessment strategies including; Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success; engineering effective classroom discussions, questions, activities, and tasks that elicit evidence of students' learning; providing feedback that moves learners forward; activating students as

owners of their own learning; and activating students as learning resources for one another. The three agents in the classroom are; teacher, learner and peer. Three questions to be answered during instruction; where the learner is going? Where the learner is now? and How to get there? (Chemeli, 2019).

The sociocultural constructivist theory, Skinner's theory of operant conditioning and the Framework of Formative assessment by Wiliam and Thomson (2007) have been considered because of the role they play in ensuring the attainment of educational goals by ensuring effective learning and improved performance of learners through formative assessment in contemporary society. As a result, the theories will provide a framework for formative assessment in Social Studies as a means through which its goals and objectives could be attained. It also served as a framework through which the formative assessment practices of Social Studies teachers will be measured against the goals and objectives of teaching and learning Social Studies.

2.2 Empirical Review

Erickson (2007) viewed formative assessment as the continual 'taking stock' that teachers do by paying firsthand observational attention to students during the ongoing course of instruction careful attention focused upon specific aspects of a student's developing understanding in order to make decisions about next steps in instruction. In this view, several studies have been conducted to investigate formative assessment practices in Ghana.

Akyeampong (1997) conducted a study to examine the nature and scope of activities and problems faced by teachers in the practice of continuous assessment at the post-secondary teacher training level in Ghana. The research also examined the training and guidance provided for those undertaking continuous assessment, and the impact

of the new assessments upon teaching and learning. The study was conducted in three teacher training (now Colleges of Education) colleges. The findings of the research suggest that, many problems continue to threaten the benefits of implementing continuous assessment in the training colleges. He mentioned operational and structural conditions in the colleges, professional support systems for tutors to carry out continuous assessment, tutor competency in assessment and considerations rooted in the values and beliefs of tutors about assessment which define their assessment culture and agenda as major problems threatening continuous assessment among the teacher training colleges. Hayford (2007) explored the use of continuous assessment and the experiences of lower attaining pupils in primary and junior secondary schools at Agona and Affutu Districts in Ghana. The study revealed that majority of the teachers in the study felt strongly that continuous assessment enabled teachers to support lower achieving pupils to improve. Moreover, the teachers identified policy, larger classes and lack of training as barriers to supporting lower achievers to improve. Also, the study reported that lower achieving pupils became anxious, frustrated, and helpless before and during class tests, and are upset when they failed.

Bordoh *et al.* (2013) adopted a case study design to investigate the cognition of Social Studies tutors in formative assessment in Colleges of Education in Ghana. Their study revealed that formative assessment is crucial to information on the students' academic achievements in the classroom. In their conclusion they clarified that tutors conceptualized formative assessment not to be the same as summative assessment and that both do not serve the same purpose.

Also, Bekoe *et al.* (2013) examined the formative assessment techniques that tutors use to assess teacher-trainees' learning in Social Studies. It was revealed that due to hasty nature in formulating formative assessment and scoring, tutors laid emphasis on

cognitive domain to the neglect of affective and psychomotor domains which are also of paramount importance. In addition, Eshun *et al.* (2014) conducted a study to evaluate students' learning using formative assessment in Colleges of Education in the Central Region of Ghana. It was found that evaluation in the classroom motivates tutor-student relationship in formative assessment but it was also observed that most of the tutors were not using concrete evaluation feedbacks. In 2018, Adam, et al conducted a study on how Senior High School teacher in Ghana actualize formative assessment in the social studies classroom. Their findings on how the teachers implement formative assessment was reported under: (A) declaration of learning goals and sharing success criteria and (B) integrating assessment in instruction, thus, eliciting and using evidence to adapt teaching strategies. Their findings on declaration of learning goals and sharing success criteria was that formative assessment was seldom practiced in the classroom apart from the declaration of learning outcomes. The findings of this study concluded that there is deficiency in the teachers' formative assessment practices. It was observed that teachers were inconsistent with effective ways of implementing formative assessment in classrooms. As to whether teachers integrate assessment in instruction, it was revealed through this study that teachers hardly integrate assessment in their instructional practices. The study thus deduced that teachers' inability to integrate formative assessment in their lessons thus implies the inadequate knowledge they have about formative assessment. Also it was presupposed that the teachers may not be able to use assessment to improve their teaching strategies, monitor students' understanding of Social Studies' concepts and inculcate in their students the relevant knowledge, attitudes, values and skills they need to solve problems (in line with the subject's goal). It was further concluded that,

the assessment practices of many Senior High School Social Studies teachers do not align with contemporary theories and practices in the field.

A study by Amoako *et al.* (2019) applied a questionnaire to 148 mathematics teachers in the Cape Coast metropolis to investigate the knowledge of Formative Assessment Practices among Senior High School Mathematics Teachers in Ghana. The study indicated that SHS mathematics teachers' knowledge level in formative assessment is low. They also concluded that there is a connection between teacher knowledge of formative assessment and their frequency of practice of formative assessment in the classrooms. They argued that the insufficient knowledge level of teachers in formative assessment might take its root from their training in the Universities and Colleges of Education and insufficient in-service training in the area of assessment with particular reference to formative assessment. Their finding was in agreement with Brookhart (2011), Heritage *et al.* (2009) who in their study found out that sufficient knowledge and skills on practicing formative assessment is lacking among most teachers which tend to impair their classroom. Chun (2011) also found that teachers have low knowledge in formative assessment in a survey and concluded that, the low of knowledge of teachers in formative assessment could deny them from achieving classroom instructional goals. The study revealed that formative assessment practices were very complex, demanding and a difficult task for the teacher in several ways. The studies were limited in telling the knowledge level of teachers. Again, because the researcher used a single individual, it would be difficult for the researcher to generalise his findings on others hence the need for more empirical study.

The reviewed literature clearly shows that there are deficiencies in teachers' formative assessment practices. It also reveals that teachers' knowledge in formative assessment inform their classroom formative assessment. Formative assessment to many teachers

is a routine in teaching and learning hence teachers seldom declare learning goals and sharing success criteria. Admittedly, some studies have been done on formative assessment in Social Studies. Notable among them are Adam, *et al* (2018); Eshun *et al.* (2014); Bekoe *et al.* (2013); Bordoh *et al.* (2013) but it appears no studies have been done to show how teachers formative assessment practices contributes to the goals and objectives of Social Studies especially in the basic and senior secondary schools, particularly in the Nsawam Municipality. This is the gap that this study seeks to fill.

2.3 The Goals and Objective of Social Studies

Most writers in an attempt to define what the term social studies is also try to explain its goals and objectives. The term goal which is being used interchangeably with the word purpose refer to the long term expectations of social studies as distinct from objectives which are more specific and with short term expectation. Like its scope, there has been contentious debates' regarding the goals of social studies. Ross and Marker (2005) remarked that, "the very lack of agreement regarding the purpose of the field, perhaps more than any other characteristics has become the hallmark of social studies" (p. 2).

Social Studies educators have always pitched a big tent, with plenty of room for diverse perspectives, and the response to conflicts over goals has most often been to look for how we could all just get along. This view is given credence by Ravitch (2003) when she echoes that over the time, the leader of the field social studies have frequently wrestled with their goals and purposes. She continues "the social studies field has readily redefined its aims to meet what so ever the socio political demands of the age were" (p.1). The comments seem to suggest to a great extent the kind of

disagreement and factionalism among those who advocate the various "tradition" of social studies education. It is therefore no wonder that Whelan (2001) comments that "the disagreement has become as adversarial as to threaten the field with factionalism, thereby undermining the pluralism from social studies has frequently benefited" (p. 43). While it appears there is no agreement among social studies educators over what the goals of social studies are, it is generally agreed that the primary pedagogical goal of social studies is to support students as they come to understand their world and have urgency as citizens (Vinson & Ross, 2001). The main goal of social studies therefore is to promote citizenship education.

Several authors however, have questioned the status of citizenship education as the main purpose of social studies. They argue that the term citizenship has not being clearly defined as goal of social studies (Lemming, *et al.*, 2003); Longstreet and Shane (1993). Clearly, the social studies contrarians' position point to mind that there is no "scientifically objective" answer to the question of the purpose of citizenship education because those purpose are not things that can be discovered (Ross & Marker, 2005). In reaction to the above reasoning by the social studies contrarians, Banks (1990) writes that citizenship education is the primary focus of social studies in the school curriculum which promotes desirable participatory citizenship. According to Banks, "while the other curriculum areas also help students to attain some skills needed to participate in a democratic society, the social studies is the only curriculum area which has the development of civic competencies and skills as its main goals" (p.3).

Subscribing to this views is Jarolimek (1971) who stated three categories of the objectives of social studies for the achievement of citizenship education. First, understanding which deals with knowledge and knowing; second, attitude which

relate to value, appreciation, ideals and feeling; third, skills which relate to using and applying social studies learning and ability to gain new learning. Also Tamakloe (1994) says that the main goal of social studies is to help students to be able to make informed decisions for the purpose of resolving personal problems and influencing public policy. To him these are important for the realization of the aims of citizenship. Ross and Marker (2005), state that "the purpose of social studies is citizenship education aimed at providing students opportunities for a model of problem solving" (p. 140). Homana *et al.* (2006) define citizenship as the opportunity provided by school to engage in meaningful learning experience... and other teaching strategies to facilitate their development as socially and politically responsible individuals. This is supported by the National Council for the Social Studies, (NCSS, 2006) which has long being leading advocate in the area of social studies. According to the NCSS the primary goal of education is to prepare students to be effective citizens and that through the curriculum students should have the opportunity to apply their civic knowledge to solve problems in schools. Martorella (2001) sums it up by saying; the basic purpose of social studies curriculum across the grade is to develop reflective, competent and concerned citizens. Reflective individuals are critical thinkers who make decisions and solve problems. Competent citizens possess a repertoire of skills to aid them in decision making and problem solving. Concerned citizens investigate their social world, identify issues as significant, exercise their responsibilities as members of a social community. Social studies should be seen as the head, the hand and the heart. The head represents reflection; the hand denotes competent and the heart symbolizes concern.

From the forgone discussion, it could be inferred that the social studies teacher has the sole responsibility of training student not only to develop their knowledge and skills but also the affective aspect of the individual, these are reflections of good citizens which Martorella (2001) refers to as "effective citizen". Martorella argues that the general purpose of social studies should be citizenship education; the objective is to produce reflective, competent and concern citizens who are critical and have inquiry mind. By thinking reflectively, students are able to apply the best course of action among alternatives. Reflective thinking therefore disrupts prejudices and deliberates on issues that are "fair to everyone concerned "(Parker, 2003). Since citizenship is the central purpose of social studies as well as the bed rock upon which schools functions teachers should provide reflective classrooms to help close the chapter on problematic areas of our society. This will require effective method of reflection that should be applied to the school curriculum and organization (Kumashihiro, 2004). According to Barth, social studies builds around four capacities and this is given credence by Banks (1990); Parker and Jarolimek (1997); Martorella (2001) and NCSS (2006). These four capacities are acquisition of knowledge, acquisition of skills, development of desirable attitudes and values and civic participation. Each capacity uniquely leads to responsible citizenship as they mirror the essential ingredient that characterizes sound social studies education. Gaining knowledge is an integral part of citizenship skills which allows for reflective decision making. According to Taba (1962) cited by Sawyer (2015, p.26) knowledge of any sort is an index of one's acquaintance with reality. As an individual increases his knowledge he also increases his understanding of the world around him. Often the maturity and intelligence of an individual is judged by the amount of knowledge he possesses. Students will be able to make reflective decisions and participate fully in their communities if build knowledge in

order to understand how things work within the community in which they find themselves, thus knowledge is an essential base to citizenship.

Skill goals are essential to social Studies teaching; they are identified in the capabilities of the student. Skill goals according to Banks (1990) can be categorized into four groups; these are thinking skills, inquiry skills, academic or study skills and group skills.

Thinking skills include the ability to gather and analyze information before making a decision. According to Banks (1990) thinking skills include the ability to conceptualize, interpret, analyze, generalize, apply knowledge and evaluate knowledge. Thus through thinking skills students are able to act constructively by evaluating evidence through rational conclusions Sawyer (2015).

Inquiry skills: These skills include the ability to formulate scientific questions and hypothesis to collect data and to use the data to test hypothesis to derive generalization. Inquiry raises the curiosity of students and prompts them in seeking further explanation to questionable situations.

Study skills: Studying is the way people learn new ideas. In social studies these include the ability to locate, organize and acquire information through listening and observing, communicate orally and in writing, read and interpret maps. Through study skills students make sense of new ideas for meaningful understanding of issues.

Group skills: These include the ability to perform effectively both as a leader and as a follower in solving group problems, to use power efficiently, and fairly in group situation, to make useful contributions to group progress to communicate effectively in a group and to resolve controversy in groups (Banks, 1990).

Attitudes and values: An important area of human development is attitude and values which are mainly concerned with the affective domain. Attitudes in particular affect how people evaluate situations. Positive attitudes allow people to view human conditions from a variety of perspectives Sawyer (2015).

Values are essentials of human relations, Human likes, patriotism, respect of dignity; hard work and right of others provide an area of reflective development. Since values are so central to decision making it beholds on schools to teach students to think critically about issues affecting society by analyzing events both past and present to bring harmony within society. It is in this light that Maclaughlin (2004) suggests that schools should provide opportunity for the youth to engage in a way that leads to confidence in the value of participatory problem solving. While desirable attitudes and values are central to what humans do, the central focus and purpose of civic participation is to foster the development of citizens who will participate actively in and outside the school.

Knowledge, skills, attitudes and values are paramount to community participation. Formative assessment in Social studies should include assessment tools that facilitate the development of all these in their learners.

2.4 Perspective and Nature of the Social Studies Curriculum

Social Studies is one of the integrated areas of study in the Ghanaian educational system today at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels. Social Studies as a discipline has suffered from identity crisis over the years due to many definitions given to it. Martorella (1994) for instance, argues that its ambiguous nature has turned it into an educational puzzle. Scholars in the field provide a multiplicity of answers to the question depending on their orientation and conception of the subject. Barr, Barth

and Shermis (1977) are of the view that the field of social studies is caught up with ambiguity, inconsistency and contradiction that represents a complex educational enigma which defies any final definition acceptable to all. Ravitch (2003) also confirms that over time leaders in the field have frequently wrestled with various definitions. She samples some of the vexing questions as follows:

What is social studies? Or what are social studies? Is it history with attention to current events? Is it a merger of history, geography, civics, economics, sociology, and all other social sciences? Is it a mishmash of courses such as career education, gender studies, and environmental studies? Is it a field that defines its goals in terms of cultivating skills like interpersonal relations and critical thinking? (p. 1).

Undoubtedly, opinions about what Social Studies is or should be, vary from country to country and from author to author. Since its inception, some educators have never agreed on common definitions, that is whether the subject uses a singular verb “is” or a plural verb “are” (Zevin, 2000). McClendon (1965) indicated that, a professional usage demonstrates convincingly that the term social studies is properly regarded as a plural verb. This notwithstanding, the term social studies must be used in a generic sense which takes the singular verb “is”. With time the definition of the subject has culminated in a number of schools of thought. These schools of thought include Social Studies taught as an amalgamation of the social sciences, an approach, as human relations and citizenship education (Ayaaba, 2011). This is supported by Bekoe and Eshun (2013a, p.92) that “teachers have varied conceptions about Social Studies as an amalgamation of the social sciences, citizenship education, reflective inquiry or problem solving”. Tabachnik (1991) argued that in trying to find out what social studies is, “one should examine general definitions for social studies offered by educators whose special interest is in social studies education which will serve as guideline and statement of purpose for social studies” (p.726).

Social Studies is seen by some scholars as a subject that deal with man and his environment. Olatunde (2006) simply defines Social Studies as an “approach through which man studies and learns about problems of survival in his environment”. Ndan and Jarimi (2011, p.46) state that “in Nigeria, Social Studies is perceived as the field of education or the common learning of man’s interaction with his social, physical, economic and political environments which influences and brings about human improvement”. Similarly, Arisi (2011) explain social studies as “the study of man within his, physical, social, economic, psychological, religious, political, cultural, scientific and technological”.

Ebirim and Edi (2014) cited in Godabe (2016), are of the view that, basically, man is the epicenter of Social Studies and the environment (physical and man-made) is the base for man’s survival and existence in the environment in which he finds himself thus, man is being examined from the following comprehensive perspectives; social being, political being, legal being, religious being, cultural and economic being.

The above definitions are conceptualized on the basis that Social Studies is the study of how man exists in his environment, deals with the multitude of factors that bears on man’s existence. It involves man’s activities, the activities he engaged in and why he engages in them. They include what man does, why he does them, what he believes in and why he believes in them; his problems and how they can be solved. Social Studies is a means through which the individual acquires the competency necessary for survival in which he/she applies to relate with their environment. The definitions are concerned with how man influences the environment and how the environment influences man. This suggests that man must be able to control his environment to his benefit.

Advocates of this assertion therefore call for the use of the thinking processes used by social science investigators to gain new knowledge. The selection of the contents for teaching and learning is based on concepts in the disciplines. The interest of the learner and the social context are not given much attention. Thus, methods used in teaching this tradition include transmission and discovery. Teachers give out information about the facts, concepts and generalizations of the disciplines to the students to memorise. It is obvious that all the definitions lay so much emphasis on the understanding and the analysis of man and his relationship with his immediate environment. The demand of today's education goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge and information to the application of the information and the knowledge acquired for the good of man and his total environment hence the need to refocus and redirect Social Studies curriculum.

Another school of thought defines Social Studies as an approach of teaching. This school of thought upholds the view that Social Studies is a method or approach of teaching the social science disciplines. Among the Proponents of this view are Wesley and Wronski (1964) and Wesley, who are of the view that Social Studies are the social sciences simplified for pedagogical purposes. Similarly, Kenworthy (1969, p.6) states that –Social Studies is a kind of shorthand for the study of people by pupils in elementary and secondary schools” also, Thesaurus of ERIC, 1987 defined Social Studies as a subject that consists of adaptations of knowledge from the social sciences for teaching purposes at the primary and secondary levels of education. Again the CRDD (1987) also defined social studies to mean an integrated interdisciplinary approach to the study of society and the environment (CRDD, 1987).

The implication of defining social studies to mean a method or approach of teaching connotes that it is not a subject on its own. However, it should not be taken that Social

Studies is just an approach to teaching in which the content, findings and methods of the social sciences are merely simplified and reorganized for instructional purpose. It is a field of study in its own right though it derives its existence from the amalgamation of a number of disciplines.

Another school of thought view Social Studies as an amalgam, interdisciplinary and integrated subject. To some of the practitioners in this category, Social Studies was defined as “amalgamation” of all knowledge of the arts and social sciences, in terms of history, geography, political science and sociology. People of this persuasion believe that for young people to become reflective individuals, they need to acquire sound knowledge and skills of particular social science subjects. In support is Dynneson and Gross (1999) assert that Social Studies is an interdisciplinary field of learning drawing upon the concepts and means of the social sciences and related areas. The official definition of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 1994, p.105) contains a strong inter-disciplinary focus with the aim of solving social problems. It states that Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. To the NCSS, because civic issues such as health care and crime are multi-disciplinary in nature, understanding these issues require multi-disciplinary education. Iwegbu and Ossai (2011, p.34) Social Studies is an interdisciplinary field of study which cuts across all the subjects in the field of social sciences and humanities.

Those who define social studies as an amalgamation of the social sciences identify the content or subject matter of social studies, which includes essential information, ideas, skills, issues and enquiry procedures drawn from the group of disciplines called the social sciences. Concepts, principles, generalizations and processes from the social sciences serve as resources on which the Social Studies curriculum draws, blending

and integrating them as needed to provide students with meaningful learning experiences. It is therefore evident from these definitions that one main characteristic that makes social studies more distinct is that it incorporates many fields of endeavour which go beyond the social sciences. To a large extent, the framework of Social Studies promotes history, geography and economics. These are the three major disciplines of Social Studies since they directly promote the development of temporal and spatial competencies and sustainable living. History gathers and evaluates relevant traces of past event and provides Social Studies with the key concepts of chronology, cause and effects and historical records. The key concepts of geography in Social Studies curriculum include land form, migration, climate, ecosystem and sustainable economic development. Economics is the study of how we use resources to satisfy wants and need and this is given prominence in the Social Studies syllabus. Other fields of study, such as political science, anthropology, sociology and social psychology contribute essential understanding and competencies to Social Studies. The social sciences are therefore constructs developed to aid in the scholarly pursuit of knowledge with the content and findings from the social sciences furnishing the raw materials on which the Social Studies programme is built (Welton & Mallan, 1992). It may be true to some extent that the social sciences provide the foundational concept–matrix for Social Studies. However, it appears social studies is broader a field than that covered by the social sciences. Bekoe and Eshun (2013b, p.43) contend that, –although Social Studies is seen as an integrated body of knowledge of the social sciences, there is an issue of acceptable level of integration”.

The implication of the integrative nature of Social Studies therefore calls for critical thinking about social issues leading to the development of thoughtfulness in students. Through integration pupils acquire a variety of skills including those of inquiry,

investigation and discovery as they are actively involved in the teaching and learning process. Curriculum labelled on this view only ended up departmentalising knowledge by selecting assortment of topics from the Social Sciences. This can only compel the teachers holding this view to limit their selection of topics related to their discipline, with emphasis on such topics at the neglect of other topics unless other specialists can be found to handle other aspects of the curriculum. Advocates of the Social Studies taught as social sciences are of the view that teaching consists of introducing students to the thinking processes used by social science investigators to gain new knowledge. Popular methods used in teaching this tradition include transmission and discovery where teachers give out information about the facts, concepts and generalizations of the disciplines to the students to memorise.

