UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

EXAMINE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2010 GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS: A CASE OF ELLEMBELLE DISTRICT

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EXAMINE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2010 GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS: A CASE OF ELLEMBELLE DISTRICT

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, SUSANNA KANGAH, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all 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 work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

SUPERVISOR**: Prof. Mrs. Esther Yeboah Danso-Wiredu**

SIGNATURE: …… DATE:

……

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my husband, father, siblings and all my family members.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CIPP	Context, Input, Process & Product Model
GES	Ghana Education Service
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GPS	Global Position System
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
MoE	Ministry of Education
NaCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NPECF	National Pre-Tertiary Curriculum Framework
PGDE	Postgraduate Diploma in Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SBA	School Based Assessment
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHS	Senior High School
TPACK	Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge
T-TEL	Transforming Teacher Education and Learning
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WAEC	West African Examination Council
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination

ABSTRACT

This study examined the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum in selected Senior High Schools within the Ellembelle District, Western Region, Ghana. Using a qualitative approach, eight Geography teachers were purposively sampled from Bonzo-Kaku Senior High, Uthman Bin Afam Senior High, Nkroful Agricultural Senior High, and Esiama Senior High/Tech School. Data were collected through interviews and observations, which were then thematically analyzed. The study adapted the CIPP Model developed by Stufflebeam in the (1971) as a comprehensive framework for programme evaluation. This model contributed to the study by providing a structured and flexible framework for systematically analysing the contextual conditions, resource inputs, and implementation processes influencing the effectiveness of the 2010 Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District. Findings revealed gaps in adherence to Geography curriculum, identifying challenges in the process of implementing the 2010 Geography curriculum. Practical components of the subject such as fieldwork were rarely conducted due to financial and logistical constraints. Teaching and learning methods significantly influenced curriculum implementation, with most teachers relying on teacher-centered approaches despite some incorporating interactive strategies. Major challenges included insufficient instructional time, limited number of qualified teachers and professional development, inadequate teaching resources, and poor administrative support. The study recommends strict adherence to curriculum through standardised time allocation, recruiting qualified Geography teachers and ensuring accessibility of professional development programmes, and resource procurement policies to support practical learning and enhancing teaching strategies and student engagement.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Education is widely recognized as a powerful tool for national development which equip learners with the skills, knowledge, and values required for social progress and economic transformation (UNESCO, 2023). In this context, Geography education plays a particularly important role, as it fosters spatial awareness, critical thinking, environmental literacy, and problem-solving skills necessary for addressing pressing challenges such as climate change, resource management, and sustainable urban development (Dixit & Dixit, 2024; Carow, 2024). Globally, Geography curricula have increasingly shifted toward competency-based approaches that emphasize enquiry-based learning, ICT integration, and sustainability education (Clayton, et al., 2024).

Geography education in the senior high schools has come along with its challenges and advantages. Geography has been an elective subject in the Senior High Schools (SHS) in Ghana. The 2010 SHS Geography Syllabus has been structured and organized into three main sections. The syllabus was structured into three main components: Physical Geography, Human and Regional Geography, and Practical Geography.

Despite its comprehensive design, evidence suggests that implementation of the 2010 syllabus has faced persistent challenges. Studies indicate that Ghanaian Geography teachers often rely on teacher-centered methods, emphasized on rote memorization to prepare students for high-stakes examinations rather than promoting enquiry and critical thinking (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020; Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023). However, the limited teacher preparedness, inadequate teaching and learning materials, weak integration of ICT, and insufficient support for fieldwork have further hindered effective delivery of the subject (Mensah, et al., 2021; Ntumi et al., 2023).

The Ellembelle District presents unique socio-economic and cultural conditions that significantly affect curriculum implementation. The district, primarily rural, relies heavily on agriculture, small-scale mining, and fishing as economic drivers, which often compete with students' education time (GSS, 2010). Additionally, cultural expectations, such as early family responsibilities, can reduce students' participation in school-based learning. These socio-economic challenges contribute to disparities in educational achievement and may exacerbate difficulties in implementing subjects like Geography, which require hands-on learning resources and teacher expertise.

Teachers are at the heart of curriculum implementation, and their preparation plays a critical role in determining outcomes (Ntumi et al., 2023). Research highlights that while the 2010 Geography syllabus demands a combination of theoretical and practical teaching approaches, many educators in rural areas lack adequate training and resources (Amoako, 2010). In-service training and ongoing professional development opportunities for Geography teachers have been sporadic, leaving gaps in pedagogical knowledge and practical skills delivery. Moreover, the lack of specialised training often forces general subject teachers to teach Geography without the requisite competencies, impacting student understanding and performance. This underscores the need for targeted teacher development programmes to strengthen implementation.

Stakeholders, including parents, local education authorities, and community leaders, equally play an essential role in curriculum implementation. However, in districts like Ellembelle, limited stakeholder engagement has hampered efforts to address challenges such as infrastructure deficits, resource constraints, and supervision. For instance, many senior high schools in the district lack basic teaching and learning materials like Geography textbooks, maps, and tools for practical exercises. Furthermore, the absence of robust community partnerships has weakened local advocacy for quality education

delivery (Cobbold, 2017). Building stronger relationships among stakeholders is necessary to enhance resource mobilisation and support for Geography education.