There are other Social Studies authorities who are of the view that good citizenship is contingent on the values, attitudes and behaviours that one exhibits towards others in the society. To them, Social Studies teaches the youth how to live responsibly in society by inculcating in them desirable democratic values and attitudes such as honesty, respect for oneself and others, tolerance of divergent views, hard work and discipline. They defend social studies should taught as citizenship transmission. Prominent among these views are Tamakloe (1994) who defines Social Studies by places premium on individual qualities such as patriotism, honesty, diligence, obedience, and critical thinking, and also group ideals like interdependence, co-operation and peaceful co-existence. Similar view shared by Obed (2009) when he asserted that Social Studies is a programme of general education for the new generation focusing on the study of humans, societal institutions, and human relationship with nature and with one another. Baraya and Malcolm (2014) cited in Godabe (2016, p.23) added that Social Studies is a process of education which

emphasizes the relationship human beings have with their physical and social world. The focus of Social Studies is the network of relationship that evolve among people as they try to coexist in the various group settings that compete for their loyalties. Thus Social Studies is a means through which a society propagates its acceptable norms, attitudes, values and behaviours.

The assumptions underpinning the teaching of social studies as citizenship transmission are that, first, there is a body of knowledge and values which exist and which can be made known to the learner. Values and knowledge are external, real and exist in an objective sense. The second assumption of citizenship transmission school is that it is the duty and responsibility of the teacher to acquaint students with this body of knowledge and values. The third assumption is that the acquisition of this body of knowledge and values will shape the end product (i.e. the citizen) described above. On the basis of these assumptions, the advocates of the citizenship transmission school of thought tend to rely on passive teaching techniques such as questioning, lecture, teacher demonstration, recitation and so on. The teacher is encouraged to teach to reflect the existing body of knowledge and values while the student is expected to learn the correct beliefs, norms and values in order to become a properly functioning citizen.

In addition, social studies to some writers is citizenship education or reflective inquiry. According to Thornton (1994, p.224), while ~~most~~ Social Studies leaders and policymakers justify the subject on the grounds of citizenship...it is here that the consensus ends: What does citizenship mean and what, in turn, does this mean for curriculum and instruction?" In seeking to answer just such a question, Barr *et al.* (1977) culled the literature and found three approaches to Social Studies-citizenship transmission, reflective inquiry, and social science method, each of which resulted in

a different conception of a citizen and a different approach to prepare young people for citizenry.

In Proponents of this school of thought believe that Social Studies should prepare young people for adult citizenship roles. They contend that although all other subjects play a significant role in developing informed and responsible citizenship, it is only social studies that has citizenship development as its priority goal (Banks, 1990). It is evidently clear in the definition of the African Social and Environmental Studies Programme (ASESP, 1994) when they defined social studies as the integration of purpose of promoting and practicing effective problem solving, promoting citizenship skills in social, political and economic issues and problems. Similarly, the Ghana Education Service (GES, 2001) defines Social Studies as “integrated bodies of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will help the pupils develop a broader perspective of Ghana and the world” (p. iii). In addition, Chukwu (2011), Social Studies is the integration of interrelationships of different subjects aimed at inculcating national consciousness and national unity, imbibing the right type of values and attitude for self and national survival, the acquisition of necessary skills, ability and competences which individuals needs to be able to contribute to national development. Again, Mezieobi, *et al.* (2013) define Social Studies as an integrative field of study which probes man’s symbiotic relationships with his environment, endows man with the reflective or contemplative capacities, intellectual, affective, social and work skills, to enable him to understand his world and its problems, and to rationally solve or cope with them for effective living in the society. The advocates of Social Studies as citizenship education emphasize on the use of problem solving and discovery methods of teaching. According to Du Bey and Barth (1980) the heart of the reflective enquiry position is the identification and analysis of students’ perceived problems. The

reflective enquiry advocates insist that students should be given opportunities to discover their potentials as good citizens through the child-centred method employing techniques such as projects, brainstorming, discussion, debate, etc. Students should be assisted to identify problems and use the problem-solving process to have them addressed. The proponents emphasize authentic activities that call for using content for accomplishing life applications. For example, critical-thinking attitudes and abilities are developed through policy debates or assignments calling for critique of currently or historically important policy arguments or decisions, not through artificial exercises in identifying logical or rhetorical flaws. Similarly, in addition to more traditional assignments, students frequently engage in cooperative learning, construction of models or plans, dramatic re-creations of historical events that shaped democratic values or civic policies, role-play, and simulation activities (e.g., mock trials or simulated legislative activities, interviewing family members, and collecting data in the local community). They are of the view that through authentic application activities they develop civic efficacy by practicing it—engaging in the inquiry and debate required to make informed decisions about real social issues then following up with appropriate social or civic action.

Contemporary scholars of social studies are also of the view that social studies should be taught as peace education and global citizenship. To Adeyemi (2004), Social Studies is an interdisciplinary or a multidisciplinary course of study which enables human beings to participate in and engage effectively and rationally in the affairs of their local, national and international communities, in a manner that will make the overall global society, a better place to live in. Ezeoba (2012), is also of the view that, the ultimate aim of Social Studies is to equip individuals with knowledge and understanding for peaceful relationships and living. Ezeoba further argued that

nations which used Social Studies as a corrective measure for reconstruction and rehabilitation of their societies place high value in the implementation of their Social Studies curriculum so that the subject exposes them to new values and skills necessary for the sustainability of a peaceful nation. To the advocates of social studies as peace education and global citizenship, the teaching of Social Studies should be integrative across time and space, connecting with past experiences and looking ahead to the future. This means students should be helped to appreciate how aspects of the social world function, not only in their local community and nation but also in the global world.

From the various schools of thought, Social Studies can be seen as a subject that provides us with the ways of looking at the society in order to understand its structure and its problems and to find ways of solving the problems of the society. Nonetheless, to reconcile all these schools of thought and to give the subject a focus, the NCSS in 1992 adopted the following definition of Social Studies: Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. The primary purpose of Social Studies is to help young people to develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizen of culturally diverse democratic societies in an interdependent world. This definition has the following implications for teaching and learning. First, the material that is studied (the content of Social Studies). This includes information, ideas, skills, generalisations, concepts, principles, issues, and inquiry procedures drawn from the social sciences - history, geography, government, civics, political science, economics, sociology, and anthropology. Others are literature, music and the visual and performing arts, religion and archaeology. These fields serve as resources for the Social Studies curriculum which blends and integrates them as and when necessary to

provide learners with worthwhile experiences. The second implication is the purpose of Social Studies, which is citizenship education. Notwithstanding, Eshun and Mensah (2013, p.83) concluded that –Social Studies should be taught as a holistic subject, which should reflect behavioural change in students and not facts from other social sciences. Social Studies teachers should stress on teaching of skills more than the factual content. The main role of the Social Studies teacher is to emphasize the development of relevant knowledge, positive attitudes, value and problem solving skills of students.”

2.5 The Concept of Assessment

A number of specialized books, journals, seminal articles, conference papers, currently defended thesis and dissertations were scrutinized in an attempt to find a comprehensive meaning to the concept of assessment. According to Bachman (2004), –The term ‘assessment’ is commonly used with a variety of different meanings. Indeed, the term has come to be used so widely in many different ways in the field of language testing and educational measurement that there seems to be no consensus on what precisely it means” (p.6). Brown (2004) defined assessment as –any act of interpreting information about student performance, collected through any of a multitude of a means or practices” (p. 304). To Hanna and Dettmer (2004) assessment is the ways instructors gather data about their teaching and their students’ learning. It requires assigning students’ performances numerical descriptions of the extent to which they possess specific characteristics or traits measured according to specific standards, or criteria serving as a source of evidence of many aspects of an individual student’s knowledge, understanding, skills and/ or abilities (Ghaicha, 2016). Ghaicha further explained that in the classroom, assessment considers students’ performances on tasks in a variety of settings and contexts”. Ioannou-Georgiou (2003) defines

assessment as “a general term which includes all methods used to gather information about children’s knowledge, ability, understanding, attitudes, and motivation.” Ioannou-Georgiou’s definition brings to light the need to assess all the domains of the learner-cognitive, affectionate, and the psychomotor in order to collect comprehensive information about the learner. Hall and Sheehy (2010) discuss what assessment is and their conclusion is that “assessment means different things in different contexts” but declare that it is “always bound up with attitudes, values, beliefs and sometimes prejudices” on both sides which is in accordance with Ioannou-Georgiou. For the purpose of this thesis, assessment is operationally defined as a part of the educational process where instructors collect, measure, analyse, synthesize and interpret relevant information about learners’ ability, understanding, attitudes and skills through diverse means and techniques in relation to curricula objectives set for their levels, and according to the procedures that are systematic and substantively grounded.

Educational assessment is governed by the purposes, uses and functions to which they are performed. Assessment serves many diverse purposes: motivating students; directing and enhancing learning; providing feedback to students on strengths, weaknesses and how they might improve; providing feedback to the lecturer about student understanding; and checking whether learning outcomes are being achieved (Zou, 2008, pp. 82-83). Assessments allow people in charge of assessment to get instructive insights about three critical functions: Selecting, Monitoring, and Holding Accountable (Ghaicha, 2016). To Murphy and Harrold (1997) assessment results, along with other measurement data assist in evaluating the effectiveness of institutional practices by tracking the functioning of different components of the assessment system (generally referred to as national assessments), sometimes holding the individuals responsible for those components accountable, contributing to decision

making about the functioning of departments, programs and curricula, and providing potential measures to be taken to improve all the cornerstones of an educational system. In other words, assessment also allows departments or division heads to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and allows instructors to determine what, and how well, students are learning and how effective are both their instructional and assessment practices are to their students and the accountability measures set by their educational system. Jones and Tanner (2008) rather had three general aims for classroom assessment which include pedagogical, managerial and communicative.

Gibbs (2003) observed the six main functions of assessment as: Capturing student time and attention, Generating appropriate student learning activity, Providing timely feedback which students pay attention to, Helping students to internalize the discipline's standards and notions of equality, Generating marks or grades which distinguish between students or enable pass/fail decisions to be made and Providing evidence for others outside the course to enable them to judge the appropriateness of standards on the course. Gibbs further added that with the exception of the last two points these should occur as frequently as possible to support effective learning. Assessment plays a critical role in the successful implementation of the curriculum which requires that the assessment in place is effective as a form of communication. The understanding of assessment as a form of communication is made to a variety of sources - to the learner (feedback on their learning), to the teacher (feedback on their teaching), to the curriculum designer (feedback on the curriculum) and to district, regional and national education directorates (feedback on the use of resources) (MOE, 2019).

Phye (1997) summarizes three purposes of assessment: a) discovering and documenting students' strengths and weaknesses, b) planning and enhancing instruction, and c) evaluating progress and making decisions about students" (p. 10) . Kane, et al (1997) also identifying the four purposes of assessment as: influencing and informing instruction and curriculum; monitoring student progress; holding teachers and schools accountable; and certifying student achievement. Vingsle (2014) add that assessment can also serve to provide feedback to students by measuring their progress, giving them an idea of their degree of (non)mastery of the content taught to them in relation to others or to a norm or a standard and instructors can use assessment to place students in a group for behavioural, social and/or instructional purposes. Kelly (2009) observed four specific purposes of assessment as: Formative, so that the positive achievements of a pupil may be recognized and discussed and the appropriate next steps may be planned; Diagnostic, through which learning difficulties may be scrutinized and classified so that appropriate remedial help and guidance can be provided; Summative, for the recording of the overall achievement of a pupil in a systematic way; and Evaluative, by means of which some aspects of the work of a school or discrete part of the educational service can be assessed and/or reported upon (MOE, 2019).

2.6 Assessment in the Basic and Senior High Schools of Ghana

Assessment has been used for multiple purposes, such as providing student grades, national accountability, system monitoring, resource allocation within a district, student placement or monitoring, determining interventions, improving teaching and learning, or providing individual feedback to students and their parents/guardians (Newton, 2007). Large-scale and classroom assessment serve different purposes and have different goals. Large-scale assessment informs systems. It is often used for

system monitoring, to evaluate programs, or to make student placements. Teachers are sometimes evaluated based in part on how well their students perform on such assessments (Wilson & Kenney, 2003). Classroom assessment is considered as a critical factor in promoting quality education and has become the pivot of various educational improvement efforts (Oduro, 2015).

Assessment in Ghana has over the years been used mostly for placement decisions. That is to select candidates to progress through the levels/ stages of the educational system and for employment. The implication here is that, little attention and value has been attached to formative assessment in both basic and secondary schools.

In the National Pre-tertiary Education Curriculum Framework, assessment in Ghana's schools should take the following forms:

Continuous assessment

In order to capture the full range and levels of competence, a variety of formal and informal continuous assessment situations are necessary to provide a complete picture of the learner's progress and achievements in all subjects. Continuous assessment must be clear, simple and manageable, and explicitly anchored in learner-centred principles and practice. Teachers must elicit reliable and valid information of the learner's performance in the basic competences. The information gathered about the learners' progress and achievements should be used to give feedback to the learners about their strong and weak points, where they are doing well and why, and where they need to improve, how, and why. The parents should be regularly informed about the progress of their child in all subjects, be encouraged to reward achievements, and given suggestions on how they can support their learning activities. The learner's

progress and achievements in all subjects must be reported to parents in the school report (MOE, 2019).

School based assessment

School Based Assessment (SBA), also referred to as Continuous Assessment, which is used in Ghana as part of the Educational Reforms that began in September 2008, is recommended for use. SBA is a very effective system for teaching and learning if carried out properly. The new SBA system is designed to provide schools with an internal assessment system that will help them to achieve the following purposes:

- Standardise the practice of internal school-based assessment in all schools in the country.
- Provide reduced assessment tasks for each of the primary school subjects.
- Provide teachers with guidelines for constructing assessment items/questions and other assessment tasks.
- Introduce standards of achievement in each subject and in each class of the school system.
- Provide guidance in marking and grading of test items/questions and other assessment tasks. Introduce a system of moderation that will ensure the accuracy and reliability of teachers' marks.
- Provide teachers with advice on how to conduct remedial instruction on difficult areas of the syllabus to improve pupil performance (MOE, 2010).

The marks for SBA should together constitute the SBA component that is marked out of 60%. The emphasis is on improving learners' learning by encouraging them to perform at a higher level. The SBA will hence consist of:

- End-of-month/Strand tests

- Homework assignments (specially designed for SBA)
- Project

The SBA system will consist of 12 assessments a year instead of the 33 assessments in the previous continuous assessment system. This will mean a reduction by 64% of the work load compared to the previous continuous assessment system.

Apart from the SBA, teachers are expected to use class exercises and home work as processes for continually evaluating pupils' class performance, and as a means for encouraging improvements in learning performance (MOE, 2010).

End-of-term examination

The end-of-term examination is a summative assessment system and should consist of a sample of the knowledge and skills pupils have acquired in the term. The end-of-term test for Term 3 should be composed of items/questions based on the specific objectives studied over the three terms, using a different weighting system so as to reflect the importance of the work done in each term in appropriate proportions (MOE, 2019).

Informal and formal methods

The teacher must assess how well each learner masters the basic competences described in the subject syllabuses and from this gain a picture of the all-round progress of the learner. To a large extent, this can be done in an informal way through a structured observation of each learner's progress in learning and practice situations while they are investigating things, interpreting phenomena and data, applying knowledge, communicating, making value judgments, and in their participation in general. In the Pre-Primary phase, all assessment is observational and aims to identify if a child has special needs and how to mobilise the resources to meet them. In the

Lower Primary phase and in non-promotion subjects in Years 4-12, only informal continuous assessment is used. It is done in less structured and more structured settings. The use of formal written and oral tests can only assess a limited range of competences and therefore should not take up a great deal of time (MOE, 2019).

Authentic assessment/ alternative assessment

Authentic assessment or alternative assessment can be defined as a variety of performance assessments that require learners to generate rather than choose a response. Authentic assessment is a method that emphasises learning and thinking, especially higher order thinking such as problem-solving strategies rather than just lower order thinking. In doing such assessment, the child/student uses all his/her cognitive, aesthetic, physical and social potential. Examples of Authentic assessment or alternative assessment include: Child Observation; Anecdotal Records; Checklists; Oral Interview; and Portfolio (MOE, 2019). In Years 10 (SHS 1) and 12 (SHS 3), mock examinations may be held to learn examination skills and to identify areas of the syllabus which may need extra attention (MOE, 2019).

In 2010, the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA) was introduced. The EGRA and EGMA are assessments administered to a representative sample of pupils in public basic schools at the end of second grade to assess reading and mathematics skills. Two EGRA and EGMA tests have been conducted in Ghana since 2010 – one in 2013 and one in 2015.

National Education Assessment (NEA) is an assessment administered to a representative sample of pupils in basic education for English and mathematics. National Education Assessment (NEA) assessments began in 2005 and have been conducted every two years, except for the last round which was conducted in 2016.

Assessments in 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013 were administered to pupils in P3 and P6, whereas in 2016 this assessment was administered to pupils in P4 and P6 (MOE, 2018). It can be concluded that little emphasis have been put on social studies assessment in the national level. If the purpose of assessment is to gather information about children's knowledge, ability, understanding, attitudes, and motivation the it is imperative for the nation to put emphasis on social studies assessment since it the only subject in the Ghanaian school curriculum responsible for the development positive attitudes and values.

2.7 The Concept of Formative Assessment and its impact on Instruction

Formative assessment is often called on-going or assessment for learning (AFL). It is used to form and change the learning process in order to achieve better results. In 1998, Black and Wiliam, took on the task to review literature on formative assessment in the purpose to survey how and if improvement of classroom assessment could improve classroom learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998a), resulting in their first definition of formative assessment as all those activities undertaken by teachers-and by their students in assessing themselves-that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities. Such assessment becomes formative assessment when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching to meet student needs (Black & Wiliam, 1998 cited by Vingsle, 2014). The activities that were proven in the review to enhance student learning were; sharing success criteria with learners, classroom questioning, comment-only marking, peer- and self-assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1998b). In support of this assertion is Popham (2000) who defined formative assessment as a process that "involves the gathering and analysis of assessment-elicited evidence for the purpose of determining when and

how to adjust instructional activities or learning tactics in order to achieve learning goals" (p. 14).

In 1999, Cowie and Bell, adopted a narrow definition of formative assessment by using the definition ~~the~~ "the process used by teachers and students to recognize and respond to student learning in order to enhance that learning, during the learning". The definition of Cowie and Bell requires formative assessment to take place during learning. That is, focusing the unplanned and unpredictable situations during lessons when practicing formative assessment.

There are other definitions that focus on the feedback pupils receive during lesson and outcome of learning, this is in accordance with Harmer (2007) who states that ~~this~~ "this is done at a micro-level every time we indicate that something is wrong". Again, Harmer emphasized formative assessment can also ~~take~~ "take place when teachers go through the results of progress and achievement tests". According to Heritage (2010) the purpose of formative assessment is to provide feedback to teachers and students during the course of learning about the gap between students' current and desired performance so that action can be taken to close the gap. Garesis (2007) sees formative assessment as any means by which a teacher finds out what pupils are getting and what they do not understand in the classroom to inform teaching and learning but excludes grading. Simply said, it is a piece of information about how successful a piece of learning has been and what they should work on in the future. This does not only give feedback to the students, but also helps the teacher realize which elements he or she should concentrate on more and which aspects he or she succeeded in.

Critic against this way of perceiving formative assessment points out the fact that this leaves the assessment itself open to the possibility to be just any random information (Vingsle, 2014). And as a reaction, Broadfoot introduced the term assessment for learning pointing out that the term formative implies no more than assessment is carried out frequently and is planned at the same time as teaching (as cited in Wiliam, 2010). To this end, Black and Wiliam (2009) again were of the view that a practice in a classroom is formative to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited. The change of word used in Black and Wiliams definitions, –assessment evidence” in 1998, to –elicited information” 2009, implies that it is not only information gathered from tests, workbooks, nor coincidences that the teacher in a formative practice receives valuable information from students (Virglsle, 2014). The term instruction is used to describe any activity that intends to create learning, denoting both teaching and learning (Wiliam, 2010).

Moss and Brookhart (2009) saw formative assessment as an active and intentional learning process that partners the teacher and students to continuously gather evidence of learning with express goal of improving students learning. This implies that unless students and teachers are learning from the process, formative assessment is not occurring in the classroom. For this study, the researcher sees formative assessment to be all those activities undertaken by teachers and or by learners which provide information that can be used to guide learners towards learning goals and objectives.

There are four main components of formative assessment (Wiliam, 2011; Wiliam & Thompson, 2007): (i) Explaining learning objectives and success criteria; (ii) increasing the quality of inquiry/dialogue; (iii) increasing the quality of marking/feedback/record keeping; and (iv) using self and peer assessment. According to Heritage (2009), goals and criteria enable students to know what and why they will learn so that they can become active participants in what otherwise can be a passive learning process. When a new topic is introduced, it is crucial for students to share their goals, needs and criteria to get good results.

The principal purpose of formative assessment is developmental, to help students monitor their own understanding and progress. Its nature is diagnostic, identifying weaknesses allowing students to spend time and effort on improvement (Petty, 2004, p. 463). It must provide feedback that can help students modify their performance, whether it comes from lecturers, other students or self-evaluation (Butcher et al, undated, p. 1). The process of formative assessment is a key way that reflectivity can be enhanced (Hadrill, 1995, p. 169). Regular formative assessment can be motivational, as continuous feedback is integral to the learning experience, stimulating and challenging students (Leach *et al.*, 1998, p. 204). Formative assessment is also an opportunity to find out if the learning they planned is actually happening (George & Cowan, 1999, p. 9). It can therefore be used during a module to form judgments on the success of learning so that remedial action can be taken before it is too late (Petty, 2004, p. 449). Similarly, Black and Wiliam (1998) described AfL as the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learner is in their learning, where they need to be (the desired goal), and how best to get there. The use of formative assessment in Ghanaian classrooms should be understood as Assessment for Learning (AfL), an assessment

practice that describes approaches within the formative purposes of assessment (MOE, 2019). Assessment for learning (formative assessment):

- can be based on a variety of information sources (e.g. portfolios, works in progress, teacher observation, conversation);
- involves giving verbal or written feedback that is primarily descriptive and emphasizes strengths, identifies challenges, and points student to the next steps;
- demands of teachers to check on learners' understanding, and adjust their instruction to keep them on track;
- involves giving no grades or scores and record-keeping that is primarily anecdotal and descriptive; and
- occurs throughout the learning process, from the outset of the course of study to the time of summative assessment (MOE, 2019).