The issue of monitoring and evaluation is also central to the implementation of the Geography curriculum. While Ghana's education system has established structures for supervision and assessment, studies suggest these frameworks are often inadequately applied, particularly in rural areas (Hopkins, 2013). The lack of systematic monitoring leads to implementation gaps, with teachers and schools receiving minimal feedback on their adherence to curriculum standards. In the case of Geography, this problem is further compounded by the disconnect between theory and practice, as reported by annual WAEC Chief Examiners' Reports. Effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks are therefore necessary to identify implementation deficiencies and offer actionable solutions.

Rural education systems like those in the Ellembelle District face persistent challenges, including poor infrastructure, limited instructional materials, and resource constraints (Kaur et al., 2023). Geography, as a discipline, requires maps, charts, and fieldwork equipment, which are often unavailable in under-resourced schools. Consequently, students' performance in Geography has remained consistently low compared to other elective subjects (Amoako, 2010). The recurring nature of this issue highlights a critical need for sustainable investment in educational resources, improved teacher preparation, and a holistic monitoring approach to address disparities in curriculum implementation.

The final destination of any curriculum is the classroom where teachers and students translate plans and intentions into activities and actions. Implementing the curriculum is therefore the most crucial and sometimes the most difficult phase of the educational change process. Inability to manage the difficulty often results in implementation failure, which has been a characteristic of most innovations and reforms in education

(Cobbold, 2017).

In summary, the implementation of the 2010 Geography Curriculum in Ghana, particularly in rural districts like Ellembelle, reflects the complex interplay of policy, socio-economic factors, teacher preparation, and stakeholder involvement. Examining the curriculum's implementation will provide insights into the challenges and opportunities for improvement. By focusing on local realities, this study seeks to bridge the gap between policy intentions and classroom practice, ensuring that Geography education fulfills its intended role in shaping knowledgeable, productive citizens.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Curriculum reform in Ghana has long been pursued as a strategy to improve the quality and relevance of education. The 2010 Senior High School (SHS) Geography curriculum was introduced to modernize the teaching and learning of Geography, emphasizing physical, human, and practical components to prepare learners for both higher education and national development needs (Ababio & Dumba, 2013). While the syllabus was ambitious in scope, evidence suggests that its implementation fell short of its intended objectives, thereby raising concerns about its effectiveness (Akyeampong, 2017; West African Examinations Council [WAEC], 2019; NaCCA, 2024).

The problem facing the different levels of educational system is not the formulation of curriculum policy but the implementation process (Ode & Awhen, 2015). Curriculum evaluation is intended to examine the level of achievement of educational goals that needs to be realised through curriculum implementation, the success and level of achievement of the curriculum can be made known through evaluation, again evaluation and feedback are used to monitor and align teaching and learning quality with national objectives (Ifarajimi, 2023).

One of the most widely acknowledged challenges is the syllabus's content-heavy

orientation. Studies reveal that the curriculum emphasized factual recall at the expense of higher-order thinking, inquiry, and problem-solving, leading to an overemphasis on rote memorization rather than conceptual understanding (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020).

Empirical evidence shows that SHS Geography teachers in Ghana demonstrated relatively low technological knowledge compared to their pedagogical and content knowledge, resulting in minimal ICT use in classrooms (Mensah, et al., 2021). Another significant weakness was the syllabus's weak practical orientation. While practical Geography was a core component, implementation of fieldwork and experiential learning was often undermined by financial constraints, lack of logistics, and inadequate institutional support. As a result, many students completed SHS without meaningful exposure to hands-on geographical investigation, undermining the syllabus's intent to develop applied skills (Anlimachie, 2019).

Furthermore, there was a mismatch between curriculum goals and assessment practices. As an academic discipline, Geography is regarded by many scholars as crucial to the success in other disciplines through its role as springboard to every other subject in the sciences and humanities (Baerwald, 2010). Geography unearths the innate potentials of human beings and offers people a lot of opportunities to learn useful life skills and to understand the world and the processes that occur in it at different spatial and social scales (Gaite, 2011). Up to the contemporary time, Geography continues to occupy a unique place in the curricula of young people's education (Baerwald, 2010).

Although the syllabus emphasized critical thinking and practical skills, national examinations such as the WASSCE remained dominated by questions that rewarded rote memorization (Anamuah-Mensah, 2016; West African Examinations Council [WAEC], 2019). This disconnect created what Gouëdard, et al. (2020) describe as an "overambitious curriculum" problem, whereby stated aims were not reflected in

assessment systems, forcing teachers to adopt exam-driven methods rather than innovative pedagogies (Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023). A study by Anlimachie (2019) indicates that Geography students' performance in the annual WASSCE results as compare with other elective subjects such as Economics and Government is very low, and the 2018 WAEC Chief Examiners' report indicated that there was a decline in the performance of Geography candidates and the 2017 Resume of the chief examiners report for the humanities subjects section indicates that Geography candidates had difficulty in answering simple questions relating to their subject areas. This shows that the implementation of the 2010 curriculum might be facing some challenges which is affecting the learning outcomes of the Geography subject. Effective curriculum change and implementation demand sufficient time allocation, personal interaction, in-service training, and strong people-based support (Kaur et al., 2023).

The Ellembelle District provides valuable context for examining curriculum implementation because it represents a predominantly rural educational environment with unique socio-economic characteristics. The district's economy largely depends on agriculture, fishing, and small-scale mining, and many communities experience limited access to educational resources and infrastructure, which may affect student participation, availability of instructional materials, and teachers' ability to implement practical and field-based components of the Geography curriculum (GSS, 2010). Since Geography requires practical learning experiences such as fieldwork, map interpretation, spatial analysis, and the use of geospatial technologies, these approaches may be difficult to implement in resource-constrained rural schools. Therefore, studying the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District provides important insights into how contextual factors influence curriculum delivery and how national education policies function within rural school settings.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum in Senior High Schools (SHSs) in Ellembelle District.

1.3 Research Objectives

The following objectives were formulated to:

1. Explore Geography teachers' views on the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus in Ellembelle District.
2. Examine the teaching and learning methods employed by SHS Geography teachers in the Ellembelle District.
3. Examine the challenges that affect the successful implementation of the 2010 Geography SHS Curriculum in the Ellembelle District.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are Geography teachers' views on the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus in the Ellembelle District?
2. What teaching and learning methods do SHS Geography teachers employ in the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum?
3. What challenges affect the successful implementation of the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District?

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

This study is delimited to evaluating the implementation of the 2010 Geography Curriculum or syllabus for some selected Senior High Schools in the Ellembelle District since it is impossible to include all Senior High schools in Ghana.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study would help inform curriculum planners, Geography teachers, and decision-makers on the characteristics of the implementation process of the 2010 curriculum in

respect to Geography teaching and learning. This particular study would inform all stakeholders on how the Geography curriculum is being implemented in the study area. For policymakers, the findings would provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of current policies governing Geography education, identifying areas that require improvement. This study would guide policymakers in making evidence-based decisions regarding resource allocation, teacher training programmes, and curriculum revisions to enhance learning outcomes.

For school administrators and educational authorities, the study would highlight the specific challenges and successes in implementing the curriculum, enabling them to develop strategies to support teachers and students better. It would also serve as a reference for improving teaching methodologies and integrating modern instructional tools like ICT and GIS into Geography lessons.

For Geography teachers, the study would offer practical feedback on their teaching approaches and resource utilisation, helping them refine their instructional methods to meet curriculum goals effectively. Additionally, parents and community stakeholders would benefit from understanding the strengths and gaps in the Geography education system, allowing for greater collaboration in supporting student learning.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

Chapter One discussed background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, delimitation, purpose of the study and significance of the study. Chapter Two deals with review of related literature based on issues. Chapter Three describes the methodology applied in conducting the study. Chapter Four comprise presentation of the results and discussion of findings. Chapter Five deals with the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the related literature pertaining to the study. Every research relies on information, which is acquired from variety of sources, and it is very useful to review literature on the issues researchers intend to investigate (Kuranchie, 2016). The CIPP Model is discussed with relevant literature reviewed under these sub-headings; Meaning of Curriculum; Implementation of Curricula and Programmes; Geography Teaching Approaches; Challenges affecting Geography education in Ghana; the 2010 Geography Syllabus; Concept of Teaching; Concept of learning; The importance of Geography education; Conceptual framework and the Conclusion.

2.1 The CIPP Model

The Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) model developed by Stufflebeam (1971) and later refined by Stufflebeam and Coryn (2023) provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating educational programmes and curriculum implementation. The model is structured around four interrelated dimensions: context, input, process, and product. However, although the CIPP model traditionally incorporates all four components, this study deliberately employed only three dimensions, Context, Input, and Process, because the research focus was on curriculum implementation rather than outcome measurement. The Product dimension, which typically examines measurable learning outcomes and programme impact, was not directly assessed, as the study did not include quantitative performance data or longitudinal achievement analysis. The selective application of the CIPP model is methodologically acceptable, as evaluation frameworks may be adapted to align with the specific objectives and scope of a study (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2023).

Context evaluation focuses on identifying the needs, problems, opportunities, and environmental conditions within which a programme operates. This component helps decision-makers determine whether the objectives of the curriculum are responsive to the educational context.

Input evaluation assesses the strategies, resources, and capabilities available for achieving curriculum objectives. The purpose of input evaluation is to determine whether adequate resources and appropriate plans are in place to support effective implementation.

Process evaluation examines the actual implementation of the curriculum. This component helps identify strengths, weaknesses, and challenges encountered during curriculum delivery, thereby providing feedback for improvement.