Current perspectives in classroom assessment encourage the use of a range of assessment strategies, tools, and formats, providing multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning, making strong use of formative feedback on a timely and regular basis, and including students in the assessment process (e.g., Brookhart, 2011). Formative assessment can be summarized in three central questions to be answered by the students or teacher (NRC, 2001 cited by Bordoh, *et al.*, 2013): Where are you going?; Where are you now?; and How are you going to get there? This three-step process summarizes what has been called the "feedback loop" in formative assessment; that is, setting a learning goal, determining the gap between the learning goal and the student's present state of understanding, and formulating feedback to close the gap. Bordoh, *et al.* explained that although they may often be tacit, teachers

have goals for their students as they conduct learning activities. Sadler (1989) cited by Bordoh, *et al.* (2013) described the process of goal-setting in detail. These goals may come in the form of what type of product they are looking for, the quality of their argument, or the clarity of an explanation provided by a student. Teachers can make goals explicit to students through descriptive statements, which detail the different aspects of the goal; or examples, which show gradations of quality up to the desired standard. Despite a teacher's best efforts, a goal only becomes important to the students when they adopt the goal internally for themselves. In many educational settings, goals that are specific rather than vague have been shown to be most effective at capturing students' attention and increasing mobilization on a task. These learning goals, while often viewed as conceptual in nature, can also be spread across the other domains of learning (Duschl, 2003).

The literature offers a metaphor of a gap to help conceptualise the role assessment can play in helping students to achieve learning goals (Sadler, 1989; Black & Wiliam, 1998). If one side of the gap represents student learning goals (point B) and the other represents the current place where students sit with respect to those goals (point A), the distance between points A and B comprises a gap that needs to be bridged. To establish the size of the gap between points A and B, the teacher must in some way make the students' thinking visible so that their level of understanding can be compared to the goal. This can include eliciting students' thinking through verbal or written prompts, reviewing students' notebooks or homework, or listening to small-group conversations (Bordoh, Bassaw & Eshun, 2013). They bemoaned that in many conversations about assessment, the focus stops with an inference concerning student understanding (point A), and at times includes how much it falls short of point B or the goals. While the gap metaphor lacks the complexity inherent in any classroom

activity, it does capture the possibility of how assessment can provide teachers and students with information that can inform actions that bridge the gap. The optimum gap size is hypothesized to be not too large or too small, so as to create sufficient determination for the student to adopt and reach the goal and the process that connects the teacher's goals or criteria with the students' current state of understanding, that is, the process that closes the gap, is the "feedback loop" or the process of the teacher providing feedback to students (Bordoh, Bassaw & Eshun, 2013).

In the study of Cowie and Bell (1999) two types of formative assessment were identified: planned and interactive formative assessment. In their view when formative assessment is planned, the phases of formative assessment are typically generated from the teacher's initiative. It is a cyclic process of eliciting, interpreting and acting, carried out with all students in the class and relies on teachers' professional knowledge. In interactive formative assessment on the other hand, the information is noticed by the teacher during student talk or student questions and tends to be carried out with some individual student or small groups. Popham (2011) outlined two types of formative assessment as pre-assessment and ongoing assessment. Pre-assessment is a type of formative assessment that occurs before a unit of study begins. They are purely diagnostic in nature. Teachers attempt to find out what students already know, understanding, and are able to do regarding the upcoming learning. Ongoing assessment is what most people think of as formative assessment. It occurs at various intervals throughout the learning process and it is purposed to find out the degree to which students are "with" the teacher in terms of meeting learning goals, so classroom content, process, and products can be adjusted to better facilitate student growth (Popham, 2011). Formal formative assessment usually starts with a planned activity by the teacher, designed to focus some aspect of

learning. The purpose of the activity is to check student understanding to plan the next step of instruction in order to move their students' learning forward. Informal formative assessment, is assessment imbedded in instruction, for example when the teacher walks in the classroom listening to student talk or looking in their notebooks. Informal formative assessment uses everyday learning activities as potential assessments that provide evidence of students' learning in different modes (Vingsle, 2014). Wiliam (2006) bases notions of formative assessment on time cycles (i.e. long, medium length and short cycle) depending on the responsiveness of the feedback system.

He also indicates the formal-informal aspect when describing the continuum. Wiliam brings in other agents than the teacher and other forums than classrooms. For example, long-cycle formative assessment is described as a supervisor using results from state-tests to inform a plan of workshops for teachers (Wiliam, 2006). Medium length cycle formative assessment has a timescale of one to four weeks and is exemplified by a teacher using a pre-test to make adjustment in instruction for individuals or class before the actual test (Wiliam & Thompson, 2007). Short-cycle formative assessment is described as either day-by-day or minute-by-minute. Formative assessment day-by-day is when the elicited information is used between lessons with a responsiveness up to two days. This enables the teachers to use the elicited information as a base when planning next lesson. Formative assessment minute-by-minute is when the feedback system's responsiveness is immediate, within the lesson. In Wiliam's description the assessment can be either planned or spontaneous.

Mastery Connect, (n.d) categorized formative assessments into formal formative assessment and informal formative assessments. According to them, formal formative

assessments is often documented and may or may not carry grade points. It includes Quizzes, Papers, Entrance slips, Presentations, Concept maps, Written surveys etc. Informal formative assessments on the other are less documented and often more performance-based. Examples are Quick checks for understanding, Questioning, Discussions, Observations, Confidence indications (e.g. “thumbs up / thumbs down”). Heritage (2007) bases the conceptualization of formative assessment on the eliciting phase. Her notion on formative assessment is when the teacher uses spontaneous, unpredictable or unplanned situations during sessions to gather information. Planned formative assessment, is the notion when the teacher have planned questions, tasks or activities to elicit information and finally, curriculum-imbedded formative assessment where the elicited information might be elicited from diagnostic tasks in the textbook or likewise (Heritage, 2007).

Interview-based assessment is another form of alternative assessment that teachers use to gather data about students' experiences, interests, background, thoughts, beliefs, activities etc. Teacher-student interviews vary from highly structured to informal conversations. Herrera *et al.* (2007) agree that unstructured detailed interviews with students help teachers to adapt the lesson based on the information gathered from students. Play-based assessment is also a valuable assessment form that teachers can use at different grade levels. Examples include pre-school children who are learning the names of objects, language learners who can just barely explain things in the new language, and upper grade levels who role play or dramatize concepts from the literature, history, concurrent life situations, and politics (Herrera *et al.*, 2007). In addition, Herrera *et al.* (2007) indicate that assessment can take place in any manner but it does not mean that authentic assessment merely happens in nontraditional ways. Goodwin (2000, p.6) agree –authentic assessment begins with teachers making it their

business to purposefully watch, listen to, talk with, and think about the children in their classrooms”. Some teachers reflect on who these children are, the extent of what they know, and the way they will learn, based on the evidence that they observe in the role-play (Herrera *et al.*, 2007). Co-operative group assessment is seen as a form of alternative formative assessment. The concept of group work or team work varies, depending on the context. Recent recognition of collaborative or team work is increasing among education, realizing that strengths and skills of some students are well-defined when they are engaged in group activities such as cooperative learning or assessment. Herrera *et al.* (2007, p.38) observe that “collaborative or group activities often culminate in projects or experiments that may or may not require oral or written reporting”. Slavin (2006) argues that planning for group assessment requires educators to consider both group efforts and individual liability. Herrera *et al.* (2007) note the complexity of assessing a cooperative group activity, in particular distinguishing an individual student’s effort and the contribution he or she makes performing a group activity or project. Teachers often document the thought and action of individual students in the process of performing an activity as they learn from cooperative activities and the dialogue that occurs among the students.

Formative assessment refers to frequent, interactive assessments of student progress and understanding to identify learning needs and adjust teaching appropriately. The principles of formative assessment may be applied at the school and policy levels, to identify areas for improvement and to promote effective and constructive cultures of evaluation throughout education systems. More consistent use of formative assessment throughout education systems may help stakeholders address the very barriers to its wider practice in classrooms. (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) 2008).

A comprehensive review carried out by Black and Wiliam in 1998 found conclusively that formative assessment results in considerable learning gains, amongst the most considerable for educational interventions (Black & Wiliam, 1998). There is widespread evidence that assessment and feedback are powerful forces of learning (Baume, 1998, p. 6). Research shows that assessment that provides informative feedback while a student is learning has more effect on student achievement than any other factor (Petty, 2004, p. 450). Formative assessment with its feedback function can strongly influence motivation, encouraging interest, commitment, intellectual challenge, independence and responsibility; it is impossible to overstate the role of effective feedback on a student's progress (Ramsden, 1992, pp. 184-185, 193). Assessment for learning (formative assessment) is said to encourage students to become more active and participative in classroom interaction (MacPhail & Halbert, 2010). As dialogue in a non-threatening environment is promoted, it is suggested that they feel more confident to intervene and propose ideas during the class (Hodgson & Pyle, 2010). Along with this, the practice of peer assessment and self-assessment generally requires students to take a more prominent role in the classroom. It is further argued that students' relationship to learning changes, in terms of developing a greater awareness of what is expected of them, due to the explicit focus on communicating learning goals and criteria. This shifts their attention from the competition and comparison of themselves with other students to a stronger focus on understanding their own process of learning and their progress according to pre-established learning goals and criteria. Because of this, it is argued that they become more responsible for their own learning progress, which is monitored by them through self-assessment methods (MacPhail & Halbert, 2010); Hayward and Spencer (2010). Ajogbeje (2013) in his research finding maintained that with effective utilization of formative

assessment, it enables adequate preparation of the students for the test and such frequent test enables the students to get more involved and committed to the teaching-learning process thereby enhancing their academic performance.

There is also agreement in most of the literature about the benefits of Assessment for Learning (formative assessment) for teachers' professionalism and teaching practices. Teachers, like students, change their role in classroom interaction when Assessment for Learning (formative assessment) is introduced as their participation is said to shift from the prime concern to be a content deliverer who largely controls the classroom dynamics, to a moderator and facilitator of learning who collaborates with students during the class, supporting and monitoring their progress (MacPhail & Halbert 2010). Formative assessments inform teachers about whether the students have learned and they have an indicator qualification for how the teachers should plan their next lessons (Wuest & Fisette, 2012).

2.8 Quality Control Criteria for Effective Classroom Assessment

It is important to examine what is meant by effective classroom assessment if one is to get the appropriate tools to evaluate the teachers' actual practices of classroom assessment. Whatever mode of assessment is developed, chosen, adopted, adapted for one's classroom assessment practice, it is mandatory that these should (1) follow a theoretically founded model of how tests are developed, validated and evaluated and (2) aligned with the quality control criteria recommended by the standards of the best practices of classroom assessment so that they can effectively fulfil the functions for which they are used (Ghaicha, 2016).

For an effective monitoring system that provides charted data, Fuchs and Fuchs (1996) described some guiding criteria for high quality assessment. A few of these are:

- Measurement of important learning outcomes;
- Measurement that addresses important educational decisions;
- Measurement that is compatible with a variety of instructional models;
- Clear descriptions of student performance that can be linked to instruction;
- Easy administration, scoring, and interpretation;
- A process that communicates learning goals to teachers and students; and
- A system that generates accurate and meaningful information.

Other scholars believe that classroom assessment should reflect “real-life” (i.e., outside of the classroom) tasks and require students to utilize higher order thinking skills (Crotty, 1994; Leon & Elias, 1998) to fulfil on-demand duties and tasks. This gave birth to another assessment approach known as contextual (authentic) assessment (CAA) advocating that these assessments should:

- require intellectually worthy tasks,
- mirror best instructional activities, and
- consist of ill-structured challenges that are similar to the complex ambiguities of life (Wiggins, 1990),
- assess a wider range of learning outcomes,
- use a wider range of types of assessment tasks, and
- assess in more authentic contexts (Bell & Cowie, 2001)

Luoma (2001) contributed to this issue with a well-stratified model for the process of test development and validation. Below is a summary of its components and the

complete skeleton of this process. According to Luoma (2001) a well-designed test should:

- Use well-developed test specifications operationalizing the construct assessed.
- Use well-developed tasks and assessment criteria.
- Pilot the test.
- Revise the test material (tasks, scoring rubrics and criteria).
- Use well-structured administration procedures.
- Validate the test by evaluating test product against theory (construct) and linking it to future validation research.
- Operationalize the test by developing new tasks.
- Operationalize test administration.
- Monitor test reliability and maintain it for future use.
- Revalidate the test as a part of the continuous validation process.

Juwah *et al.* (2004) identified seven key principles on effective formative feedback as following:

- Facilitate development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning
- Encourage teacher and peer dialogue about learning
- Clarify what good performance is
- Provide opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance
- Deliver high quality information to students about their learning
- Encourage positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
- Provide information to teachers that can be used in their teaching.

In the work of Race (1995) the following has been put forward as a good practice summary for formative assessment and feedback:

- Use short formative assessment with rapid feedback
- Do not bolt on assessment, tie it to course design
- Concentrate on quality not quantity, both in assessing and learning
- Use peer and self-assessment
- Give better feedback as opposed to model solutions
- Frame feedback so it is meaningful, useable, constructive and interesting to students
- Give feedback on draft essays
- Give mock exams and de-brief
- There is no one best (Formative Assessment Classroom Techniques) FACT or collection of FACTs for teaching and learning, so consideration is necessary when deciding on the FACTs you intend to use in your classroom (Cullinane, 2011). It is of benefit to ask the following questions before you use the FACT you have chosen: (1) Does this FACT achieve what I want to achieve? (2) Does it suit the subject I want to teach? For the purposes of this study teachers' ability of designing effective formative assessment tools in relation to the goals and objectives of social studies will be looked at under the following considerations:
 - What assessment tasks best encompass the key learning outcomes for the unit?
 - Will engagement in the task be a worthwhile learning activity in its own right?
 - What information should be provided to learners about what is expected of them and the standards they should meet?

- When, and in what form, should this information be provided?
- What kinds of feedback information should be provided to learners following completion of the task?
- Who should provide this information?
- How promptly can it be realistically provided? How should it be structured?
- If marks or grades are also given, how can the design optimise learner engagement with detailed comments rather than focus on grades?
- On what specific occasions during the unit will students be able to apply what they have learned from completion of the task to subsequent work? (Bearman, Dawson, Boud, Hall, Bennett, Molloy & Joughin, 2014).

2.9 Teacher Knowledge, Skills and Professional Development in Formative

Assessment

Heritage (2007) suggests types of knowledge and skills teacher who practice formative assessment need. She describes four basic elements of teacher knowledge (including a number of skills) and in addition, four specific skills that pertain to pedagogical content knowledge that is not a basic knowledge in her framework. The basic elements of teacher knowledge are:

Domain knowledge. This includes concepts, knowledge and skills within the domain to be taught, including, being able to define learning progression, which could be used to clarify success criteria and to provide substantive feedback. Heritage also includes teachers' understanding of students' metacognition as it relates to assessment and students' motivational beliefs within the domain knowledge. I understand Heritage's notion of domain knowledge as corresponding or close to Ball's and colleagues (i.e. Hill, *et al.*, 2008; Ball, *et al.*, 2008) definition of subject matter knowledge.

Pedagogical content knowledge. In Heritage's view, pedagogical content knowledge includes familiarity with multiple models of teaching to be used to adapt instruction to student learning. This knowledge base also includes teachers' familiarity with multiple models of metacognitive processes and self-assessment skills.

Students' previous learning. Including teacher's knowledge of students' level of knowledge and skills in the content area. It also includes knowledge of the developing student's attitudes to the subject and their level of language proficiency.

Assessment knowledge. Including knowledge of formative assessment strategies to elicit information and knowledge of how to align formative assessment with instructional goals. Further, teachers must know that there are multiple sources of evidence on student learning, for example from student or peer assessment.

The four specific skills that Heritage (2007) suggests are all defined as pedagogical knowledge. The specific skills for practicing formative assessment that teachers need to be able to do are, according to Heritage; creating the conditions for the formative practice, using student self-assessment, being able to interpret evidence of student learning and matching instruction to the gap. Brookhart (2011) suggests the Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students to be updated due to formative assessment. These standards were developed with the purpose of guiding teacher educators developing teacher education program and work-shop instructors as well as functioning as an impetus for educational measurement instructors to conceptualize student assessment more broadly (AFT & NCME & NEA 1990). The influences from formative assessment is the importance of students' as active participants in the assessment process, participants who need information that help them make productive decisions (Brookhart, 2011).

Teachers need professional training and experience besides their academic qualification to master the art of assessment in the classroom. It is upon this that Leming (1991) asserts that the characteristics of social studies teachers such as professional values and experience are potentially valuable for understanding the art of teaching and the influence of teachers.

According to Desimone, *et al.* (2002) professional development is essential to improving teacher quality and that changes in teaching practice will occur if teachers have a consistent and high quality professional training. Research by Wenglinsky (2002) indicates that the link between teacher quality and students' performance, supports the belief that teachers' input can influence student performance. He notes further that the greatest influence on students' achievements come from the classroom practice and the professional development that supports them. Wenglinsky's research indicates that "regardless of the level of preparation students bring into classroom, decisions that teachers make about classroom practice can either greatly facilitate students learning or serve as an obstacle to it" (p. 7).

Darling-Hammond (2000) asserts that assigning teachers to teach course that they are not trained to teach has a negative effect on students' achievement. Darling-Hammond, *et al.* (2001) adds that teachers who are trained and teach in the area in which they are certified outperform teachers who have no certification. Goldhaber and Brewer (2000) on their part note that, not all certified teachers' are assigned to teach in the areas for which they have been trained. In support of Goldhaber and Brewer, Ingersoll (2003) add that large numbers of teachers are assign duties for which their certification "irrelevant". One of the least recognize of this courses is the phenomenon known as "out of field teaching", that is, teachers assigned to teach subject for which

they have little training or education. In a similar sentiment, Seamstrom, *et al.* (2002) state that many teachers' lack adequate academic training, certificate or both. Research work by Darling-Hammond (2000) on teacher quality concludes that, teachers' preparation is by far the strongest correlate of student achievement. Teacher experience is another teacher's quality variable that influence students learning. Even though earlier research findings have concluded that relationship between teacher experience and student achievement may not be linear recent research however has documented the importance of teacher experience to student achievement (Cimbricz, 2002). Darling-Hammond and Sykes (2003) in their write up on national teachers supply policy for education, observed that the right way to meet the highly qualified teacher challenge concluded that beyond verbal skills, subject matter knowledge and professional knowledge, experience makes an important difference in student learning.

2.10 Formative Assessment Tools in Social Studies

According to Shermis and Di Vesta (2011) assessment should be viewed as an "intrinsic part" of teaching not as a "separate attachment" from teaching (p. 83). –Formative assessment is a means of communication between teacher and student, guiding the teacher toward appropriate instructional decisions and providing encouraging feedback to the students” (Benjamin, 2008, p.9).

Quartey (1987) cited by Bordoh, *et al.* (2013, p: 2) asserts that Social Studies is an issue-centred curriculum. Therefore learners must not only acquire knowledge but also demonstrate skills and develop values. This notwithstanding, according to Bekoe, *et al* (2013, p.28) due to hasty nature in formulating formative assessment and

scoring, tutors rather laid emphasis on cognitive domain to the neglect of affective and psychomotor domains which are also of paramount importance.

Good Social Studies will develop a range of tools to assess students' learning. Some of the tools will be traditional forms-short-answer questions, selective and essay responses, and some will be newer forms such as performance or authentic assessment, which have been developed in response to recent knowledge about teaching and learning (Myers, 2004).

Traditional assessment refers to the conventional methods of testing which usually produces written document, such as quizzes or exams. These comprise tests given to students by teachers to measure how much the students have learned. The most widely used traditional assessment tools are multiple-choice tests, true/false tests, short answers, and essays.

Selected response tests

Selected response tests, often called "objective paper and pencil tests" consist of multiple choice, true / false, matching, and fill-in-the-blank items. The phrase "selected response" is most accurate since it reflects the procedure of selecting correct responses from a range of possibilities. In true-false tests, data is quickly collected on a range of knowledge targets such as generalizations or propositions, with little demand on reading ability. Among their limitations are the strong possibility of guessing and the difficulty of designing items beyond the factual knowledge level. Fill-in tests work for outcomes such as vocabulary understanding and, unlike other forms of selective response, do not promote guessing. On the other hand, poorly designed items and students' poor spelling can result in ambiguous answers that are difficult to score. Matching is particularly useful for assessing student recognition of

how ideas are associated. In social studies examples of associations are countries and capitals; definitions and terms; or historical figures and their accomplishments/discoveries. Multiple-choice items, usually consisting of a complete statement of the problem or question (stem/lead); construction of plausible distracters (wrong answers); random placing of the key (correct answer), are the most versatile form of selective response, ranging in use from recall of basic information to interpretation, analogies, and other complex outcomes (Meyer,2004). Depending on the level of cognitive effort, multiple-choice items become harder and more time consuming to create. In other words, multiple choice items can be used effectively in testing the items that demand low level of cognitive effort such as recalling previously memorized knowledge, yet items that require students to use higher order thinking skills such as analyzing and synthesizing are more difficult to produce (Simonson, *et al.*, 2000).

Extended- or essay response tests

Essays are items that require an extended or constructed written answer to a relatively open-ended question for which a variety of appropriate responses are possible. Essay tests or assignments may be more valid than selected response items in that they are more likely to provide data on important outcomes such as the ability to identify an issue, organize relevant information into an argument, reveal cause-effect relationships, recognize human-environmental interactions, weigh evidence, and so on. Essays are effective assessment tools since the questions are flexible and assess the higher order learning skills. However, they are not very practical due to the fact that it is very difficult and time consuming to score the essays. Moreover, subjectivity might be an issue in scoring. Creating a rubric might be helpful to grade the essays (Simonson et al., 2000).

Authentic or alternative assessments are particular forms of formative assessment in social studies where students are required to perform a real-life activity and an assessment is made based on that activity. Herrera, et al (2007) include formative and summative assessment along with other types of authentic assessment, such as performance based assessment, portfolios, self-assessment and peer-assessment, interview-based assessment, play based assessment, cooperative groups assessment, dialogue, journal, and scaffold essays. Alternative assessment presents new ways of motivating and inspiring learners to explore and exploit dimensions of themselves as well as the world around them. Scholars in assessment believe that while subject matter content recollection is easy to test, critical thinking and creativity is difficult to assess. As they claim, long-term retention of knowledge and information and its transfer is what should be focused on. Diagnostic assessment is also seen as an alternative form of assessment. Although some authors view diagnostic assessment separately from formative assessment, the intention is that diagnostic assessments are used for formative purposes (Wiggins & McTighe, 2007 cited by Bekoe *et al.*, 2013, p.22). Diagnostic assessment or pre-assessment is used to collect information for planning instruction and acknowledging learners' needs (Black & William, 1998). Wiggins and McTighe (2007) cited by Bekoe, *et al.* (2013, p.22) assert that pre-assessments "include checks of prior knowledge and skill levels and surveys of interest or learning-style preferences." The authors maintain that, a great number of students come to school with a misconception that they are not talented enough to perform a certain task, such as drawing a picture or writing an analytic memo (Wiggins & McTighe, 2007 cited by Bekoe, *et al.*, 2013, p.22).

Performance assessment

Palm (2008) maintained that performance assessment is seen as having better possibilities to measure complex skills and communication, which are considered important competencies and disciplinary knowledge needed in today's society. Elliott (1995) observed that there are two major concepts that describe performance assessment: Performance- a student's active generation of a response that is observable either directly or indirectly via a permanent product; and Authentic - the nature of the task and context in which the assessment occurs is relevant and represents "real world" problems or issues. Unlike the traditional forms of assessment, the assessor does not count correct responses in order to render a judgement. Instead she or he collects data on the process or makes a judgement about the quality of the final product as students actually do something. Linn and Miller (2005) cited by Bekoe, *et al.* (2013 p.23) explain performance-based assessment as "snapshots of students learning in time, which provide a longer exposure with panoramic lens, or real-time video". The idea that knowledge is constructed during the learning process and that a student discovers knowledge for him/herself, rather than receiving knowledge, inspires the notion of performance based assessment. This approach facilitates both the way students take information and the way they store and apply this information to deal with novel situations (Herrera et al., 2007). This means that, in addition to eliciting constructed responses, performance based assessment incorporates authentic tasks that need higher level of thinking and application of skills. Herrera, *et al.* (2007, p.28) interpret performance- based assessment as an opportunity that "tap(s) into the depth and breadth of students' learning.

Portfolio assessment

According to Wiliam and Thompson (2008), gathering purposeful examples of students' work that demonstrate their effort, progress, and level of understanding over a period of time compose the main features of portfolio. However, what has changed through the course of time is the format and content, making portfolios meaningful and purposeful. Based on the constructivist theories, which advocate that learning has to be constructed by the learners themselves, rather than being imparted by the teachers, portfolio assessment requires students to provide selected evidence to show that learning relevant to the course objectives has taken place. They also have to justify the selected portfolio items with reference to the course objectives (Steffe & Gale, 1995 cited by Bekoe, *et al.*, 2013; p.22). Mueller (2012) says portfolio is a collection of a student's work specifically selected to tell a particular story about the story. With these, portfolio could be thought to mean a collection work produce by a student or group of students in some specific areas of study. The collection must include student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection". Because of their cumulative nature, portfolios require a lot of input and responsibility from the student. Moreover, they demand a great deal of time and commitment from the teachers, which yields a practical problem in assessment (Bailey, 1998). Different types of portfolios include: showcase, which celebrate students' best work; descriptive, which demonstrates what students can do; evaluative, which assesses students' against a standard and progress, which documents students' work overtime. They maintain that the value of portfolios is in the assessment of student achievement. They are particularly useful in this respect because they provide a continuous record of students' development that can be shared with others. According to Wiggin and McTighe (2007) cited by Bekoe, *et al.*

(2013, p.23) the importance of considering the intended purposes for developing portfolios, by establishing the targets for its use. An instructor can decide what kind of student work to incorporate, who should manage it, how often to review it, and more. The instructors regularly assign students to include writing samples, reflections, drawings, reading logs, student self-evaluation, and progress notes, visuals and audio clips, among the many.

Self-assessment

Self-assessment is another valuable tool for learning and measurement. For example, when students are engaged in assessing their own work, they try to learn the criteria for high-quality performance, and they experience a willingness to apply those criteria (Herrera *et al.*, 2007). However, Black and Wiliam (1998, p.7) remain concerned about student readiness to self-assess or evaluate peers. They propose that once students acquire a clear picture of the outcome or purpose, “they become more committed and more effective as learners: their own assessments become an object of discussion with their teachers and with one another”. Asking students to assess their own work alters their perception of themselves as active learners and challenges them to become thoughtful judges of their own work. Students can learn a great deal when assessing their own work, especially when they revisit previously difficult problems and see how the concepts inherent in those problems may inform more recent questions (Carroll & Carini, 1991). According to Zessoules and Gardner (1991), “as students take on increased responsibility for their own learning and assessment, their growing awareness and ownership of their development enables them to make use of the process of assessment as a tool for learning” (p. 63). Students who have the ability to “know how much they know, to judge the quality of this knowledge, and to know what they need to do in order to learn more” (Kenney & Silver, 1993, p. 236)

are considered to be powerful learners, a trait highly regarded in any educational system. Self-assessment encourages students to become more committed to, active in, and effective regarding their learning. It however requires the instructor to be very clear about what the learning goals really are, and explicitly state where they want students to be and how students can actually get there.

Peer-assessment

In peer-assessment, students often assess other students' work compared to the criteria developed by the instructor, or both students and the class instructor. An important aspect of peer assessment is that it engages students in dialogue with their classmates, commenting on each other's work rather than a one-way feedback system from instructor to student (Bekoe, *et al.*, 2013). Black and Wiliam (1998) propose that students be trained to assess their peers purposefully, with the goal of improving learning. As students comment on their peers work, they use informal language which is better understood by them. According to Gipps (1992), peer assessment is believed to enable learners to develop abilities and skills denied them in a learning environment in which the teacher only assesses their work. In other words, it provides learners with the opportunity to take responsibility for analyzing, monitoring and evaluating aspects of both the learning process and product of their peers. Research studies examining this mode of assessment have revealed that it can work towards developing students' higher order reasoning and higher-level cognitive thought, helping to nurture student-centred learning among undergraduate learners, encouraging active and flexible learning and facilitating a deep approach to learning rather than a surface approach.

Play-base assessment

Play-based assessment is also a valuable assessment form that teachers can use at different grade levels. Examples include pre-school children who are learning the names of objects, language learners who can just barely explain things in the new language, and upper grade levels who role play or dramatize concepts from the literature, history, concurrent life situations, and politics (Herrera *et al.*, 2007). In addition, Herrera *et al.* (2007) indicate that assessment can take place in any manner but it does not mean that authentic assessment merely happens in non-traditional ways. Goodwin (2000, p.6) agree –authentic assessment begins with teachers making it their business to purposefully watch, listen to, talk with, and think about the children in their classrooms”. Some teachers reflect on who these children are, the extent of what they know, and the way they will learn, based on the evidence that they observe in the role-play (Herrera *et al.*, 2007).

Scaffold assessment

Vygotsky defined scaffolding instruction as the –role of teachers and others in supporting the learner’s development and providing support structures to get to that next stage or level” (Raymond, 2000 cited by Bekoe, Eshun & Bordoh 2013, p. 24). Scaffolding instruction as a teaching strategy originates from Lev Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory and his concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). –The zone of proximal development is the distance between what children can do by themselves and the next learning that they can be helped to achieve with competent assistance” (Raymond, 2000, p.176). Accommodative or scaffold authentic assessment may take various forms, including dialogue journals requiring students to write their thoughts about certain topics, or stories. Another form, scaffold essays, allows the instructor to simplify a complex essay question by breaking it down into

short answer questions. This is especially useful when assessing content information, because it reduces the stress of students who may assume that they will have to answer questions in an essay format (Berekowitz, *et al.*, 2000).

Interview-based assessment

Interview-based assessment is another form of alternative assessment that teachers use to gather data about students' experiences, interests, background, thoughts, beliefs, activities etc. Teacher-student interviews vary from highly structured to informal conversations. Herrera *et al.* (2007) agree that unstructured detailed interviews with students help teachers to adapt the lesson based on the information gathered from students.

Cooperative group assessment or collaborative testing

Co-operative group assessment is seen as a form of alternative formative assessment. The concept of group work or team work varies, depending on the context. Recent recognition of collaborative or team work is increasing among education, realizing that strengths and skills of some students are well-defined when they are engaged in group activities such as cooperative learning or assessment. Not only is sharing ideas conducive to greater understanding but it also reduces anxiety in testing situations. Research has also shown that collaborative test taking promotes continued learning (Helmericks, 1993; Lehman, 1995; Vockell, 1994; Webb, 1995). Herrera *et al.* (2007, p.38) observe that "collaborative or group activities often culminate in projects or experiments that may or may not require oral or written reporting". Slavin (2006) argues that planning for group assessment requires educators to consider both group efforts and individual liability. Herrera *et al.* (2007) note the complexity of assessing a cooperative group activity, in particular distinguishing an individual student's effort

and the contribution he or she makes performing a group activity or project. Teachers often document the thought and action of individual students in the process of performing an activity as they learn from cooperative activities and the dialogue that occurs among the students. According to Webb (1995), developing new understanding by building on other students' ideas is a form of learning, as well as is giving explanations that encourage the explainer to justify statements, recognize misconceptions, reevaluate thinking, and clarify thoughts. Every one of these aspects of collaborative testing has great potential for increasing student learning, especially for those students who are not served by traditional assessment practices. Many ways of implementing collaborative testing exist. One collaborative testing technique is to allow all students take a test in small groups, each completing his or her own test. One test is then randomly chosen from the group to be graded with the understanding that all students in the group will receive the same grade. The benefit of this approach is that it encourages students to work together, to be aware of what others are doing, and to make sure all their group members really understand the problems and solutions, as anyone's test could be the one scored. Another technique is by assigning all group members solve one problem together and write a single solution. They then individually answer questions about the group solution and solve two similar problems—a problem that is parallel to the group problem and one that extends it (Kroll *et al.*, 1996). This affords the opportunity for an individual score to be calculated, as well as the group score.

Journals

Journals provide another resource for finding out what students think. They can be a daily record of problem solving activities, descriptions of solutions to problems as though one were describing to someone else how it was done, or descriptions of what they have learned. They can act as an outlet for students' feelings, attitudes, and beliefs, giving teachers greater insight into their students. They can also encourage metacognitive behavior by having students write about concepts they understand or do not understand. Further, they provide students the opportunity to write in the language of the discipline in an informal way, which can act as a precursor to writing more formally. Journals also can be used to increase student reflection, which is a critical component in successful problem solving. Writing reflections often solidifies understandings through the process of putting into words exactly what students are thinking. This habit of reflection ~~has~~ the power to boost the silent and mechanistic approach to assessment into an active, vivid discourse between teachers and students" (Zessoules & Gardner, 1991, p. 58). When students regularly write in journals they often come to value the act of reflecting on their work—what they have been learning, what is difficult or challenging for them, and how they can use previous learning challenges to help them at the present time (Kenney & Silver, 1993; Lester & Kroll, 1996). This reflection allows them to become aware of which of their behaviors facilitate and which inhibit their learning. Journals also inform the teacher what his or her students took from the instruction given them. What students learn may not coincide with what the teacher thought they would learn and journals offer a means for informing the teacher of any discrepancies between what was thought to be taught and what the students actually learned. Journals allow very in-depth insight into student knowledge and understanding, student strengths and weaknesses, as well as

student beliefs and attitudes however it is very time-consuming to use; not only for students to write, but especially for instructors to read.

Structured observation

Many performance and authentic assessments will include “hard” evidence of student progress such as written components, constructed models, and visual representations, but often much of the evidence of student progress will be gathered through watching them work. For example, many social studies outcomes are related to that important and hard-to-define term “thinking.” However thinking is defined, conventional tests reveal only so much. One approach is to determine what thinking looks like when we see it. Such “intelligent behaviours” are “habits of mind”: a repertoire of mindful strategies we use when faced with problems or decisions. Structured observation involves watching for, and collecting evidence on, particular behaviours. In the area of thinking, for example, we might watch for:

- Perseverance: Do students give up or back up and use a different strategy if the first ones do not work?
- Decreased impulsiveness: Do students blurt out answers and make many corrections in their written responses or do they pause before answering, make sure they understand the learning task, and consider the responses of others in building arguments?
- Flexible thinking: Do students use the same approaches for different problems or do they use and weigh the merits of alternative strategies, consider the approaches of others, and deal with more than one classification system simultaneously?
- Metacognition: Are students unaware of how they learn or do they describe and reflect on the processes they used in learning?

- Careful review: Do students hand in uncorrected or unedited work as soon as it is done or do they take time to review and edit?

These observations would be structured not only in the sense that the teacher looks for evidence for precise criteria like these but also in the sense that some form of record is kept of the observations such as checklists or anecdotal notes.

2.11 Appraisal of Reviewed Literature

In conclusion, it can be said that there has been emerging conceptions of social studies through time and space with regards to its meaning, scope, nature, objectives and even the way assessment tools are selected in teaching it. Scholars in the field provide a multiplicity of answers to the question depending on their orientation and conception of the subject. One thing which is very important about a concept is how to give it a clear and distinct meaning which will portray its essential features as well as its focus. Saw the wisdom and relevance in meaning when he strongly emphasized that meaning definition of concepts are necessary because they state the precise nature, distinction or delineation of phenomenon being so defined so that the relevance of whatsoever is said written in the name of the phenomena may be accurately and correctly assessed. It must be emphasized here that social studies is not a mish mash of materials. There are basic principles and underlying philosophies that guides the selection content materials to constitute the body of academic learning in social studies. In support of assertion is Ediger (2007) who also points out that there is the need for definition of a subject since determines the goal and objectives, and the content of the subject. By implication, how a teacher sees social studies will serve as a guide that informs his or her instructional techniques as well as the classroom assessment techniques.

From the various scholarly views discussed from the literature in Social Studies can be understood as the following: (a) Social Studies focuses on the relation of man to the environment in which he lives and the world, (b) Social Studies is concerned with the relation of man to other human beings as a member of the family, peer group, community, school, work place, church and so on; (c) Social Studies is concerned with the relation of human beings to themselves; (d) Social Studies is basically a programme of citizenship education; and (e) Social Studies is a problem-approach discipline (Iyamu, 1991).

It can be deduced from the literature also that the difference views shared by scholars of the subject as to what social studies is also have implications on its goals. However, Dynneson and Gross (1999) suggested that the overall instructional goals of social studies are often related to the following concerns: to prepare students for a changing world; to broaden students' perspective and understanding of the community, nation and world; to provide students with the knowledge, skills and abilities they need in both their personal and public lives; to help students draw and synthesize knowledge, skills and values that are characteristics of social science subject matter; to contribute to students' understanding of what it means to live in a complex and pluralistic society; to provide students with an understanding of the means and processes of a representative form of government; to encourage students to participate in the affairs of society and to work towards establishing a good society; and to promote important social goals associated with democratic living. As phrased by the Task Force on Standard on the Teaching and Learning of Social Studies of the National Council for the Social Studies (1992), stressed that powerful teaching of social studies should help learners to understand their social world and to develop attitude towards citizenship roles.

Even though, there are disagreements among scholars as to what is and the goal of social studies education, it seems that there is an agreement of its being seen as a problem solving subject based on the literature reviewed.

The various conceptions of Social Studies have influence on the teachers' formative assessment practices. The implications are that those who conceptualise social studies as the amalgamation of the social sciences are compelled to teach it by give out information about the facts, concepts and generalizations of the social science disciplines to the students to memorise hence formative assessment will mainly be to recall facts or teachers will assess the cognitive domain with little or no assessment of the affectionate and psychomotor domain. Those pedagogues who conceptualise it as citizenship education will teach and assess the subject to helping their students to be problem solvers. Despite the lack of consensus among scholars on definitions or specific techniques that comprise formative assessment, it seeks to present students with explicit goals or outcomes of instruction, to help them assess their current position in relation to these goal, and to equip them with the tools to bridge the gap between the two. Chappuis and Stiggins (2002) summarises it by asserting that effective formative assessment must help students to answer the following questions: where am I trying to go? Where Am I Now? And How Do I Close the Gap?

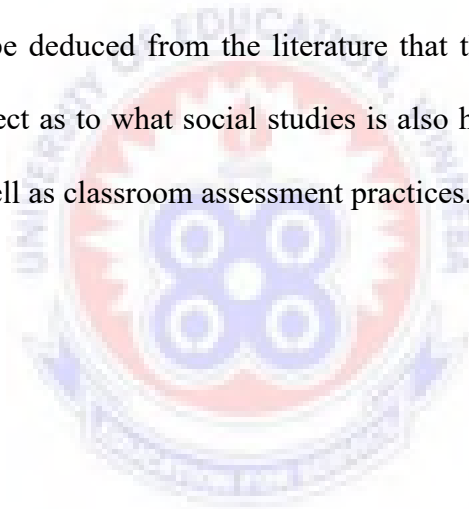
In view of the related literature compiled on the formative assessment practices social studies teachers in relation to goals and objectives of teaching Social Studies, it is imperative for the researcher to conclude on some research directions. The empirical literature review such as one done by (Bordoh, *et al.*, 2013; Bekoe, *et al.*, 2013; Eshun, *et al.*, 2014) reveals that majority of the studies conducted were in the colleges of Education. From the literature, it was gathered that formative assessment is practiced in social studies classrooms but due to hasty nature in formulating formative

assessment and scoring, tutors rather laid emphasis on cognitive domain to the neglect of affective and psychomotor domains which are also paramount. Again the studies have revealed that tutors were not using assessment techniques that involved students in the teaching and learning process and also teachers were not using concrete evaluation feedbacks. In addition, the literature have it that, the assessment practices of many SHS Social Studies teachers do not align with contemporary theories and practices in the field. In conclusion, it seems more emphasis have been put on the formative assessment of tutors in the Colleges of Education as majority of the studies carried out in the Colleges of Education except Adam, *et al.* (2018) who studied how Senior High School (SHS) teachers in Ghana actualise formative assessment which implies that little have been said about the formative assessment practices of Basic and Senior High School social studies teachers. Again it seems the literature did not conclude on how Social Studies teachers relate their formative assessment practices to the goals and objectives of the subject. To this end, the questions that readily come to mind are; what informs the formative assessment practices of social studies teachers? Are social studies teachers aware of the tasks that constitute formative assessment in social studies? Could it be that the social studies teachers do not have the capability to design formative assessment task that will lead to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the subject? What are the best practices in the use of social studies goals and objectives in formative assessment? The answers to these questions are not readily available because not much information has been documented regarding how social studies teachers relate formative assessment practices to the goals and objectives of the subject especially in the Junior and Senior Schools of the Nsawam Municipality. If social studies teachers do not synchronise their formative assessment practices with the goals and objectives of teaching social studies the teaching and

learning of social studies will be inconsequential. These thesis therefore looks at the correlation between formative assessment and the goals and objectives of social studies.

2.12 Chapter Summary

The sociocultural constructivist theory, Skinner's theory of operant conditioning forms the theoretical framework underpinning the study and is also supported by the Framework of Formative Assessment by Wiliam and Thomson (2007). The social studies curriculum for Junior and Senior High Secondary schools in Ghana requires that a greater percentage of assessment tasks should focus on the application of knowledge. It can be deduced from the literature that the different views shared by scholars of the subject as to what social studies is also have implications on its goals and objectives as well as classroom assessment practices.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at the various methods and procedures used in gathering data in finding answers to the research questions that guided the study. The chapter focuses on the methodological aspect of the study which comprises the research design, the population, the sample and sampling procedure, the instruments used for data collection, data collection procedure and data analysis procedure.

3.1 Approach

The study was therefore structured basically within the framework of qualitative approach. It is the collection, analysis and interpretation of data that cannot be meaningfully quantified (Wiid & Diggines, 2009). It involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world, that is qualitative research study phenomena in its natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.10). According to Flick (2014) Qualitative research is interested in analysing subjective meaning or the social production of issues, events, or practices by collecting non-standardised data and analysing texts and images rather than number and statistics. The definition of Flick (2014) stressed on how people make sense of something in the world. The choice of this approach as explained by Asiamah, *et al.* (2017) is to provide the researcher with the perspective of target audience members through immersion in a culture or situation and direct interaction with the people under study. It is also based on the fact

that qualitative research promotes better self-understanding and increase insight into the human condition. The strength of qualitative approaches, according to Asiamah, *et al.* (2017) is that they generate rich, detailed data that leave the participants perspective intact and provide a context for the phenomena being studied. Qualitative approach was adopted to enable the researcher have better self-understanding and increase insight into the conditions of the participants.