Product evaluation assesses the outcomes and results of the programme. Product evaluation determines the extent to which the intended goals of the curriculum have been achieved.

2.2 Operationalisation of the CIPP Model in this Study

The Context dimension of the CIPP model examines the environment within which a programme operates by identifying needs, problems, and situational realities that influence implementation. In this study, context evaluation was operationalised through the exploration of Geography teachers' perceptions of the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus in the Ellembelle District. Teachers' views regarding the relevance, adequacy, and practicality of the syllabus were examined in relation to the socio-educational realities of their schools, including availability of resources, Geography teachers available, qualification of Geography teachers, scheme of work, various forms of assessments, instructional time allocation, and learner needs. Curriculum implementation is widely acknowledged to be shaped by local contexts and teacher

agency rather than being an automatic translation of policy into practice (Gouëdard et al., 2020; Wedell & Grassick, 2017). By examining teachers' interpretations of the syllabus within their specific institutional settings, the study assessed whether the curriculum design aligns with contextual demands. This operationalisation directly corresponds with the first research question, which seeks to explore Geography teachers' views on the 2010 syllabus.

The Input dimension focuses on the resources, strategies, and support systems necessary for effective curriculum implementation. In this study, input evaluation involved examining the availability and adequacy of teaching and learning materials, teacher qualifications and professional development opportunities, integration of ICT and geospatial tools, and institutional or administrative support mechanisms. Educational change literature emphasises that curriculum reform is unlikely to succeed without adequate inputs such as teacher training, instructional resources, and policy support structures (Fullan, 2015; UNESCO, 2023). This dimension also aligns with the third objective.

The Process dimension examines how a curriculum is enacted in practice and assesses the quality of its implementation. In this study, process evaluation was conducted through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations that explored teaching and learning methods, pedagogical strategies, classroom dynamics, and challenges affecting implementation. Process evaluation is critical because the success of a curriculum depends not only on its design but also on how teachers interpret and operationalise it in real classroom contexts (Kandiko Howson & Kingsbury, 2023; Clayton et al., 2024). Previous research in sub-Saharan Africa indicates that curriculum reforms often stall at the implementation stage due to limited resources, reliance on lecture-based teaching methods, and insufficient monitoring (Boeskens et al., 2020;

Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023). By observing classroom practices and engaging teachers in reflective dialogue, this study examined the extent to which the intended curriculum corresponds with the enacted curriculum. This operationalisation aligns with the second and third research questions, which investigate the teaching methods employed and the challenges affecting successful implementation.

Although the Product dimension of the CIPP model evaluates outcomes such as student achievement and programme impact, it was not directly applied in this study. Product evaluation would have required quantitative performance data, such as standardised examination results, or longitudinal measures of learner skill development. Given that this research adopted a qualitative case study design grounded in interpretivism, its primary aim was to understand implementation processes rather than to measure academic outcomes. Creswell and Creswell (2017) note that qualitative case studies are particularly suited to exploring processes and contextual influences rather than establishing causal relationships or statistical generalisations. Therefore, the exclusion of the Product dimension was consistent with the methodological orientation and scope of the study. The evaluation conducted is thus implementation-focused rather than outcome-based.

The adapted use of the CIPP model in this study offers several strengths. First, it provides a holistic yet flexible structure for analysing curriculum implementation by integrating contextual, structural, and pedagogical dimensions. Unlike outcome-focused evaluation models, the CIPP framework allows for diagnostic analysis that identifies weaknesses within the implementation process itself (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2023). Second, the model aligns effectively with qualitative research methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, thereby enhancing methodological coherence. Third, the framework generates policy-relevant insights by highlighting

areas where curriculum design and implementation diverge, thus informing evidence-based reform efforts.

However, the selective application of the CIPP model also presents certain limitations. The absence of the Product dimension means that the study does not directly measure student learning outcomes or empirically determine the effectiveness of the curriculum in improving academic performance. Consequently, the findings cannot establish causal links between curriculum implementation and measurable student achievement. Furthermore, because only three components of the framework were applied, the evaluation is partial rather than fully outcome-oriented. Nevertheless, these limitations are consistent with the qualitative and exploratory nature of the study and do not undermine its implementation-focused objectives.

Conceptual framework

THE FOUNDATION
2010 SHS Geography Curriculum (Policy Framework)
The baseline for our evaluation

↓

PHASE 1: CONTEXT FACTORS
Understanding the Environment
- Teacher perceptions
- School environment
- Learner needs

↓

PHASE 2: INPUT FACTORS
Evaluating the resources
- Teaching resources
- Professional development
- ICT integration
- Institutional support

↓

PHASE 3: PROCESS FACTORS
Analysing the execution
- Teaching methods
- Classroom practices
- Implementation challenges

Figure 1: CIPP Model Construct

2.3 Meaning of Curriculum

The concept of curriculum has been defined and debated extensively in educational research, reflecting its multidimensional nature. At its simplest, curriculum refers to the totality of experiences designed to promote learning within an educational programme (Craig & Wyse, 2018). However, scholars caution against equating curriculum solely with a syllabus or a list of topics, since this narrow interpretation obscures the broader roles of pedagogy, assessment, and student engagement (Fasinro, et al., 2024). In practice, curriculum encompasses not only the official documents that prescribe content and objectives but also the processes, resources, and contexts through which teaching and learning occur.

However, in the Ghanaian context, curriculum is frequently perceived as the syllabus prepared by the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, which teachers are expected to implement (Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023). This restricted view often limits teachers to a content-delivery role and underplays the dynamic relationship between knowledge, skills, values, and learner experiences. Yet, as Addae-Kyeremeh Boateng (2024) argues, curriculum must be understood more broadly as an instrument for developing well-rounded individuals equipped with competencies for national development. Thus, effective curriculum implementation demands not only content coverage but also the cultivation of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills objectives that are emphasised in global education reforms and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNESCO, 2023).

For senior high school Geography, the meaning of curriculum is particularly significant because the subject blends scientific inquiry, environmental awareness, and socio-cultural understanding. A curriculum in this domain cannot be reduced to factual knowledge alone but must integrate inquiry-based and experiential learning

opportunities such as fieldwork, mapwork, and ICT-supported exploration (Clayton, et al., 2024). However, the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus has been critiqued for being overly content-driven and insufficiently focused on learner-centred outcomes (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020). This disjunction between the intended broad meaning of curriculum and the narrow content-heavy focus of the syllabus is one of the central problems motivating this study.

Defining curriculum as a holistic set of planned learning experiences helps situate the evaluation of the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum within a broader discourse. By highlighting that curriculum is not merely what is taught but also how it is taught, what resources are provided, and how outcomes are assessed, this section underlines the need for systematic evaluation of both design and implementation. It is precisely this mismatch between theory and practice that this study seeks to interrogate through the perspectives of Geography teachers in the Ellembelle District.

2.4 Implementation of Curricula and Programmes

Curriculum implementation refers to the process through which a designed curriculum is translated into actual teaching and learning practices within schools. It involves teachers' interpretation of the syllabus, the instructional strategies they employ, the resources they utilise, and the assessment methods used to evaluate learning outcomes. As Gouëdard, et al. (2020) emphasise, curriculum implementation is never automatic; it is shaped by local contexts, teacher agency, resource availability, and institutional support. Thus, successful implementation requires more than a well-written syllabus as it depends on the capacity of teachers and schools to actualise the curriculum's intentions.

In that regard scholars have described curriculum implementation as a staged process, including initial, installation, full, and sustainability phases (Metz, et al., 2015). At the

initial stage, awareness of the new curriculum is created through orientation and training. The installation stage involves the provision of resources and alignment of teaching practices with new requirements. Full implementation occurs when the curriculum is consistently enacted in classrooms, while sustainability refers to the long-term institutionalisation of practices and their continuous improvement. However, research in sub-Saharan Africa suggests that most reforms stall between the installation and full implementation stages due to inadequate professional development, resource gaps, and monitoring weaknesses (Boeskens, et al., 2020; UNESCO, 2023).

In Ghana, curriculum implementation has historically been constrained by limited teacher preparation and systemic challenges. Addai-Mununkum and Setordzi (2023) note that while reforms such as the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus were well-intentioned, their enactment in classrooms was undermined by inadequate textbooks, overcrowded classrooms, and insufficient instructional time. Teachers often revert to lecture-based approaches because interactive strategies like fieldwork and ICT-based learning require resources and logistical support that are rarely provided (Bariham, 2019). These challenges resonate with the concerns highlighted in the problem statement of this study namely, the poor implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum resulting in weak learner outcomes.

Globally, successful curriculum implementation depends heavily on teacher agency. Kandiko and Kingsbury (2023) argue that reforms will fail if teachers do not perceive the curriculum as relevant, feasible, and adequately supported. This is particularly true in Geography education, where the integration of experiential and inquiry-based learning is essential but requires significant institutional support (Clayton, et al., 2024). Without strong professional development and accountability mechanisms, reforms risk being interpreted narrowly as content coverage rather than transformative teaching.

For this study, curriculum implementation is conceptualised as the bridge between policy and practice, where teachers' interpretations, methods, and challenges determine whether the aims of the syllabus are realised. Understanding implementation is therefore critical to evaluating the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum, as it provides insight into how the syllabus is enacted in classrooms, the obstacles teachers face, and the extent to which reform intentions have translated into improved teaching and learning. This focus aligns directly with the second and third objectives of the study, which seek to investigate the methods employed by Geography teachers and the challenges affecting curriculum delivery in the Ellembelle District.