However, Silverman (2010) argues that qualitative research approaches sometimes leave out contextual sensitivities, and focus more on meanings and experiences. Also the smaller sample size used in qualitative research approach raises the issue of generalizability to the whole population of the research (Harry & Lipsky, 2014; Thompson, 2011). Darlington and Scott (2003) argued the general isability seems not to be a problem as they point out that, “If one considers the unit of attention as the phenomenon under investigation, rather than the number of individuals, then the sample is often much larger than first appears”. Moreover, Labaree (2004) suggested that no educational research (either quantitative or qualitative) ought to be regarded as generalizable, because too many contextual variables can shape the findings. Donmoyer (2012) argued that the qualitative researchers can tell the policy makers what works as the qualitative research provide the thick description.

3.2 Research Design

The research design adopted for the study was exploratory research design. According to Creswell (2008) exploratory research design gives researchers the opportunity to become familiar with the basic facts, people and concerns in their study; formulate questions, make suggestions and refine issues for future research. Exploratory research design is refers as gathering information in an informal and unstructured

manner. The exploratory research design is proper when the researchers knows small about the opportunity or issue (Burns & Bush, 2006). Saunders *et al.* (2007) observed that exploratory research is conducted when enough is not known about a phenomenon and a problem that has not been clearly defined.

The choice of the research design was to fulfill the researcher's curiosity and also to help the researcher gain a deeper understanding in the problem understudied. It is also to enable the researcher explore the research questions in order to bring the exact definition for the problem understudied. In the views of Copper and Schindler (2006) the primary goal of exploratory research is to gain better understanding of an issue or situation and it is an appropriate way to provide ground work for later more rigorous study.

3.3 Population of the Study

Banerjee and Chaudhury (2010) defined the general population as "an entire group about which some information is required to be ascertained". The general population for study comprised all teachers in the Nsawam Municipality. Banerjee and Chaudhury (2010), are of the view that the target population is the group from which the sample is drawn. The target population for the study is social studies teachers in the Nsawam Municipality. Accessible or the study population is the population in research to which the researchers can correlate their conclusions. Qualitative study is concerned with non-statistical methods and small samples, often purposively selected (Delpont & De Vos, 2011). Based on the views of Delpont and De Vos (2011) the study population consist of ten (10) social studies teachers. Hence one (1) social studies teacher from the following schools: Nsawam senior High School, St. Martins Senior School, Perseverance International School, Sakyi Agyakwa Junior School,"A"

and –B”, Prince Boateng Junior High School, Firm Foundation Junior High School, Good Foundation Junior High, Bishop Ato M.A Junior High School and SDA Junior High School.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

Sampling refers to the selection of a subset of persons or things from a larger population. Non-probability sampling methods (purposive and convenience sampling techniques) were used to select the schools and the teachers. In all the study was conducted in ten schools in the Nsawam Municipality: Nsawam senior High School, St. Martins Senior School, Perseverance International School, Sakyi Agyakwa Junior School, ”A” and –B”, Prince Boateng Junior High School, Firm Foundation Junior High School, Good Foundation Junior High, Bishop Ato M.A Junior High School and SDA Junior High School. Nonprobability sampling focuses on sampling techniques where the units that are investigated are based on the judgement of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units (e.g., people, cases/organisations, events, pieces of data) that are to be studied.

The convenience sampling technique was used to select the ten schools in the municipality because of proximity. Convenience sampling according to Taherdoost (2016) is selecting participants because they are often readily and easily available. The researcher opted for convenience sampling because it is inexpensive and could help cut down cost and risk of traveling. Purposive sampling procedure was used in the selection of social studies teachers for the study. Purposive or judgmental sampling is a strategy in which particular settings persons or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained from other choices (Maxwell, 1996 cited by Taherdoost, 2016 p.72). Purposive sampling

was chosen to sample the teachers because the researcher believes the technique will guide in selecting participants that possess the necessary information about the topic at stake.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Three instruments were used to gather data for the study. These were observation protocol interview guide and document analysis guide.

3.5.1 Observation protocol

To explore the formative assessment practices of Social Studies teachers, structured lesson observations were conducted in the selected schools sampled for the study. As an advantage, observation provides an opportunity to record information as it occurs in a setting, to study actual behaviour, and to study individuals who have difficulty verbalizing their ideas. The purpose of the observation list was to provide a brief account of the context of the source of the data, in order to facilitate an understanding of the setting in which the respondents work and to provide information about the climate in which the interview took place (Connelly & Peltzer, 2016). Observations however, have the disadvantage of ‘Hawthorne effect’ which means that the observed is conscious of the observer’s presence and performs better than how they would in an unobserved situation, also there is the potential of observation bias where the observer only observes activities of interest and lastly, it only allows the observer to observe a certain event or behavior without understanding the reasons behind those behavior or event (Connelly & Peltzer, 2016). To reduce the effects of these disadvantages an observation guide was designed by the researcher to guide the observation process. Lessons were observed from the introduction to conclusion stage which lasted for about 70 minutes in the junior high schools and 80 minutes in the senior High

Schools. The observation was aimed at ascertaining whether the teacher communicate lesson's objectives with learners, the kind of questions teachers ask their learners during lesson presentation and how the teachers assess the learners after the lesson. An observation guide made up of forty two (see appendix C) structured classroom setting checklist was designed by researcher to guide the data collection. Specifically, lesson observation was direct and overt in natures.

3.5.2 Interview guide

An interview is typically a face-to-face conversation between a researcher and a participant involving a transfer of information to the interviewer (Creswell, 2012). It provides useful information when participants cannot be directly observed. For deeper understanding of the underlying issue; formative assessment and the goals and objectives of Social Studies, a semi structured interview was conducted individually among the participants in their schools and the interviews lasted for about 30 minutes. Semi-structured format involve prepared questions that allow the interviewee to choose from existing responses and also to express their opinions resulting in a set of responses that are detailed and easy to analyse. Semi- structured interview was adopted because by their nature, interviewees are allowed to develop their ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the interviewer (Denscombe, 2007). It is also useful for uncovering the story behind the participants' experiences and could help in pursuing in-depth information on the topic.

The interview questions comprised twenty seven open-ended questions (see appendix B). The interviews were face- to-face thus involving meetings between the researcher and the respondents. Face-to-face interviews were administered to participants because of their small number. Interviews were held before lesson observations and

by permission the responses were audio recorded. Interviews allowing respondents to express own opinions relative to the manner in which they practice formative assessment using their own words. The researcher adopted this instrument because in qualitative research specifically, interviews are used to pursue the meanings of central themes in the world of their subjects (MacNamara, 2009).

3.5.3 Document analysis guide

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Document analysis is an important research tool in its own right, and is an invaluable part of most schemes of triangulation (Bowen, 2009). O’Leary (2014) points out three primary types of documents: Public Records, Personal Documents and Physical evidence.

Based on the views of O’Leary and Bowen, physical evidence which includes test items, learners’ class and homework books were analysed to gather data to ascertain the actual formative assessment practices of the participants in relation to the goals and objectives of Social Studies. Assessment items and learners books were analysed to determine the type of questions the participants asked learners, how often teachers practice formative assessment, how teachers relates their formative assessment practices to the goals and objectives of social studies and the type of feedback teachers give to students.

Document analysis guide was chosen because it is stable, “non-reactive” data sources, meaning that they can be read and reviewed multiple times and remain unchanged by the researcher’s influence or research process. Also, documents can also contain data that no longer can be observed, provide details that informants have forgotten, and can track change and development. Document analysis can also point to questions that need to be asked or to situations that need to be observed, making the use of document analysis a way to ensure your research is critical and comprehensive (Bowen, 2009). However, Yin (1994) raised the issue of biased selectivity by pointing out that incomplete collection of documents suggests ‘biased selectivity’. that is some documents may be incomplete, or their data may be inaccurate or inconsistent. For these reasons, documents used were evaluate for quality.

3.6 Trustworthiness

Quality control procedures were considered important for the study. The trustworthiness of the findings was ensured through the quality control procedures of dependability, transferability, confirmability and credibility as advocated by Schwandt (2007). These quality control measures were applied to ensure credibility hence, validation of the study as highlighted below:

Dependability

Dependability involves participants’ evaluation of the findings, interpretation and recommendations of the study such that all are supported by the data as received from participants of the study. In order to address the dependability issues in the study, the processes within the study were reported in detail, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other settings or groups. (Polit & Beck, 2012). It is the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents. In this study the researcher ensured transferability through thick description. Thus the researchers provided a rich account of descriptive data, such as the context in which the research was carried out, its setting, sample, sample size, sample strategy, and excerpts from the interview guide. To ensure transferability, the researcher also used verbatim transcripts of data. However. The applicability of finding of the study would be appropriate within the Nsawam Municipality because the sample size and sampling method made it difficult to generalize the results to the whole population of teachers and schools in Ghana.

Credibility

Credibility deals with the focus of the research and refers to the confidence in how well the data address the intended focus (Polit & Beck, 2012). As a measure to ensure trustworthiness of the research findings, the researcher collected the most suitable data for study. Data collected was rigorously and systematically analysed. Credibility checks ensured that all relevant data was included and irrelevant data was excluded.

Triangulation allows the researchers to have a credibility groundwork for the findings and the contribution of knowledge. The purpose of triangulating is to provide a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility (Bowen, 2009). Skate (1995) describes

four strategies to triangulate different sources or methods for data collection. Among the four strategies described, I adopted the data source triangulation which involves the use of different types of data sources, thus interview guide, observation protocol and document analysis guide were used.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the degree to which the findings of the research study could be confirmed by other researchers. Confirmability is concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination, but clearly derived from the data. For this reason, quotations from transcribed text were presented (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004) to show a connection between the data and results. Concepts were linked to the data by a quotation in order to confirm the connection between the results and data as well as the richness of data. Again, interview recordings were play back interview to each interviewee and the transcripts were read out in the presence of each interviewee.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

An introductory letter was collected from the Department of Social Studies Education of the University of Education, Winneba to enable the researcher visit the schools. With the permission of the headmaster, the researcher interacted with the teachers. Test items, class and homework books were first analyzed (see Appendix A). I also interviewed the Social Studies teachers individually using an interview guide (see Appendix B) in all schools. The interview was immediately followed by the lesson observation in both schools using the observation guide

The researcher observed one lesson from each of the teachers. Merriam (2001) intimated that observation can effectively be implemented only if it is planned deliberately, recorded systematically, and subjected to checks and controls on reliability and validity. Each observation took between seventy to eighty minutes to complete depending on the level and the number of periods for the lesson. The observer focused on whether the tasks that the teachers use to assess the students really match with their lesson objectives; appropriate questioning during lesson presentation. How teacher synchronize social studies goals and objectives classroom assessment and the kind of feedback they gave to the students. One month was used for administration of all three instruments used in data collection.

3.8 Data Processing and Analysis

Data was analysed by thematic procedure based on the themes arrived at during the data collection. The themes were related to the research questions and interpreted on the number of issues raised by respondents. The researcher opted to use thematic analysis because it is suitable for analyzing experiences, perceptions and understandings and also a cost-effective means of conducting exploratory research (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Interview data was transcribed verbatim after each interview. Interview transcripts and field notes from classroom observation and data analysis were compiled. Data processing and analysis were done in according with Braun and Clarke (2013) guidelines.

The researcher carefully read the compiled data, searching for patterns of meaning or ideas in the data that will help outline the analysis, before any analysis took place. Codes were developed to represent the identified themes and applied to the raw data and by which individual codes were collated. From the collated data, provisional

themes and sub-themes were constructed through interpreting and reporting facts, ideas and the meaning drawn from data. The provisional themes were reviewed into final themes. The researcher then defined and named the themes according to their relevance to the research questions and the research problem. Teachers who were interviewed and observed were assigned pseudonyms (Mr. Bob, Miss. King Mr. Ras, Mr. Bones, Mr. Jack, Mr. Nick, Miss Jane, Miss Anna, Mr. Bat and Mr. Kapi). Data analysis and discussion of findings have been thoroughly presented in chapter four.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

Creswell (2009) opines that ethical practices in research involves much more than merely following a set of static guidelines, such as those provided by educational and professional associations. Creswell suggests that researchers need to protect their research participants, guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their organizations or institutions, and promote the integrity of research. All the research instruments used had an introductory front page that clearly stated the intent and purpose of the study. For ethical reasons, I decided to change information such as the names of teachers to ensure their anonymity. Again participants were also assured that information provided would be treated confidential. Finally, all authors cited have been duly referenced at the reference section.

3 .10 Chapter Summary

The research design employed for the study was exploratory study. Ten Basic and Senior High School Social Studies teachers in the Nsawam Municipality were selected through convenience and purposive sampling procedures for the study. Semi-structured interview, lesson observation protocol and document analysis guide were used to gather data for the study. Data was analysed by thematic procedure based on the themes arrived at during the data collection.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings based on the analyses of data collected for the study. The researcher blended discussion with the presentation of results.

4.1 Characteristics of Respondents

The study sought to explore the formative assessment practices of social studies teachers in relation to the goals and objectives of social studies education in the Nsawam Municipality. Convenience and purposive sampling techniques were used to sample ten social studies teachers from the Basic and Senior High Schools in the Municipality. Interview guide, classroom observation protocol and document analysis guide were the data collection instruments employed for the study.

To clearly describe the state of social studies formative assessment in the Nsawam Municipality, the researcher deemed it imperative to find the professional background of the participants. Interview guide item 1 sought to elicit respondents' professional qualifications. The responses are presented in Table 1.

Table 4.1: Professional qualifications of respondents

| Professional qualification | Number |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Diploma in Education | 2 |
| B. A Sociology | 1 |
| B. Ed Social science | 1 |
| B. Ed Social Studies | 3 |
| M. Ed Social Studies | 1 |
| None of the above | 2 |
| Total | 10 |

Source: Fieldwork data (2020)

Table 1 shows that three of the teachers possessed Bachelor Degrees in Social Studies Education, two of the teachers hold Diploma in Education, one possessed Bachelor Degree in Social Science Education, one had Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology without initial teacher training at the Teacher Training College (now College of Education) while one teacher had Master of Education Degree in Social Studies. The data reveal that not all the teachers assigned to teach social studies have the professional qualification to teach the subject. Four out of the ten teachers teaching Social Studies in the study area had no professional training in Social Studies and were therefore not professionally qualified to teach the subject. During the interview, Miss. Anna (not the real name) said *“I did study social studies in the university ... but the content of the subject is in my palm”*. One of the teachers who did not have any professional qualification in social studies also confessed studying Sociology in the University of Ghana. There were also two teachers who studied Religious Studies and History and are teaching Social Studies in JHS. This confirms the assertions of Goldhaber and Brewer (2000) and Ingersoll (2003) who note that, not all certified teachers are assigned to teach in the areas for which they have been trained and that large numbers of teachers are assigned duties for which their certification are "irrelevant". Aggarwal (2002) observed that scholarship and professional training are the first two essential requirements for a Social Studies teacher. Aggarwal further cautioned that:

If the Social Studies are to assist people to understand this complex world in which they live, in order that they may better adapt themselves for an intelligent and constructive citizenship, we must provide well trained teachers of Social Studies at all stages.

The implication of this finding is that teachers who do not possess professional qualifications in teaching Social Studies will not be able to teach and assess in line

with the goals and objectives of the subject. In the view of Young and Kim (2010), using formative assessment in the classroom is not a beginner's skill but takes an array of foundational knowledge, pedagogical understanding, instructional skills and classroom management to effectively use formative assessment. Pinchok and Brandt (2009) confirm this and maintain that those skills border on mastery-level teaching, but in many ways, these are expectations of quality formative assessment practices. This implies that teaching experience and constant professional development are fundamental to effective formative assessment. Interview guide items 2&3 was placed in the interview guide to elicit teachers' experience and in-service training attended item 2 reads: *How long have you been teaching social studies?* And item 3 reads: *Have you been attending in-service courses in assessment practices? If yes how many of this courses have you attended?* Table 2 indicates participants teaching experience the in terms of number of years of teaching Social Studies and the in-service courses they have attended.

Table 4.2: Responses on teaching experience and in-service courses attended

| Name of teacher (not real name) | Years of teaching Social Studies | Attendance of in- service assessment courses | Number of in- service courses attended |
|--|---|---|---|
| Miss King | 9 | Yes | 2 |
| Mr. Bob | 22 | Yes | 3 |
| Mr. Ras | 3 | Yes | 1 |
| Mr. Bones | 2 | Yes | 0 |
| Mr. Jack | 2 | Yes | 1 |
| Mr. Nick | 12 | Yes | 2 |
| Mr. Bat | 9 | Yes | 2 |
| Miss. Jane | 2 | Yes | 1 |
| Mr. Kapi | 9 | Yes | 1 |
| Miss. Anna | 3 | Yes | 1 |

Source: Fieldwork data (2020)

From the table it was established that three of the Social Studies teachers have taught for two years, two have also taught for three years, three have taught for nine years, one have twelve years' experience of teaching Social Studies and one have twenty two years' experience of teaching social studies. It was established in the study that all the Social Studies teachers taught the subject between two and twenty two years. This means that they had some experience in the teaching of Social Studies. It could also be said that they were quite familiar with the formative assessment practices in Social Studies. In effect, teachers with varying experiences in classroom practices participated in the study. All the teachers except one have attended in-service training courses in assessment with the highest attendance being three.

In response to interview guide items 2&3, teachers had these to say; Mr. Kapi (not the real name) said:

~~In~~ my nine years of teaching social studies the only workshop I have attended on assessment was just recently; it was to prepare teachers for the curriculum reforms". Mr. Bob (not the real name) said ~~I~~ think this courses are organized by Education Service and the Colleges of Education in the region to re-emphasize the things we learnt during our professional training and also to give us new information about our classroom practices...it is good and I attend anytime they call". Mr. Bones (not his real name) however said ~~we~~ the teachers teaching in the private schools don't usually attend these workshops...most of the time we are not called to attend and even if they do, it is the head of departments who attend and briefs us".

These revelation is an indication that the education authorities are not desirous to improve the skills, competencies and knowledge of Social Studies teachers. In-service training for teachers is a pre-requisite for teachers' professional growth and development. As rightly put by Ding (2001) and Cobbold (2007) that teaching is a specialized work and that teachers (Social Studies teachers) as developing professionals should reach their maturity both in the context and level of their profession through lifelong learning and exploring. It was established that all the

teachers believed that in service training is very crucial in their professional development. This affirms Aggarwal (2002) view that the desire for improvement is the most important aspect of a Social Studies teacher's professional education.

4.2 The State of Formative Assessment Practices in the Nsawam Municipality

This section sought to describe the condition of social studies formative assessment in the Nsawam Municipality. The main objective is to ascertain whether social studies teachers' formative assessment practices are in accordance with the goals and objectives of the subject. It first looks at the conception of Social Studies, the formative assessment practices of Social Studies teachers in relation to the goals and objectives of Social Studies education as well as how teachers' formative assessment practices conform to profile dimensions underlying behaviors for teaching, learning and assessment in social studies. The above theme was used in order to arrive at answers to the Research Question 1:

What is the state of Social Studies formative assessment practices in the Nsawam Municipality?

Research Question 1 is discussed under two sub-themes: teachers' conception of social studies; teachers' conceptions of the goals, objectives and the profile dimension of Social Studies.

4.2.1 Teachers' conception of Social Studies

Darling-Hammond (2000) strongly emphasized that, definition of concepts are necessary because they state the precise nature, distinction or delineation of phenomenon being so defined so that the relevance of whatsoever is said or written in the name of the phenomena may be accurately and correctly assessed. Hence how a teacher conceives Social Studies will determine how he or she will teach and assess it

in order to achieve its goals and objectives. To adequately describe the state of formative assessment practices in the Municipality the researcher sought to first elicit teachers view on how they conceive social studies. Interview item 4 reads *how do you conceptualize social studies?* Responses from the ten teachers interviewed indicates that teachers share different conceptions as to what social studies is. The data established that some social studies teachers conceive social studies as amalgamation of the social sciences. Mr. Bat (not the real name) said *–Social Studies is an amalgamation of the social sciences...social studies combines all the social science subjects*”. Aggarwal (1993) corroborates this view when he asserts that *–social studies includes much of the subject matter of history, geography, civics and economics*”. Majority of the social studies teachers interviewed have it that social studies is about citizenship education. Mr. Nick (not the real name) came out that *–Social Studies is about Citizenship Education...is about training citizens who will participate in developing the nation*”. The views of the respondents supports the views of Blege (2001) and Ayaaba and Odumah (2007) who assert that *–Social Studies is citizenship education*”. Miss. Anna (not the real name) conceptualized Social Studies as morals education. She came out that *–Social Studies is about how morals are imparted to children*”. In the views of Adesina (2010) moral education was introduced into the school system at the elementary stage in order to inculcate moral uprightness in small children so that by the time they grow up they would not become a menace to the nation. From the views of Adesina (2010) viz a viz the goals and objectives of Social Studies, it is categorically clear that Social Studies is the only subject signed in the Ghanaian Junior and Senior High School curriculum to instill good morals in learners. Mr. Jack (not the real name) also viewed Social Studies as a problem solving subject. Mr. Ras (not the real name) said *–Social Studies is a subject that teaches about man*

and his relationship to the physical and social environment". Mr. Ras's perception about Social Studies is not different from Michaelis (1988) who asserts that ~~the~~ Social Studies are concerned with man and his social and physical environment; they deal with human relationship". These show that, although, all Junior and Senior High Schools have a homogenous syllabus, teachers of the subject have different conceptions as to what Social Studies is. This supports the findings of research conducted by Bekoe and Eshun (2013) that teachers have varied conceptions about Social Studies as an amalgamation of the Social Sciences, citizenship education, reflective inquiry or problem solving have influence on their classroom practices. The diverse views shared by the participants may be as result of what Shiundu and Mohammed (1994) described as the influence of unique traditions of the institutions that train teachers on the framework of their conceptions about whatever subject they learn during their initial training. This implies that the difference conceptions teachers hold about Social Studies might be as result of the differences initial training institutions attended and it is likely that it will influence their classroom practices. Quashigah, Kankam, Bekoe, Eshun and Bordoh (2015) bemoan that although many efforts have been made to improve the teaching of the subject in achieving its intended goals, it seems the varied curriculum conceptions of the subject may lend itself for students' misconstruing the essence of the subject introduction in the Ghanaian education curriculum. On this, Bekoe, Quashigah, Kankam, Eshun and Bordoh (2014) in their write-up on the sense of efficacy in implementing the basic school social studies curriculum in Ghana, posited that ~~P~~edagogical training is a strong predictor of teacher trainees' conception about Social Studies. Content knowledge alone does not adequately prepare teachers for the challenges they face in today's Social Studies classrooms." They however pointed that in teaching and

learning of Social Studies emphasis must be laid on the philosophy underpinning the subject introduction in Ghana which is solving individual and societal problems.