2.5 Geography Education and Curriculum Reforms

Geography education has undergone significant reforms worldwide in response to the dynamic challenges of globalisation, climate change, urbanisation, and technological advancement. Contemporary reforms have emphasised competency-based approaches, ICT integration, and experiential learning to ensure that learners not only acquire knowledge but also develop critical skills for environmental management and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2023; Dixit & Dixit, 2024). For example, in the United Kingdom, reforms in the Geography curriculum have highlighted enquiry-based learning and spatial thinking as core competencies, while in Australia and Singapore, policy frameworks have focused on interdisciplinary approaches and field-based experiences to make Geography more applied and problem-oriented (Clayton, et al., 2024). These reforms reflect a broader recognition that Geography education must prepare learners for active citizenship in complex and interconnected societies.

In Ghana, curriculum reforms have also been frequent, often motivated by the desire to make education more relevant to national development goals. The introduction of the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus was part of a broader educational reform that sought to

modernise content and align with global trends. However, research indicates that the implementation of the 2010 syllabus fell short of expectations due to its content-heavy nature, limited integration of ICT, and insufficient focus on critical thinking and skills acquisition (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020; Bariham, 2019). Geography teachers reported challenges in conducting fieldwork, providing practical demonstrations, and motivating students in the face of resource shortages and examination pressures (Anlimachie, 2019). These challenges echo the global literature which warns that ambitious curriculum reforms often collapse at the level of implementation when teachers are underprepared and schools under-resourced (Boeskens, et al., 2020; Gouëdard, et al., 2020). The persistent weaknesses in implementing the 2010 syllabus informed the development of the revised 2023 SHS Geography curriculum by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA). The revised curriculum adopts a more competency-based orientation, emphasising learner-centred pedagogy, ICT integration, and environmental sustainability (MoE, 2023). Although it is too early to evaluate the impact of this reform comprehensively, it represents a policy response to longstanding critiques of the 2010 syllabus. Nevertheless, as Addae-Kyeremeh & Boateng, (2024). argues, the success of any curriculum reform in Ghana depends on whether systemic implementation barriers such as teacher preparation, instructional time, and resource provision are addressed.

2.6 Approaches to Teaching Geography

The teaching approaches in Geography are critical to how effectively the subject is implemented in schools because Geography straddles both the natural and social sciences, its pedagogy requires a balance and this framework ensures that the evaluation is rigorous, contextually grounded, and policy-relevant (Clayton, et al., 2024). Scholars have long emphasised that teaching approaches should not merely communicate factual

content but also engage students in critical inquiry, spatial analysis, and environmental problem-solving (Dixit & Dixit, 2024). However, evidence from Ghana indicates that the teaching of Geography at the SHS level remains dominated by lecture-based instruction, with limited use of interactive and learner-centred approaches such as fieldwork, project-based learning, and ICT-supported strategies (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020; Bariham, 2019).

One of the most effective approaches in Geography education is fieldwork and observation-based learning, which enables students to connect classroom theory with real-world spatial phenomena. Research from both developed and developing contexts shows that field-based pedagogy enhances student engagement, deepens conceptual understanding, and fosters critical thinking (Clayton, et al., 2024; Pike, 2021). In Ghana, however, fieldwork is rarely conducted due to financial constraints, inadequate logistical support, and heavy teaching loads (Anlimachie, 2019). This gap undermines the experiential dimension of Geography and limits students' ability to apply knowledge practically.

Another widely discussed approach is the use of ICT in Geography teaching, including tools such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Google Earth, and digital simulations. ICT integration has been shown to improve spatial reasoning, stimulate learner interest, and align Geography teaching with 21st-century skills (UNESCO, 2023; Chastnyk, et al., 2024). In Ghana, however, ICT use in Geography is minimal, as many schools lack computer labs, reliable internet connectivity, and adequately trained teachers (Bariham, 2019). Consequently, students are deprived of opportunities to engage with digital mapping and data analysis tools that are now central to modern Geography education.

Traditional lecture and discussion methods remain the most commonly used pedagogies, largely because they are cost-effective, time-efficient, and suitable for examination preparation. While these methods are useful for covering broad syllabi, they have been criticised for promoting rote learning at the expense of analytical and problem-solving skills (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020). Moreover, they often marginalise weaker learners, who benefit more from interactive and differentiated teaching strategies (Wedell & Grassick, 2017).

Recent scholarship calls for a hybrid pedagogy that integrates traditional instruction with learner-centred methods such as inquiry-based learning, case studies, collaborative projects, and ICT-supported tools (Kola, et al., 2015). Such an approach is consistent with global reforms emphasising competency-based education, which prioritises not just knowledge acquisition but also the application of skills in real-world contexts. In the Ghanaian SHS context, this would mean encouraging Geography teachers to blend classroom lectures with practical exercises such as map interpretation, environmental projects, and digital data analysis.

In summary, while a range of pedagogical approaches is available for teaching Geography, their implementation in Ghana has been constrained by resource shortages, examination pressures, and insufficient professional development. These limitations contribute directly to the challenges outlined in the problem statement of this study namely, that the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum, though well-intentioned, has not been effectively enacted in classrooms. This gap emphasises the importance of this research in evaluating teaching approaches used by SHS Geography teachers which corresponds with the second objective of the study.

2.7 Challenges Affecting Geography Education in Ghana

This subsection outlines six key challenges that constrain the effective implementation of the 2010 Senior High School (SHS) Geography curriculum. Each challenge is critically analyzed and explicitly linked to the study's objectives and the core problem statement established in Chapter One.

2.7.1 Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development

The successful translation of curriculum policy into classroom practice is fundamentally dependent on teacher capacity. A recent mixed-method study involving 352 basic school teachers across six regions in Ghana provides critical insight into this challenge. The study found that while educators broadly deemed the National Pre-Tertiary Curriculum Framework (NPECF) relevant and valuable, its actual implementation was significantly hindered by persistent classroom challenges, most notably insufficient and ineffective in-service training (Ntumi et al., 2023). This finding is corroborated by a nationwide survey conducted by Arthur and Obeng (2023), which revealed that after four years of the curriculum's introduction, only 44.2% of teachers felt fully ready to implement Ghana's standards-based curriculum. The primary reasons cited for this low readiness were chronically limited access to continuous, high-quality professional development and a critical shortage of appropriate teaching and learning resources. This gap between policy expectation and practical preparedness creates a significant implementation deficit, where teachers, despite recognizing the value of reform, default to traditional, familiar methods of instruction.

This documented low readiness and the inadequacy of teacher development systems directly relate to Objective 2 (which examines teaching and learning methods) and Objective 1 **(**which seeks to understand teachers' views). Investigating these factors in the specific context of Geography education in the Ellembelle District will provide

crucial empirical evidence to clarify the precise mechanisms through which well-designed syllabi fail in practice, thereby addressing a central component of the study's problem statement.

2.7.2 ICT Integration and Technological Confidence

The integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools into Geography teaching remains notably weak and represents a significant barrier to achieving modern curricular goals. A focused Ghanaian study employing the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework surveyed 113 Senior High School Geography teachers, revealing a critical dissonance in their professional competencies. While the teachers demonstrated solid foundational knowledge in both geographical content and general pedagogical methods, their technological knowledge and specific confidence in utilizing ICT tools for instruction were significantly lower (Mensah, et al., 2022). This deficit in technological confidence directly impedes the effective use of digital maps, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and other geospatial technologies essential for developing 21st-century spatial literacy. Compounding this issue of teacher readiness is the persistent infrastructural gap documented in broader educational research. Studies emphasize that foundational barriers including a severe inadequacy of computers, unreliable or nonexistent internet access, and insufficient power supply create an environment that fundamentally inhibits the consistent and effective use of ICT in classrooms, regardless of teacher intention or training (Manu et al., 2024). These combined human and technical constraints result in a digital divide that severely limits the pedagogical potential of the geography curriculum.

2.7.3 Resource and Material Constraints

Although the search results yielded limited detailed recent sources focusing exclusively on Geography-specific resource allocation, the general trend observed across the

Ghanaian education sector is unequivocal: rural and peri-urban schools systematically face severe material deficits. These chronic shortages encompass a lack of current textbooks, an absence of essential maps and atlases, and a critical limitation of practical equipment required for hands-on geographical investigation. National education reports and curriculum analyses consistently identify these resource gaps as a primary factor undermining the effective delivery of both practical exercises and differentiated instruction within Geography teaching. The scarcity of these fundamental tools not only restricts the range of pedagogical strategies available to teachers but also directly compromises the curriculum's ambition to foster applied learning and spatial competence. Consequently, the intended experiential and enquiry-based elements of geographical education are often omitted or reduced to theoretical discussion, significantly diminishing the subject's vitality and relevance for students.

It is evident that these pervasive resource constraints likely constitute a major barrier to the enactment of the practical components mandated by the Geography syllabus, such as mapwork, data collection, and fieldwork. Therefore, systematically documenting the specific nature and extent of these material shortages within the sampled Senior High Schools in the Ellembelle District is a crucial undertaking. This investigation will provide concrete, localized evidence to clarify the external factors that impede effective curriculum implementation, directly addressing Objective 3 (identifying implementation challenges) and offering a tangible explanation for the gap between policy intent and classroom reality.

2.7.4 Constraints on Practical Work and Fieldwork

While a recent source focused exclusively on the state of fieldwork in Ghanaian Geography education was not identified within the provided search results, the broader literature on Geography teaching in Ghana consistently emphasises that experiential

learning, particularly through fieldwork, remains a rare pedagogical occurrence. This absence is primarily attributed to a confluence of persistent logistical challenges that effectively prohibit such activities. These constraints are typically tied to excessive teacher workload, which limits the capacity for organizing and supervising trips; a fundamental lack of resources, including transportation, specialised equipment, and funding; and a critical absence of institutional support and clear protocols for conducting off-site learning. The culmination of these factors results in a pedagogical environment where theoretical instruction predominates, and the curriculum's mandate for hands-on, real-world geographical investigation is largely unmet. This gap between the syllabus expectations and classroom reality signifies a profound weakness in the implementation of a curriculum designed to be enquiry-based and applied.