Concluding this section of social studies teachers' conception of the term Social Studies, the data clearly indicates that Social Studies teachers have varying conception as to what Social Studies is. The varying conception is not far from the assertion of Quartey (1984) that in the academic world, almost every subject has had its changing views" This notwithstanding, there is no consensus among educators as regards what Social Studies is or ought to be. In the light of this Martorella (1994) asserts that the field of Social Studies is so caught up in ambiguity, inconsistency and contradiction that it represents a complex educational enigma. This signifies that there is controversy surrounding Social Studies with regard to how it is conceptualized in terms of meaning, content, objectives, and assessing its outcomes. This is supported by Kankam, Bekoe, Ayaaba, Bordoh, and Eshun (2014, p.143) that "There have been many different conceptual perspectives given to the scope of content of Social Studies through time and space. However, the focuses are the objectives around which the various proponents identified as elements of their conceptual dimensions and given definitions." This implies that there has been emerging conceptions of Social Studies with regards to its meaning, scope, nature, objectives and even the way assessment tools are selected in teaching it. Hence it can be concluded that since Social Studies teachers in the Nsawam Municipality share different conceptions about Social Studies, teachers are more likely to formatively assess the subject differently according to how they perceive the subject.

4.2.2 Teachers' conceptions of the goals, objectives and the profile dimension of Social Studies

The term goal which is being used interchangeably with the word purpose refer to the long term expectations of Social Studies as distinct from objectives which are more specific and with short term expectation. Like its meaning, there has been contentious debates' regarding the goals and objectives of Social Studies. Ross and Marker (2005) remarked that Social Studies educators have always pitched a big tent, with plenty of room for diverse perspectives, and the response to conflicts over goals has most often been to look for how we could all just get along. This view is given credence by Ravitch (2003) when she echoes that "over the time, the leader of the field Social Studies have frequently wrestled with their goals and purposes. She continues "the Social Studies field has readily redefined its aims to meet what so ever the socio political demands of the age were". The comments seem to suggest that there is a kind of disagreement and factionalism among Social Studies scholars and educators as to what the goals and objectives of Social Studies are. Item 5 and 6 on the interview guide were placed to elicit teachers' views on this issue. Interview item 5 reads *what do you think is the ultimate goal of Social Studies?* The data collected suggest that Social Studies teachers share diverse views as to what the ultimate goal of Social Studies is. However, majority of the participants seem to agree that the ultimate goal of Social Studies is about the need of the individual as well as society's expectations.

Miss. King (not her real name) said:

" the ultimate goal of social studies is to prepare young citizens make reflective decisions and participate in civic life". Mr. Nick also emphasized that ~~the~~ ultimate goal of Social Studies is train critical thinkers who can solve their personal and society's problems. Mr. Ras (not his real name) who shared similar opinion said ~~the~~ goal of social studies to prepare students to assume their roles as good and responsible citizens".

The views shared by the participants are in agreement with The Task Force on the Teaching and Learning of Social Studies of the National Council for the Social Studies (1992) who stressed that the powerful teaching of Social Studies should help learners to understand their social world and develop attitudes towards citizenship roles. Again Martorella (1994) similarly is of the view that the goal of social studies is to produce reflective, competent and concerned citizens. There were other participants: Mr. Bat, and Mr. Jack (not the real names) were of the view that Social Studies has many goals which cannot be overlooked. Among the views shared by these participants is that:

–Social Studies is concerned with preparing young people with knowledge, skills and ability they need for their personal and social lives”.

They similarly opine that the ultimate goal of social studies is to develop positive attitudes and values. The foregoing argument of Mr. Bat and Mr. Jack seems to be rooted in the argument Ayaaba (2008) who argues that the broad goals of Social Studies are achieved in the school system through the attainment of three sub-goals, namely, the acquisition of relevant knowledge, the development of positive attitudes and values and the development of worthwhile skills. Two of the participants; Miss. Anna and Mr. Bones (not their real names) who exhibited no knowledge about the goal of the subject they taught. Their lack of knowledge exhibited by these participants may be due to the fact that they may have no professional training in the subject.

Interview guide item 6 reads *do you know Social Studies general objectives? If YES, clearly specify at least two of such objectives? If NO, give reasons for your answer.*

The result from the data collected made three categorized revelations on the issue. First, the result revealed that there were teachers who confused or are unable to clearly

differentiate the goals of Social Studies from the general objectives as most of them continuously repeated the answers they gave for what the goals of Social Studies. It can be concluded from the answers given that these participants are trained Social Studies teachers but they seem to have forgotten what they learnt during their professional training. This reaffirms the conclusion of research made by Cobbold and Dare (2009) that teacher for that matter, the Social Studies teacher can no longer take refuge in the notion that teaching is technically simple, and that once a teacher qualifies to teach, he or she knows the basics of teaching forever. The second revelation made was that there were some Social Studies teachers who do not have knowledge about what objectives of Social Studies really is. Mr. Bones said:

–I don't really know much about the these goals and objectives of Social Studies, I did not do Social Studies as course in the university but I can teach the subject very well because I have textbooks and the syllabus at my disposal". Miss. Anna said –I don't know the general objectives of Social Studies but I know what the subject is about and I can teach it very well".

The implication is that some Social Studies teachers do not have initial training in the subject hence they are not informed about the discipline which contradicts the assertion of UNESCO (2007) who qualified that a good Social Studies teacher shows mastery of the subject matter, knows how to transmit this knowledge, give assignments, and provide feedback on assignments, cater for individual differences in learning and manage classes and instructional time well. There were also Social Studies teachers who well informed about the subject. Mr. Nick professed;

–I know Social Studies have about five general objective... it's about development of positive attitudes and values and also to help learners to adopt to the changing environment". Mr. Bat said –I know the social studies general objectives... it is build national consciousness and unity and also to develop positive attitudes and values in the students".

Teachers assigned to teach Social Studies must have good professional standing in the subject in order to teach and assess the subject effectively to achieve its goals and objectives.

The profile dimension of the Social Studies (knowledge and understanding, application of knowledge as well as attitudes and values) and the rationale for teaching the subject at the SHS (JHS) levels are evidence of how learners should be made to recognize their active role during instruction as bonafide owners of instruction and thus lie at the heart of constructivism (NCSS, 2010). To elicit teachers' understanding on the profile dimensions, interview item 7 which reads *what are the profile dimensions in social studies? Which of the profile dimensions do you consider most when assessing learning?* Mr. Nick (not his real name) said *–the profile dimension describe the underlying behaviours one seeks to achieve when teaching... in Social Studies, we have knowledge, understanding, application, attitudes and values... for me I teaching and assess all the dimensions*". Mr. Bat (not his real name) said *–the profile dimension in Social Studies include knowledge, understanding, and application of knowledge... I think my teaching and assessment practices covers all the profile dimensions*". Item 14 of the document analysis guide sought teacher's formative assessment practices in relation to the profile dimensions. The findings were however contrary to what the teachers said. The documental analysis of test items, learners exercise and homework books revealed that teachers frequently assesses knowledge and understanding. Most of the test items analyzed commenced with action verbs such as list, where, name, state, mention, recall, identify, define, describe, list, name, match, state principles, explain, discuss, compare, summarize, translate, rewrite, paraphrase, give examples. Teachers occasionally assess the use of knowledge, action verbs which connote the use of knowledge are occasionally used

by teachers to design assessment items. The document analysis again revealed that most teachers never assessed attitudes and values as action verbs used in designing test items do not command such outcomes. Social studies education is relevant to the needs of Ghanaian society; Social Studies education provides practical approach in solving problems; Social Studies education addresses societal problems; Social Studies education is integration of subjects; Social Studies education can be taught by a single subject specialist; Social Studies education is the study of ourselves and our environment; Social Studies education helps to appreciate the impact of history in current and future development effort of the country and Social Studies education helps in the development of positive attitudes, values and skills can be confirmed as the nature of Social Studies. Social Studies could be all of the above but if teachers of the subject do not teach and assess to achieve its goals and objectives its benefits in the school curriculum will not be realized. Social Studies is Citizenship Education; the subject tries to prepare the individual to fit into society by equipping him/her with the kinds of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed for effective living within the society and for making constructive changes in the way of life of society (Ghana Education Service, 2001). Effective implementation of formative assessment has been found to have a more significant impact on student performance and achievement of learning goals than other powerful instructional interventions, including one-on-one tutoring (Thompson, & Wiliam, 2005; Shepard, 2005).

4.3 The Ability of Social Studies Teachers in Designing and Using Quality Formative Assessment Tools to Synchronise the Goals and Objectives of Social Studies

The nature of teachers' instructional practices with regard to the use of formative assessment matters most in a subject like Social Studies. Since most of what the teacher does in the classroom is assessment related, it is imperative to better comprehend the efficacy of Social Studies teachers in designing and using quality formative assessment tools that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the subject. With any pedagogical approach, it is important as a teacher to align learning goals or objectives, teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks, particularly where the intention is to encourage deep, rather than surface, approaches to learning (Biggs, 2003; Barrett, et al 2005). The main objective of this section is to establish whether Social Studies teachers are capable of designing and use quality formative assessment tool and also to establish whether teachers' formative assessment practices are aligned with the goals and objectives of Social Studies. The above themes were used in order to arrive at answers to the Research Question2:

How capable are Social Studies teachers in designing and using authentic formative assessment tools to synchronize the goals and objectives of Social Studies?

Some items were placed in the interview guide, document analysis guide and the observation protocol to elicit teachers' view on the issue. Classroom observation guide was used to observe Social Studies teachers teaching the subject at the Junior and Senior High Schools to see their efficacy in the use of formative assessment tool in their teaching. Interview guide and document analysis guide were also employed for data triangulation and also to elicit additional information. Research Question 2

is discussed under two sub-themes: teachers' knowledge in formative assessment techniques and teachers' sense of efficacy in the use of formative assessment tools to agenda the goals and objectives of Social Studies.

4.3.1 Teachers' knowledge in formative assessment tools

Social Studies teachers' knowledge in formative assessment techniques is discussed here. Participants were interviewed to gather information on the issue. Item 7 of the interview guide reads:

what formative assessment is and why is it important? Nick (not his real name) said ~~is~~ "is a form of assessment in which teachers assess students internally... It helps to know if students understood what has been taught". Mr. Ras (not her real name) said ~~it~~ "is the exercises we give to children in the classroom and it is to know whether the students are learning". Miss. King (not her real name) said ~~is~~ "is the type of assessment that goes on in the course of teaching...it is important because it helps to know whether the students understood what was taught". Mr. Jack (not his real name) also viewed formative assessment as ~~all~~ "all the assessments that are prepared and administered by the teacher to help learner in the process of learning". Miss. Anna (not her real name) said ~~it~~ "helps to gather response on what was taught and understood". Mr. Bat (not his real name) said ~~formative~~ "formative assessment involves all the exercises teachers give to their students... it helps the teachers to shape their method of teaching and also assists teachers to report on their learners' achievements to parents". Mr. Bob (not her real name) said ~~it~~ "helps the teacher to know if the objectives of the lesson have been achieved".

The responses show that teachers have perfect knowledge of the concept formative assessment and its role in the teaching and learning process. From the various definitions given it can be concluded that formative assessment has learning as its purpose and places agency for the improvement of learning on both the teacher and student as observed by Shavelson and Seal (2003). However, the responses show that majority of the respondents scarcely use formative assessment to gather feedback on learning objectives. Most of the respondents used formative assessment as a means of gathering feedback on students' understanding. Item 8 of the interview guide reads

which formative assessment tool do you usually use in assessing your learners? Most of the respondents said they use oral questions, class exercises and home works in the form of multiple choice and essay type questions and they also use project work occasionally to assess their learners. Miss. King (not the real name) however claimed she sometimes uses observation to assess her learners in area which cannot be easily assessed with written assessments. Item 11 of the interview protocol reads;

how do you differentiate traditional assessment from authentic assessment? And which of the two do you usually use in assessing your learners. Mr. Kapi (not the real name) said –~~traditional~~ assessment usually involves the use of test, quizzes, classwork and homework to assess students... authentic assessment is when students are asked to perform real-world tasks about what they have learn to assess them...my assessment practices revolves around the traditional form assessment because it is similar to their final examination”. Miss. King (not the real name) said –~~traditional~~ assessment is the normal assessment that is usually practiced in the classroom...authentic assessment involves application task... authentic assessments are very useful in assessing Social Studies learning but it is time consuming and it does not comply with the external examination demands”.

There were some interviewees who however did not exhibit any knowledge in authentic assessment. Social Studies teachers must be prepared to design a range of authentic assessment tasks intended to measure learners' mastery of disciplinary knowledge, inquiry, and forms of representation that lead to knowledge construction and domain-specific meaning-making that have value in civic life. The findings made indicate that some Social Studies teachers do not have adequate knowledge in alternative formative assessment tool. Again responses from the interviewees indicates that Social Studies teachers' assess learning to meet external examination demands and not for the purpose of ascertaining if the goals and objectives of the subject are met.

Item 10 of interview on the guide reads *how do you understand self-assessment? Why is it important in achieving social studies goals and objectives?* Mr. Bat (not his real name) said:

–it is the form of classroom assessment where students are given the opportunity to assess their own work based on certain criteria...Self-assessment therefore is a valuable tool for formative purpose”. Mr. Nick (not his real name) said –self-assessment is when learners are given opportunity evaluate their work to know for themselves whether their progressing or retrogressing...even though it can be important in Social Studies lessons it is impossible here because of the level of learners we have here”.

Wride (2017) notes that self-assessment can be effective when students become familiar with the concept of self-assessment. For self-assessment to be effective Students have to understand the assessment criteria. The level of language that is used should be comprehensible to young students. Ross (2006) argues that specific training for learners strengthens self-assessment ability. Therefore, teachers have the responsibility to train and equip learners with the necessary skills to be able to self-assess their work. Self-assessment helps students‘ attitudes of being –independent” and –empowered” and which builds their confidence in preparing for examinations and setting goals for the future (McDonald & Boud, 2003). Interview guide item 11 reads;

how do you understand peer-assessment and why is it important in achieving Social Studies goals and objectives? Miss King (not his real name) said –peer assessment is about students monitoring another student’s performance and it can help learners to perform better since assessment was done by a friend and not the teacher...they easily remember whatever feedback and corrections done since it comes from a follow student...it also promotes collaboration in learning which can help learners also in their communities”. Mr. Nick (not his real name) said –I believe that peer-assessment focused on improvement not grading and this enable learners to learn without any stress. Mr. Bob (not his real name) said –in peer-assessment, students often assess their peers‘ work and have their work assessed by peers”...students assessing their peers‘ can enhance the assessors own learning and

potentially motivate them in their studies. Miss. Anna (not her real name) said –peer assessment is the assessment students‘ work by other students of equal level... it is a good way of helping students to learn as children learn and remember easily from their peers but in most times students do not take this form of assessment serious when they know it is not scored”. Mr. Kapi (not his real name) indicated that –peer assessment is very important in the Social Studies classroom because it fosters classroom discussion but due to time constrains and the pressure to complete syllabus because external examination it not usually practiced”. Mr. Ras (not his real name) said –peer assessment helps learners to learn to accept constructive criticism as their work is criticized by their peer... this is by way of inculcating positive attitude in the students”.

The findings above proof an assumption of the socio-cultural theory which states that –learning is enhanced by –joint productive activity” within a social setting, such as in a classroom where students and teachers collaborate as community of learners” (Lund 2008). Heritage (2010) asserts that, the socio-cultural point of view about formative assessment includes the role of interaction between and among teacher- student(s) and students-students as well as joint collective action in the learning process. The various views shared by the teachers indicate that peer assessment is a reflective process with a retrospective orientation. By looking back and reflecting on the past efforts, change becomes visible for learners (Bell & Cowie, 2001). It helps students to become aware of themselves as learners (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002; Nunes, 2004). Peer assessment helps learners –take charge of their own learning” (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002, p.286), and take responsibility for learning, especially when they are able to make decisions about, or have choices in the process (Bell & Cowie, 2001; Dori, 2003; Nunes, 2004; Torres Pereira de Eca, 2005). Social Studies aims at producing reflective individuals who will be able to think critically when making decisions as opines by Martorrella (1994), reflective citizens are capable of channeling the knowledge acquired into action in the form problem-solving and decision making. From the foregoing views learners taking charge and responsibility

for learning through peer assessment is by way of preparing learners to towards their future expectations. Cowie (2005) peer assessment as a supportive peer culture seems to emerge as a consequence of the opportunity for interaction between students. According to Ayaaba and Odumah (2007) the development of national consciousness and unity is another major objective of Social Studies. Classroom discussions are triggered during peer assessment as learners learn to criticise and dialogue with one another in the assessment processes. Through this interactions learners learn the act of consensus building and co-operation which will help them contribute positively toward national unity. In this wise, Black and Wiliam (1998) proposed that students be trained to assess their peers purposefully, with the goal of improving learning. The interview guide item12 reads *how do you understand portfolio assessments and why is it important in achieving social studies goals and objectives?* Miss. Jane (not her real name) said *“it is the ongoing comprehensive collection of students work and getting to know where they are, in terms performance...It increases their involvement in formative assessment”*. According to Wiliam and Thompson (2008), gathering purposeful examples of students‘ work that demonstrate their effort, progress, and level of understanding over a period to time, compose the main features of portfolio. Wiggins and McTighe (2007) cited by Bekoe, *et al.* (2013, p.78) maintain that unlike the traditional forms of assessment that take a –snapshot” of students at one point in time, portfolios –function like a photo album containing a variety of photos taken at different times and different contexts”. Similarly, Herrera et al. (2007) assert that the content of portfolios, which incorporate a collection of student work, –some indications that how student rated him/herself on the process and product included and the evidences of how those products met the established criteria”. Interview item 15 reads *how do you understand scaffolds authentic assessments and why is it*

important in achieving social studies goals and objectives? The social studies teachers interviewed were confused as to what Scaffold authentic assessment is. Mr. Nick (not the real name) however came out that *–scaffolding is about a teacher demonstrating a concept to students after which the students also demonstrate for the teacher to see if the students have learnt the concept but I don't know about scaffold assessment*". Scaffold authentic assessment may take various forms, including dialogue journals requiring students to write their thoughts about certain topics, or stories. When this is well planned by teachers it will help students to be analytical thinking capabilities as this will facilitate a student's ability to build on prior knowledge and internalize new information (Bekoe, *et al.*, 2013). Item 16 of the interview protocol reads *how do you understand play-based assessment and why is it important in achieving Social Studies goals and objectives?* The participants were confused when the question was posed. They seem to have no knowledge on this assessment tool. Goodwin (2000:6) posited that authentic assessment begins with teachers making it their business to purposefully watch, listen to, talk with, and think about the children in their classrooms". Some teachers reflect on who these children are, the extent of what they know, and the way they learn, based on the evidence that they observe in the role-play (Herrera *et al.*, 2007). This implies that planning for play based assessment requires educators to consider how better one can role play and dramatize. Item 36 of the interview guide reads *do you design assessment items for your learners? If yes, what factors do you consider when designing assessment items?* Mr. Jack (not his real name) said *–yes, I do.... I consider the level of learners and the topic am teaching*. All the teachers interviewed were of similar views this means that social studies teachers consider not more than learners levels and topics when designing formative assessment items. Important factors such as expected learning outcomes and behavior are not

considered. Item 16 of the interview protocol reads *how do you understand interactive formative assessment and why is it important in achieving Social Studies goals and objectives?* In response to this, Mr. Nick (not his real name) said *–it is assessment during the course of teaching and learning and it involves verbal questions and answers among teachers and learners*”. Miss. Jane (not her real name) said *–it is the form of assessment which helps the teacher during the lesson to find out whether students understood what has been taught... it helps to understand the gap between where learners are in terms of the objectives and where they ought to be*. In support of this findings is in Adam, et al (2018) who observed that Social Studies instruction is more powerful when assessment is understood and perceived by the instructor to be integrative in the teaching and learning process as well as it being employed by the instructor. In conclusion, social studies teachers’ exhibit fair knowledge in formative assessment tools but during the classroom observation, teachers were not observed using any other of formative assessment tools besides the normal traditional formative assessment tools. In addition, teachers could not link their importance in achieving the goals and objectives of social studies. The foregoing thus implies that Social Studies teachers design formative assessment tools with little or no consideration to the goals and objectives of the subject.

4.3.2 Teachers’ sense of efficacy in the use of formative assessment tools in relation to the goals and objectives of social studies.

Teachers’ efficacy in the use of formative assessment tools in relation to the goals and objectives of Social Studies by are discussed under this section. Classroom observation protocol was used to observe Social Studies teachers’ classroom assessment practices. Document analysis of learners work books and test items were carried out to establish teachers’ sense of efficacy in the use of formative assessment

tools in relation to the goals and objectives Social Studies. Teachers were also interviewed to solicit their views on their classroom assessment practices. Item 4 of the document analysis guide reads *Teacher designs and uses multiple assessment tools to assess learners*. Available information from learners' work books and test items revealed that majority of the teachers who participated in the study do not design and use diverse formative assessment tools.

They regularly use selected response test items and essay-response test items in assessing learners. There was no evidence from the documents to prove teachers used any other forms of assessment such as, peer assessment, portfolio assessment, sociometry, checklist, self-assessment, Journals or performance assessment. The documents however revealed that project work is occasionally used by teachers to assess learning. Commenting on the use of project, some of the teachers said the time allocated on the time table for teaching the subject is not enough and that cannot support the use of projects in assessing Social Studies concepts. During the classroom observation, teachers who assessed their learners relied on the traditional assessment tools to assess their learners. Current thinking about assessment does not encourage the use of textbook items to assess students. The practices of the teachers support the claim of Suurtamm, *et al.* (2010) who found that teachers use variety forms of assessment to improve student learning with emphasis on the use of test, homework and classroom exercise to elicit pupils' understanding. Berenson and Carter (1995) however lamented that traditional assessments contribute to students' pursuits of grades rather than pursuits of learning. They suggest that broadening the system to include alternative assessments that provide an opportunity for students to make conceptual connections and reflect on understanding can refocus students towards the pursuit of learning. The seemingly lack of competencies to use the alternative forms

of formative assessment might possibly inform their choice of the traditional forms. It also brings to question, the initial training of our teachers as well as their professional development. This gives credence to Campbell and Evans (2010) as cited in Jarrett (2016) who reported that most teachers lack the relevant experience with classroom assessment practices as they have never previously been taught or received training in the field. This lack of knowledge and skills according to Akos, et al (2007), poses a problem to the attainment of social studies goals and objectives as well as that of the educational system as teachers are not adequately prepared to meet the diverse learning needs of students in the classroom.

Authentic intellectual work is defined as the “original application of knowledge and skills” that “results in a product or presentation that has meaning beyond success in school” (King, *et al.*, 2009). Item 9 of the interview protocol reads *how often do you assess your learners?* The teachers interviewed claimed they assess their learners after every lesson. Mr. Jack (not the real name) said that “*assessment is part of the teaching learning... a teacher cannot teach without assessment...in view of this I assess my learners at end of every lesson*”. Mr. Ras (not the real name) came out that “*assessment is carried out after every lesson*”. However the classroom observation revealed that, teachers did contrary to what they reported. Most of the lessons observed did not end with assessment, teachers barely conclude their lessons before the next lesson starts. Again in the document analysis, there were few evidence of class exercise, homework and projects in the learners work books. Interview item 26 reads *should Social Studies teacher use follow-up activities that have definite implications for behaviour and why?* Mr. Jack (not his real name) said “*the use of follow-up activities in teaching helps... it helps the teacher to know if pupils understood what was taught...this helps to evaluate the lesson*”. Miss King (not the

real name) said “*yes they have to use follow up activities, because without asking your students questions on what was taught how will you know if they understood you?*” The assertions made during the interviews on the theme did not support their assessment practices during the lesson observation, majority of the teachers observed did review learners’ knowledge on the previous lesson before introducing the day’s lesson but most of the lessons observed did not conclude with any follow-up activities. The findings made contradict the assertion of Simonson and Maushak (2001) who assert that mediated instruction does contribute to desired attitudinal outcomes in learners, especially when the instruction is designed specifically to produce certain attitudes or attitude change. This professional practice exhibited by the teachers is against what Eshun (2015) described as the three most important qualities of Social Studies instruction. Which he indicated as the use of follow-up activities and open-ended questions; the use of realistic types of media devoid of contradictory cues; and the creation of an aroused state in the learner through emotional and intellectual involvement.

Item 14 of the document analysis guide sought to elicit information on teachers’ formative assessment practice in relation to the profile dimension of Social Studies. The various assessment items analysed proof that teachers frequently rely on verb that assesses knowledge and understanding in constructing assessment items. In fact there was no evidence to confirm that teachers’ assessment practices covers the attitudes and values dimensions. Questions that demanded learners to apply their knowledge were occasionally used as they appeared only in the end of term test items which were sourced from past external examination paper. In the classroom observation protocol, item 14 which reads *assessment tasks elicit higher order thinking skills of pupils? Are questions framed with verbs such as apply, analyse, synthesise, evaluate, determine,*

explain, conclude etc. this item was placed to ascertain if higher order thinking skills are assessed orally during lesson presentation. There was however no evidence gathered to ascertain if teachers assess learners' higher order thinking skills. During lesson, teachers only asked learners to explain their ideas when there is the need to clarify a point. Verbs which command higher order thinking skills were not used in questioning during lessons. The same question was posed in the document analysis guide to ascertain if Social Studies teachers' assessment practices cover higher order thinking skills of learners. Evidence gathered from learners work books and test items reveals that the assessment items used by teachers mainly measure lower order thinking skills of learners. Questions were mainly asked with action verbs such as state, mention, name, define; learner were occasionally asked to explain or describe a concept. It can be emphasized that learners with higher learning capabilities were not catered for as they were likely to find the test item too easy. Hence assessment items do not cater for individual differences. Meaningful assessment involves examining the learner's entire conceptual network, not just focusing on discreet facts and principles (Heritage, 2010). This calls for the use of problem solving task which ensure the assessment of the higher order thinking skills rather than assessment tasks that require mere recall of facts.

Item 16 of the classroom observation protocol which reads: *Teacher uses appropriate questioning techniques in the classroom.* Teachers were seen during lessons using questions and answers to introduce their lesson. Students were also called to tell the class what they have learnt after the lesson. This shows that interactive formative assessments promote learning outcomes.

Item 10 of the document analysis guide *reads assessment items will lead to the attainment of Social Studies goals and objectives*. The main goal of the Social Studies education is the development of effective citizens. Learners of Social Studies are required to exhibit some essential features of effective citizen such as patriotism, tolerance, diligence, critical thinking skills, interpersonal and intergroup skills, etc. It is not possible to determine whether students have gained the intended skills and values, when learners are assessed through a traditional assessment approach which is the major approach used by the educators in Municipality. It is therefore necessary to blend both traditional and authentic assessment tools since teachers are required to assess both the process and the product. Document analysis done revealed that Social Studies teachers rely mainly on traditional forms of assessment in assessing learning which makes it impossible to assess the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values needed for the development of effective citizens. Assessment and instruction work in tandem to facilitate inquiry and foster civic competence for authentic intellectual work in Social Studies (King, Newman, & Carmichael, 2009). Interview item 27 reads;

do you keep in mind the problem or issues being addressed in the Social Studies teaching syllabus as you assess any topic? If *yes* how do you get the problem addressed? If *no* what informs your assessment practices in Social Studies? Mr. Nick (not the real name) said *yes*, it is the best practice as Social Studies teacher to keep in mind the issue addressed by the topic as learners are assessed on the topic because that helps in focusing on the demands of the topic...I usually pose a question that elicits my students views or solutions to the problem or issue associated with the topic. Miss. King (not the real name) said that *it* is important to keep the problems or the issues

addressed by topic in mind when assessing your learners because Social Studies is a problem solving subject...I sometimes create opportunity during the lesson through questions to generate debates or discussions on the issue...through this students find solutions to such problems or share their views on such issues. Mr. Ras (not his real name) came out that ~~the~~ problem or the issue addressed by every topic is what is to be taught and assessed in the classroom...it is therefore very important to keep them in mind when assessing your learners...those problems addressed by the syllabus are mostly societal or can sometime be problems faced by the students themselves... I usually ask learners to suggest solution to such problems or to share concerns on the issue.

The findings supports what Quartey (1984) postulated Social Studies to be, as the study that equips the youth with tools necessary in solving personal and community related problems. To him, the main emphasis of Social Studies is on developing the relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable learners to make reflective decisions and act on them to solve both personal and societal problems. This implies that formative assessment practices of Social Studies teachers should lead learners to practice from the classroom how to solve their personal and societal problems.

4.4 How Social Studies Teachers Integrate Social Studies Goals and Objectives into their Formative Assessment Practices

To effectively assess learning in Social Studies, it is incumbent on Social Studies teachers to relate the rationale, general aims, and the instructional objectives of each lesson to appropriate and effective methods of formatively assessing student progress as well as their own teaching strategies (NCSS, 2010). The main focus of this section is to establish the extent to which teachers integrates the goals and objectives of Social Studies in their formative assessment practices. It looks at how teachers

incorporate the goals and objectives Social Studies in formative assessment practices during lessons (introduction and presentation) and after lesson presentations (evaluation, feedback and follow-up activities). The above theme was used in order to arrive at answers to the Research Question 3:

To what extent do Social Studies teachers integrate Social Studies goals and objectives into their formative assessment practices?

Some items were placed in the interview guide, classroom observation protocol and the document analysis guide to elicit teachers' views on the issue.

Observation protocol item 25 reads *does the teacher give immediate feedback to students?* Was observed that during lesson presentation, teachers gave immediate feedback to students. However, from the document analysis, it was observed from students' exercises and homework books that teachers hardly give written feedback to students except for judgmental purposes. Chappuis and Stiggins (2002) bemoaned that judgmental feedback such as well done, good, or great work and more not only holds less for value for improvement and student learning, but it also discourages students from learning. Interview item 10 reads *do you think it is important to clarify and share learning intentions with your learners? Why?* Mr. Ras (not the real name) said that *–clarifying and shearing learning intentions with learners are very important...it helps learners to focus on achieving them throughout lesson*". Miss. Anna (not the real name) came out that *–sharing and clarifying learning goals with learners is very important...it helps both teacher and learners to know at the end of the lesson if goals have been achieved*". With the observation checklist item which reads *teacher formulates clear learning goals and articulate them to students*. With this it was observed that sharing learning goals was a common practice among the

teachers observed except in the case of Mr. Bob and Mr. Bone who did not share learning outcomes with students. It was also observed that most of the assessment tasks given to learners did not align with the learning goals and objectives, teachers relied on textbook items and external past questions to assess learners after lessons. This implies that learning objectives on the affectionate domain and skills development are not assessed by teachers. Again, the practices of the teachers question the validity of the test items. The actions of the teachers reflect deficiency in assessment practices, what was observed was inconsistent with the effective ways of implementing formative assessment in the classrooms; as suggested by Wiliam and Thomson (2007). The interview guide item 18 reads *how vital is formative assessment to the achievement of Social Studies goals and objectives?* Mr. Bat (not the real name) came out that *“formative assessment is very vital to the goals and objectives of Social Studies because it is through formative assessment that lessons can be evaluated to see if the goals and objectives have been achieved.* Mr. Nick (not the real name) said *–one of the roles of formative assessment is to collect information about what learners already know and build on this knowledge to start the new lesson... this does help in achieving the goals and objectives because by this you will know the level of your learners are and where you are taking them to”.* This supports (Shepard, 2005) assertion that formative assessment collects and uses information about students’ knowledge and performance to close the gap between students’ current learning state and the desired state of pedagogical action. Researchers consider formative assessment and scaffolding as complementary concepts. Again in the formative assessment framework of Wiliam and Thomson (2007), these three questions are to be answered during instruction: where the learner is going? Where the learner is now? And How to get there? (Chemeli, 2019). By answering these questions educators are

challenged to focus their instruction on goals and objectives. The fundamental purpose of formative assessment in education is to establish and understand the points that students (either as individuals or groups) have reached in their learning at the time of assessment (Masters, 2015).

Interview item 19 reads *how will you integrate the goals and objectives of Social Studies in your formative assessment practices?* Mr. Bob (not the real name) said *–before I give my learners any test item or questions I first look at the general objectives of the topic which is in the syllabus ... this guides me to give my learners the appropriate questions that will help assess if the objectives have been achieved”.*

Mr. Nick (not the real name) said that *“every topic in the syllabus is designed to achieve one or more of the general objective of the subject...it’s been my practice to give the objectives of the topic to my learners whenever I start any new topic...this helps us to focus every activity on achieving these objectives.* Miss. Jane (not the real name) said *–it is not always easy to assess according the goals and objectives... how will you know that the lesson has brought changes in your learners attitude...changes in attitudes and development of values are not attain in a day’s lesson...besides WAEC will not set questions to assess change in attitudes and values...some of the general objectives cannot be assessed formatively...I incorporate the goals and objectives in assessment practices where I deem it appropriate.* Document analysis guide items 9&10 sought to analyze assessment items given to learners to see if they are based on specific learning objectives and that if the items will lead to the achievement of Social Studies goals and objectives. It was however discovered that assessment items used by teachers were not designed by them to assess learning based to the day’s lesson outcome. Items were directly picked from past external exams questions. In some schools visited, assessment items were printed in work books for

teachers to use. In effect, teachers are unable assess new skills that learners may have acquired during the lesson. Knowledge is not static, new information on concepts are discovered and information do change. Teachers will have to adjust instruction and assessment accordingly when such needs arise. In situations where teachers do not design assessment tool based on current information and practices will deprive the assessment of new learning outcomes. This notion and practices shared by teachers contradicts the assertion of Myers (2004) who asserts that sound assessment begins with the learner in mind. It determines what the learner needs to know and or do as a result of the learning; identify clear evidence of learning; and design instruction so that students will have opportunities to learn and demonstrate their learnings. The implication of such practices professed by the teachers are that learners will not have the opportunity to demonstrate their learning but rather demonstrate their performances in their final exams.

Item 15 of the interview guide which reads *how can you use classroom rewards through formative assessment to improve the achievement of Social Studies goals and objectives?* In responses Mr. Jack (not his real name) said *–classroom rewards improve learning and also achievement of learning goals through appropriate use of in formative assessment in the sense that it motivates learners and also helps the teacher to guide their learning towards the goals and objectives as the teacher take the learners through a series of assessments when learners participate in the teaching and learning process*”. Miss. Jane (not her real name) said” *formative assessment takes place throughout learning...it affords teachers to correct and rewards students’ works...desired work or behaviour is rewarded while undesired work or behaviour is corrected... through this students are likely to repeat that which was rewarded*”.

Document analysis guides item 8 reads; *rewards were used to show appreciation and*

encourage further student development revealed that teachers used comments such as *‘good’, ‘keep it up’, ‘excellent work’* etc. to reward students work. This implies that, Social Studies teachers can use consequences to motivate and monitor students’ progress towards the targeted learning outcomes as propounded by Skinner (1971) by arguing that through constant dialogue and use of feedback, the desired behavior can be achieved by learners. Skinner further argued that praises and rewards are means of providing incentives for achievement of smaller tasks and a motivator for higher tasks (Isaksen & Holth, 2009; Jones & Jones, 2013).

Interview item 18 which reads *are Social Studies teachers supposed to use application task in assessing learning? How often do your assessment tasks require application of Social Studies concepts?* Commenting on the use of application related tasks during assessment, Mr. Kapi (not the real name) said *“yes Social Studies need to used application task to assess learning...I always ensure that there are questions in my test item that require the application of Social Studies concepts.* Miss. Anna (not the real name) came out that *—due to time constraints, I don’t always use application questions... check their past external examination question papers and see how many of the questions are application questions... whatever I do in the classroom is meant to help the children pass their final exams... that is what matters the most”*. This suggests that, some teachers see the use of application-related questions in Social Studies as time consuming. Consequently, they only use them when they think they have enough time. The responds from teachers also implies that teachers teach and assess for external examination purposes and not for the achievement of the curriculum goals and objectives of the subject. Item 8 of the observation protocol which is *– were students asked to reflect and write or discuss how they can apply concept.* This item was placed in the observation protocol to find out if teachers

engage learners in activities that ensure the application of social studies concepts. However during the classroom observation learners were not engaged in any activity that require them to discuss or write how the concept learnt can be applied. This implies that teachers' perceptions and practices in relation to formative assessment are different. It is concluded that teachers know the right practices to enhance the learning of Social Studies but for some unknown reasons teachers refuse to do them. Central to formative assessment is the provision of quality feedback. Feedback consists of information that tells us how we are doing and what we need to do next, in the light of our intentions and goals. To this end, interview item 29 which reads *are Social Studies teachers supposed to give feedback to learners after each assessment? And why?* All the participants gave affirmative responds to this question. The teachers claimed they give written and verbal feedback to learners after each assessment. As to why they give feedback to learners, Miss. King (not her real name) said *when you give feedback to learners, it helps the learners to rectify their mistakes*". Mr. Nick (not the real name) also said *giving feedback to learners motivate them and also helps to avoid repetition of mistakes*". Mr. Ras (not his real name) said *feedbacks helps to guide learners towards the learning objectives...it helps the learners to know if they are progressing*". The responses of the teachers supports the views Myer (2004) who observed that the purpose of formative assessment is to provide teacher and student with feedback that can direct future teaching and learning. In the document analysis item 10 and 11 sought to probe into how teachers give feedback to learners. Item 10 reads *does the teacher give immediate feedback to students?* It was gathered from learners work books and marked test papers that teachers scarcely give feedback to learners. There were few written feedbacks in learners work books. To probe further into the kind of feedback given by teachers, Item 11 which reads *does*

the teacher provide feedback that is comprehensible, actionable and are relevant to learning objectives? Was posed. From the analysis, teachers who gave feedback to their learners did that for no other reason than to motivate them. The written feedback mostly given to learners include excellent, very good, well done, good, keep it up, poorwork and do it again which is contrary to the views of Myers (2004) who posited that feedback consists of information that tells us how we are doing and what we need to do next, in the light of our intentions and goals. According to Myers Feedback is not the same as praise and blame, rather it is precise information about where someone is in relation to the goals they are trying to attain and what they might do in the future to make progress towards those goals. A research synthesis by Marzano, Pickering and Pollock (2001) noted the following principles of quality feedback: First, feedback should be timely (the longer we wait the less effect it has on achievement). Feedback should be specific (criterion-referenced) and “corrective” in order to show what went well, what needs improvement, and how to improve (all three components needed for maximum achievement).

If the purpose of formative assessment is to provide teacher and student with feedback that can direct future teaching and learning then Social Studies teachers in the Nsawam Municipality need to beef up their formative assessment practices in order to achieve this purpose. In the Skinner’s theory of operant conditioning one of the factors that affect the effectiveness of reinforcement is the immediacy of reinforcement or the length of time between performance of the behavior and delivery of the reinforcer. According to skinner, the closer the reinforcement follows the behavior, the more effective it will be. Quick feedback from teachers on homework, assignments and tests promotes learning better than delayed feedback. Black and Wiliam (1998) conducted a review of 250 international journal articles, books, and

research to determine whether formative assessment raises academic standards in the classroom. Based on this research, they offer suggestions for improving formative assessment at all grade levels. "Feedback to any pupil should be about the particular qualities of his or her work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve, and should avoid comparisons with other pupils" (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 145). If teachers seem to have little or no interest in giving appropriate feedback to student they assess then per the assertion of skinner, the formative assessment malpractice of Social Studies practices may seem to be the reason for low performance of students and also the non-achievement of Social Studies goals and objectives. Chappuis and Stiggins (2002) lamented that judgmental feedback such as well done, good, or great work and more not only holds less for value for improvement and student learning, but it also discourages students from learning.

Item 10 of the observation checklist which is – *does the teacher engage learners in post-assessment discussion?* Shows that out of the 10 teachers observed in a classroom setting only two of the teachers engaged their learners' post-assessment discussion. Teacher observed were also interviewed for proper clarification interview item 30: *are Social Studies teachers supposed to engage learners in post-assessment discussion* was asked. The teachers' however affirmed that teachers must provide post-assessment discussion. Miss. King (not her real name) said *yes, I do it most of the time... It is good that you ask your learners if they had some difficulties doing their exercises so that you can give further explanations...after that you can tell them their strengths and weaknesses...there is limited time for all this...WASCE is just at the corner*". Mr. Bat (not his real name) stress that *it is good but I don't do it always ... the pressure to finish the syllabus and time constrain do not permit post assessment discussions to be held frequently*". The responses from teachers implies that, learners

are not engaged in post-assessment discussions. In the Framework of Formative assessment by Wiliam and Thomson (2007) which support the study, one of the five key formative assessment strategies is to engineer effective classroom discussions. According to Svinicki and McKeachie (2011) the primary method to bring about active learning is discussion. But the purpose of discussion is not just to have students discuss; but rather to provide practice and feedback for the kinds of thinking that are the goal of the course. McMurray (2007, p.49) states “meaningful discussion should be promoted in a manner to ensure that learning is occurring, beliefs are substantiated by evidence, and minority opinions are protected”. This implies that post assessment discussion can motivate students, especially when learners assess their peers or their own work, which is, allowing students to collaborate, reflect on, and synthesise their work. Interview item 23 reads: *is Social Studies supposed to be taught and assessed with the aim of developing affective skills? If yes what assessment techniques do you use to assess the affectionate domain?* Mr. Jack (not the real name) came out that “*Social Studies is the only subject that has the sole aim of inculcating positive attitudes and values in learners...if the affectionate domain is not assessed these important goals will not be achieved*”. Mr. Kapi (not his real name) came out that “*Social Studies is supposed to be taught and assessed with the aim of developing the affective skills because the development of the affective domain lies heart of Social Studies... but assessing attitudes and values are not easy to do. I most of the time use observation technique to assess these skills*”. All the teachers interviewed were of the view that Social Studies must be taught and assessed with the aim of developing effective skills but the teachers could not come out with the formative assessment techniques they use to assess these domain. Social Studies teachers seem to lack knowledge in formative assessment tools for assessing affective skills. The question

that immediately come to mind is; which Social Studies goals and objectives do teachers seek to achieve if their classroom assessment practices do not inform the achievement of these goals and objectives. Item 10 of the observation checklist reads *assessment task was essentially focused on attitudes and values; that is, affective skills development*. It was observed that most of the teachers were not assessing learners' affective skills. Assessment items covered mainly the cognitive domain; and were of the lower order domains: knowledge and comprehension. Teachers must not only be abreast with assessing the cognitive but must also be knowledgeable on how to assess attitude and values in learning. This supports Eshun and Mensah (2013b) that test items addressed in the end of term examination in Social Studies were mainly those measuring cognitive outcomes. To dive further into this issue, item 21 of the document analysis guide which reads *Items are designed extensively to assess affective skills development*. Evidence from test items and learners workbooks proves that teachers do not assess the development of positive skills and values. This findings support Bekoe et al. (2013) that due to hasty nature in formulating formative assessment and scoring, tutors rather laid emphasis on cognitive domain to the neglect of affective and psychomotor domains which are also of paramount importance. To ensure best formative assessment practices in Social Studies, instruction and assessment must lay emphasis not only on the cognitive domain but also the affective and the psychomotor domains. Teacher can direct students to respond in structured ways using action verbs connected to Bloom's Taxonomy of affectionate Objectives. Action verbs such as alter, defend, arrange, formulate, generalize, modify, defend, initiate, invite, propose, report, share, question etc. in designing assessment items to achieve the effects needed. Interview item 31 reads *are Social Studies learners supposed to use problem solving procedures in completing task?* Mr. Nick (not the

real name) said “*it all depend on the topic involve...if the need calls for I do it*”. Miss. Jane (not the real name) said “*I do it always ...it what Social Studies is about*”. Mr. Bone (not his real name) came out that “*it is not always... I usually give my learners such task when it project work*”. In the document analysis guide item 49 which is - *Assessment probes into critical reasoning, problem solving and decision making skills of learners*. All the documents analysed (learners work books and test items) did not have items to proof that teachers assessment practices probe into learners problem solving skills. Although Social Studies has been described by scholars as problem solving subject and contemporary theories have also provided a base for teaching and assessing for critical thinking many Social Studies teachers still teach and assess it as any other subject which have resulted in producing students who are ill-equipped to problem-solving skills. This may be due to a variety of factors including; how teachers interpret critical thinking (Jones, interviewed to gather more information on the issue. 2004), their feeling of self-efficacy to support students to develop problem self-efficacy regarding their critical thinking abilities (Zimmerman, 2000; Caliskan, 2010), teachers’ inadequate information-searching skills (Laxman, 2010), and teachers’ preference for more behaviourist than constructivist approaches to teaching (Eshun, 2015). These calls for the need to re-training and re-equip teachers to teach and assess learning using the problem solving approach. Quashigah, Eshun and Mensah’s (2013, p.84) assertion that the pedagogical content knowledge of Social Studies teachers do influence the way they assess their lessons. The implication from this result is that respondents were not concerned with or are incapable to inculcate into the students the right knowledge, values, attitudes and skills which is the ultimate goal of Social Studies. Item 3 of the observation protocol reads *assessment tasks were technically stimulating with problem solving approach*. Teachers were not observed

using verbal or written assessment which were stimulated with problem solving approach.

4.5 Chapter Summary

The results and discussions of the study were done in line with the themes arrived at during the data collection. The themes were related to the research questions guided the study and interpreted on the number of issues raised by respondents. There was no significant relationship between social studies teachers' formative assessment practices and the goals and objectives of the subject. Social studies teachers lack requisite knowledge and skills in current formative assessment techniques.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of the study, the conclusions drawn from the findings of the study and recommendations made from the conclusions of the study.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the status quo regarding the formative assessment practices and the goals and objectives of Social Studied in selected schools of the Nsawam Municipality. It was specifically to find out how effective formative assessment practices can influence the achievement of Social Studies goals and objectives. It described the state of formative assessment practices in selected schools in the Nsawam Municipality. It also assessed the ability of Social Studies teacher in designing quality formative assessment tools to synchronize the goals and objectives of Social Studies. It further explored the best practices in the use of Social Studies goals and objectives in formative assessment.

The study was a qualitative approach that employed the exploratory research design. Three instruments namely interview guide, observation protocol and document analysis guide were used to gather primary information from the respondents. The population of the study included Junior and Senior High School teachers from the Nsawam Municipality. A sample of 10 teachers was involved in the study. They were selected through non-probability sampling methods (purposive and convenience sampling techniques).

Data was analysed by thematic procedure based on the themes arrived at during the data collection. The themes were related to the research questions and interpreted on the number of issues raised by respondents.

5.2 Key Findings

The research revealed that some social studies teachers in the study area had no professional training in teaching Social Studies, and were therefore not professionally qualified to teach the subject. Again the study also establishes that teachers see in-service training to be crucial for their professional development but its attendance is not adequately enforced by the educational authorities in the Municipality.

The study also establishes that there are teachers teaching Social Studies who do not have knowledge about the goals and objectives of the subject. It also revealed that Social Studies teachers assess their learners for external examination purposes and not to achieve the goals and objectives of the subject.

Formative assessment is an essential component in achieving the goals and objectives of Social Studies but in this study formative assessment as a tool for achieving these goals and objectives was limited however, Social Studies teachers lack knowledge in alternative formative assessment tools. Hence it was revealed that teachers did not use any other assessment approach other than traditional assessment in assessing learning. Teachers' therefore had very limited ways and methods of assessing their students. This finding is inline Stiggins (2002) postulation that teachers rarely have the opportunity to learn how to use formative assessment as a teaching and learning tool and for that matter hardly use it when teaching.

The present study observed that no teacher practiced self-assessment and very few teachers among the observed classes practiced peer assessment in classroom. Similarly, other researcher found that self and peer assessment practice was absent (Bekoe, Eshun, Bordoh, 2013).

This study explored that teachers mainly assessed students' lower order learning through multiple choice and essay questions. Very few teachers asked questions which demanded higher order learning. Similarly, other researchers examined that students' higher order learning was almost ignored or rarely focused by the teachers through classroom questioning (Rahman & Ahmed, 2010).

This study shows that questions posed by teachers in classroom assessment directly and/or indirectly encourages students in rote learning or memorization because teachers asked all questions from textbooks or past external examination questions or simply knowledge based especially multiple choice questions. Here, there is a great chance for students to reply any questions through memorization as well as students do not have opportunity to be engaged in self-thinking or applying their learned knowledge in a concrete and new situation, nor do they have opportunities to develop higher order learning skill. There is a need to formulate deep learning through the classroom assessment of students. The questions or tasks should have been designed in such a way so that students can use prior and factual knowledge in solving a problem or carrying out a process, but cannot apply directly on their ability to recall the information (Crooks, 1988).

Findings from this research pointed out that most of the teachers didn't encouraged students to talk and share ideas about Social Studies concepts in the classroom. This study found that students only replied the asked questions to them. The particular

features of the talk between teacher and students are the asking of questions by the teacher; this natural and direct way of checking on learning is often un-productive (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Feedback is one of the most important factors for the students understanding of any subject matter and sustainable learning (Crooks, 1988). Classroom feedback can be provided in many forms. According to Stiggins (1991) teachers mostly use some forms of feedback, such as, verbal communication, nonverbal communication, written comments, performance ratings and test score. The study found that teachers mainly provide oral feedback. Teachers ignored written form of feedback, those perceived by teachers to be written feedback were merely comments (excellent, very good, keep up, poor, etc.) to motivate or demotivate students. Again the study explored that teachers mainly provided evaluative feedback to students. Feedback is most effective when it points out strengths in the work as well as areas need to improve (Stiggins, *et al.*, 2009). Chappuis and Stiggins (2002) also reported that teacher comment that focus on students work could increase students' motivation and desire to learn. In this study most teachers did not provide written feedback after assessment. Feedback should be timely, goal oriented, task oriented and precise. It explores the existing learning in details as well as informs students the ways to achieve goals by fostering learning stage (Ahmed et. al, 2015). Feedback should be about the particular qualities of students work, with advice what they can do to improve, and should avoid comparisons with others (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings the following conclusions are drawn:

Effective formative assessment practices entails the collaborative efforts of teachers, students and peers. Collaboration between the teacher and fellow students to develop a shared knowledge about their current learning status and what they need to do to progress in their learning will builds metacognitive skills, which students need to monitor their learning and determine when they need assistance .

Social studies teachers in the Nsawam Municipality exhibit adequate knowledge in current formative assessment techniques but they do not put their knowledge into practice. This implies that, teachers know what they ought to do, but they fail to do so. There should be stringent monitoring tools and supervision to ensure effective assessment practices in the classroom.

Alternative formative assessment mostly assesses higher order thinking skills. Thus, students have the opportunity to demonstrate what they learned by engaging in hands-on activities. This is done through the application of their acquired knowledge and skills. However, teachers did not use authentic formative assessment tools. Making good use of authentic formative assessment tools in assessing Social Studies students helps them to apply knowledge which is paramount to social studies education.

Although the formative assessment practices of social studies teachers do not conform to the current thinking of assessment and have minimum impact on achieving the goals and objective of the subject, teachers do agreed that formative assessments promote learning outcomes through questioning, dialogue and descriptive feedback.

Formative assessment plays a major role in achieving the objective of a lesson and it progressively leads to the achievement of the overall goals and objectives of the said subject. Formative assessment is those activities that are used to improve student learning, shows the efficacy of teachers' classroom instructions, and consequently justify the inclusion of a subject in the curriculum.

5.4 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

It is recommended that teachers should use constant dialogue, descriptive feedbacks, praises and rewards as a means to guide and motivate learners for higher tasks towards the achievements of social studies goals and objectives.

Students learn better through interaction with other students and their teacher, students suffer when there is lack of interaction in class. It is also recommended that teachers should incorporate peer assessments and other forms of the alternative assessment to improve the achievement of social studies goals and objectives.

Head teachers and subject heads should be trained to moderate assessment items, conduct regular needs assessment and provide adequate support to ensure that teachers comply to appropriate formative assessment standards.

Engineering effective classroom discussions, questions, activities, and tasks that elicit evidence of students' learning help in collecting the right evidence about the extent of students' progress toward learning goals. Hence I recommend that teachers should plan ahead before lessons the tasks, activities, and questions that can be used with their students to elicit the right kind of evidence of students' learning.

The universities and other training institutions should strengthen the teaching of the use of the assessment techniques for the entire domain. In-service training courses

should also be organised regularly for social studies teachers on the use of formative as Social Studies teachers should be sensitised to understand the reasons underpinning the subject introduction in Ghana.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

This study is not exhaustive. It is recommended that this study should be replicated in other areas of the country to find out if the findings of the study persist in those areas.

It is further recommended that a study should be conducted to ascertain if the study of Social Studies have had positive influence on the Ghanaian youth.



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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

P.O. Box 25, Winneba, Ghana

socialstudies@uew.edu.gh

+233 (020) 2041096

3rd February, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: GRACE BAABA IDUN

We write to introduce Mrs Grace Baaba Idun to your outfit. She is a Master of Philosophy Social Studies student with registration number 8180140008 from the above-named Department.

As part of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy in Social Studies Education, she is undertaking a research on "*Exploring formative assessment and the goals and objectives of Social Studies in the Nsawam Municipality.*"

We wish to assure you that any information provided would be treated confidential.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Margaret Nyala'.

Mrs Margaret Gantier Nyala
For: Ag. Head of Department

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

EXPLORING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES AND THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE NSAWAM MUNICIPALITY

This interview is intended to collect data on the above topic as part of the data required for completing a thesis for the award of a Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) degree in Social Studies Education by the University of Education, Winneba. You are therefore kindly requested to respond to the items as frankly as possible. The information you give will be used only for the purpose of this study. I pledge to honour confidentiality and anonymity.

Thank you for your expected co-operation and support to make this study meaningful and successful.

1. What professional qualifications do you have?
2. How long have you been teaching social studies?
3. Have you been attending in-service courses in assessment practices? If yes how many of these courses have you attended?
4. How do you conceptualise social studies in terms of meaning and content?
5. What do you think is the ultimate goal of Social Studies?
6. Do you know Social Studies curriculum objectives? If YES, clearly specify at least two of such objectives? If NO, give reasons for your answer.
7. Do you think it is important to clarify and share learning intentions with your learners? Why?
8. What are the profile dimensions in social studies? Which of the profile dimensions do you consider most when assessing learning?
9. What is formative assessment and why is it important?
10. How often do you assess your learners?
11. How do you differentiate traditional assessment from authentic assessment? And which of the two do you usually use in assessing your learners.
12. How do you understand self-assessment? Why is it important in achieving social studies goals and objectives?
13. How do you understand peer-assessment and why is it important in achieving social studies goals and objectives?
14. How do you understand portfolio assessments and why is it important in achieving social studies goals and objectives?
15. How do you understand scaffolds assessments and why is it important in achieving social studies goals and objectives?
16. How do you understand play-based assessment and why is it important in achieving social studies goals and objectives?
17. How do you understand interactive formative assessment and why is it important in achieving social studies goals and objectives?
18. Are social studies teachers supposed to use application task in assessing learning? How often do your assessment tasks require application of social studies concepts?

19. How can you use classroom rewards through formative assessment to improve the achievement of social studies goals and objectives?
20. Which formative assessment tools do you mostly use to assess learning and why do you use it?
21. How can you use formative assessment to achievement the goals and objectives of social studies?
22. What learning domain do you usually assess and why?
23. Is social studies supposed to be taught and assessed with the aim of developing affective skills? If yes what assessment technique do you use to assess the affectionate domain?
24. What nature of difficulty do you have in assess social studies goals and objectives?
25. How vital is formative assessment to the achievement of social studies goals and objectives?
26. How will you integrate the goals and objectives of social studies in your formative assessment practices?
27. How do you create opportunities for learners to use problem solving skills to solve problems in the school or their community?
28. What will happen if learner are not assess based on the goals and objectives of the subject?
29. Are social studies teachers supposed to give feedback to learners after each assessment? And why?
30. Are social studies teachers supposed to engage learner in post-assessment discussion and why?
31. Are social studies learners supposed to use problem solving procedures in completing task?
32. Must Social Studies teacher assess learners based on their capability to model and reinforce desired behaviors? Give reasons for your answer.
33. Should Social Studies teacher use follow-up activities that have definite implications for behaviour and why?
34. Do you keep in mind the problem or issues being addressed in the Social Studies teaching syllabus as you assess any topic? If yes how do you get the problem addressed? If no what informs your assessment practices in Social Studies?
35. Do you think the purpose for which social studies was introduced in schools are being realised? Give reasons for your response.
36. Do you design assessment items for your learners? If yes, what factors do you consider when designing assessment items?

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

EXPLORING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES AND THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE NSAWAM MUNICIPALITY

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL ON TEACHERS FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

This classroom observation is intended to collect data on the above topic as part of the data required for completing a thesis for the award of a Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) degree in Social Studies Education by the University of Education, Winneba. It is therefore purely for academic work. I pledge to honour confidentiality and anonymity and that the information gathered here will only be used for the purpose of this study. Thank you for your anticipated co-operation and assistance to make this study a successful one.

Class:

Topic of lesson to be observed:

Time of observation: Start..... End.....

Section A: What the teacher Assesses

| statement | Yes | No | Not observed | Comment |
|---|-----|----|--------------|---------|
| 1. Teacher formulates clear learning goals and articulate them to students. | | | | |
| 2. Assessment tasks align with learning goals and objectives. | | | | |
| 3. Assessment tasks were technically stimulating with problem solving approach. | | | | |
| 4. Does the teacher engage learners in peer- assessment? | | | | |
| 5. Teacher engage learners in portfolio assessment. | | | | |
| 6. Teacher engage learners in scaffolds assessment. | | | | |
| 7. Teacher engage learners in self-assessment | | | | |
| 8. Students were asked to reflect and write or discuss how they can apply concept. | | | | |
| 9. Assessment uncovers students' ideas on social studies concepts. | | | | |
| 10. Questions lead to meaningful classroom discussions. | | | | |
| 11. Assessment tasks elicit higher order thinking skills of pupils? Questions are framed with verbs such as apply, analyse, synthesise, evaluate, | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| determine, explain, conclude etc. | | | | |
| 12. Assessment task(s) require(s) application of social studies concepts. | | | | |

Section B: How the teacher integrate social studies objectives in their assessment practices

| Statement | Yes | No | Not observed | Comment |
|--|-----|----|--------------|---------|
| 9 Learning objectives relates to the general social studies goals and objectives. | | | | |
| 10 Assessment task was essentially focused on attitudes and values; that is, affective skills development. | | | | |
| 11 Assessment items are relevant to real life themes | | | | |
| 12 Assessment items are based on learning outcomes prescribed for a given course or unit of work. | | | | |
| 13 Assessment items are based on the profile dimensions of the subject | | | | |
| 14 Activities relates appropriately to a clear learning goals and objectives. | | | | |

Section C: The teacher's capability in designing and using quality formative assessment tools

| Statement | Yes | No | Not observed | Comment |
|--|-----|----|--------------|---------|
| 15 Teacher uses a variety of assessment tools in teaching. | | | | |
| 16 Teacher uses appropriate questioning techniques in the classroom. | | | | |
| 17 Items are designed to cover all the domains of the learner | | | | |
| 18 Items cater for different learning capabilities | | | | |
| 19 Items elicit learning challenges | | | | |
| 20 Items are designed using diverse techniques based on purpose | | | | |
| 21 Assessment items probe students' reasoning | | | | |
| 22 Items are structured to elicit the type of behavior it want to measure | | | | |
| 23 Does the teacher give immediate feedback to students? | | | | |
| 24 Does the teacher provide feedback that is comprehensible, actionable and are relevant to learning objectives? | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|
| 25 | Discussions took place with students whose completed task did not meet expected standards | | | | |
| 26 | Rewards were used to show appreciation and encourage further student development | | | | |
| 27 | Items are carefully worded to give precise interpretation | | | | |
| 28 | Teacher designs and uses multiple assessment tools to assess | | | | |

Section D: formative assessment practices in social studies

| Statement | Yes | No | No observed | Comment |
|--|-----|----|-------------|---------|
| 29 Teacher's formative Assessment practices focused on how to solve problems or dealing with the affective skills development and what do you want your Social Studies pupils to achieve after teaching? | | | | |
| 30 Assessment tasks elicit students understanding on democratic values | | | | |
| 31 35 Assessment lead to meaningful debates and consensus building. | | | | |
| 32 Questions were asked to elicit students feeling about the concept learnt. | | | | |
| 33 Does the teacher engage learners in post-assessment discussion? | | | | |
| 34 Assessment tasks challenge learners to probe into social issues. | | | | |
| 35 Assessment probes into critical reasoning, problem solving and decision making skills. | | | | |
| 36 Assessment items | | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| require students to think deeply about important issues. | | | | |
| 37 Teacher assesses pupils in groups | | | | |
| 38 Assessment task elicits students to write their thoughts about certain topics or stories. | | | | |
| 39 Learners were asked to research and present their findings on a topic or important social issues. | | | | |
| 40 Learners were asked apply concept by means of demonstration, role play or dramatization. | | | | |



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES AND THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE NSAWAM MUNICIPALITY

This document analysis is intended to collect data on the above topic as part of the data required for completing a thesis for the award of a Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) degree in Social Studies Education by the University of Education, Winneba. It is therefore purely for academic work. I pledge to honour confidentiality and anonymity and that the information gathered here will only be used for the purpose of this study. Thank you for your anticipated co- operation and assistance to make this study a successful one.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

Kind of document.....

Date.....

| Statement | Yes | No | Not seen | Comment |
|--|------------|-----------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Items cater for different learning capabilities. | | | | |
| 2. Teacher designs and uses multiple assessment tools to assess learners. | | | | |
| 3. Assessment items conform to the profile dimensions of the subject | | | | |
| 4. Assessment tasks elicit higher order thinking skills of pupils? Are questions framed with verbs such as apply, analyse, synthesise, evaluate, determine, explain, | | | | |
| 5. Learners are assessed frequently. | | | | |
| 6. Does the teacher give immediate feedback to students? | | | | |
| 7. Does the teacher provide feedback that is comprehensible, actionable and are relevant to learning objectives? | | | | |
| 8. Rewards were used to show appreciation and encourage further student development | | | | |

Section C: How the teacher integrate social studies objectives in their assessment practices

| Statement | Yes | No | Not observed | Comment |
|--|-----|----|--------------|---------|
| 9. Assessment items are based on specific learning objectives. | | | | |
| 10. Assessment items will lead to the attainment of social studies goals and objectives. | | | | |
| 11. Assessment items are relevant to real life themes | | | | |
| 12. Assessment items are based on learning outcomes prescribed for a given course or unit of work. | | | | |
| 13. Questions were asked to elicit students feeling about the concept learnt. | | | | |
| 14. Assessment tasks elicit students understanding on democratic values | | | | |
| 15. Items are designed extensively to assess affective skills development. | | | | |
| 16. Assessment probes into critical reasoning, problem solving and decision making skills. | | | | |

Section D: formative assessment practices in social studies

| Statement | Yes | No | No observed | Comment |
|--|-----|----|-------------|---------|
| 41 Assessment tasks elicit students understanding on democratic values | | | | |
| 42 35 Assessment lead to meaningful debates and consensus building. | | | | |
| 43 Questions were asked to elicit students feeling about the concept learnt. | | | | |
| 44 Assessment tasks challenge learners to probe into social issues. | | | | |
| 45 Assessment probes into critical reasoning, problem solving and decision making skills. | | | | |
| 46 Assessment items require students to think deeply about important issues. | | | | |
| 47 Teacher assesses pupils in groups | | | | |
| 48 Assessment task elicits students to write their thoughts about certain topics or stories. | | | | |
| 49 Learners were asked to research and present their findings on a topic or important social issues. | | | | |
| 50 Learners were asked apply concept by means of demonstration, role play or dramatization. | | | | |