The evaluation of the frequency, nature, and quality of practical work conducted by Geography teachers and critically analysing this against the expectations set forth in the syllabus directly addresses a core component of the problem statement, which highlights the limited execution of practical components. This focus is essential for fulfilling Objective 2 (examining teaching and learning methods), as it will provide empirical evidence on a key implementation gap and help explain the observed divergence between intended and enacted curriculum.

2.7.5 Assessment and Examination Pressures

While the provided search results did not yield recent Ghana-specific research explicitly linking national assessment pressures to Geography curriculum implementation, this challenge represents a well-documented and pervasive issue in global educational literature that is undoubtedly relevant to the Ghanaian context. International studies consistently demonstrate that high-stakes examination systems, particularly those emphasizing factual recall and summative testing, exert a powerful influence on

pedagogical decision-making. In such environments, teachers often face institutional and societal pressure to prioritize exam preparation, which typically narrows the curriculum towards content coverage at the expense of student-centred, inquiry-based, and practical methodologies. This global pattern suggests a strong probability that similar dynamics are at play within Ghana's educational system, where national standardized tests likely shape instructional priorities and contribute to the observed emphasis on theoretical knowledge over the applied competencies outlined in the syllabus.

In effect, the potential that prevailing examination systems encourage fact-based, teacher-centred instruction would provide a critical explanatory factor for why student-centred and practical methods suffer within Geography classrooms. This aligns directly with the core problem statement of this research and substantively links to Objective 2**,** which focuses on analysing teaching and learning methods. Investigating this pressure within the sampled schools will therefore be essential for developing a comprehensive understanding of the barriers to effective curriculum implementation.

Monitoring, School Leadership, and Systemic Support

While the challenge of systemic support is not specifically detailed for Geography education in the available literature, assessments of Ghana's broader curriculum reform efforts consistently identify significant weaknesses in monitoring systems and leadership capacity, particularly at the district and school levels. As referenced in Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) programme reports and broader education sector reviews, the implementation of new curricula is frequently hampered by inconsistent supervisory follow-up, inadequate training for instructional leaders, and a lack of coherent support structures for teachers attempting pedagogical change. Coffie (2019) further substantiates this, noting in a study on continuous

professional development that the sustainability of any educational innovation is deeply contingent on effective leadership and systematic monitoring frameworks, which are often under-resourced or inconsistently applied across Ghana's educational system. These systemic shortcomings in administrative and instructional leadership create an environment where curriculum goals are disseminated without the necessary scaffolding to ensure their successful enactment in diverse classroom contexts, ultimately leading to a gap between policy aspiration and practical reality.

Therefore, an investigation into the administrative context within the sampled schools and education districts specifically regarding the presence, quality, and frequency of monitoring and leadership support for Geography teachers is therefore crucial. This focus will help explain fundamental implementation gaps by revealing how structural and systemic factors either enable or constrain classroom practice. This line of inquiry directly relates to Objective 3**,** which seeks to identify the specific challenges hindering the effective implementation of the Geography curriculum, by moving beyond individual teacher practices to examine the overarching systems that shape those practices.

Collectively, these challenges particularly the recent empirical evidence on inadequate teacher readiness (Ntumi et al., 2023) and critically low technological proficiency among educators (Mensah et al., 2021) highlight that the persistent disconnect between syllabus design and classroom reality in Senior High School Geography is not a simple issue of curriculum quality. Rather, it stems from a complex interplay of multiple systemic barriers operating at the instructional, institutional, and resource levels. This intricate web of constraints, which includes under-resourced professional development, infrastructural deficits, and examination-driven pedagogical pressures, demonstrates that curricular aspirations are consistently mediated and often diminished by on-the-

ground realities. This synthesis justifies the critical need for a localized, empirical evaluation situated at the district level, specifically within the Ellembelle District. By focusing its investigation on the lived experiences of teachers to capture their perspectives, documenting their actual methodological choices, and analysing the institutional conditions that enable or constrain their practice this study is designed to generate a nuanced understanding of the implementation ecosystem. This grounded approach is essential for addressing the study's overarching aim, as articulated in Objectives 1 through 3, to move beyond identifying problems and toward explaining the mechanisms through which they undermine geographical education.

2.7.6 The 2010 SHS Geography Syllabus: Rationale, Aims, Organization, and Critical Commentary

The 2010 Senior High School (SHS) Geography syllabus, developed by the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) of the Ministry of Education (MoE), was designed to modernize geography education in Ghana by structuring content across three interconnected domains: Physical Geography, Human and Regional Geography, and Practical Geography (Ababio & Dumba, 2013) (Opoku, et al., (2020). Geography education in perspective: an enquiry into Ghanaian senior high school students' positive and negative attitudes towards geography. *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, *30*(1), 39-53.)

2.8 Rationale and Aims

As noted in the revised curriculum commentary (2024), the 2010 Geography syllabus aimed to facilitate knowledge of spatial phenomena and environmental processes, foster spatial literacy, and develop practical skills that enable learners to engage with both local and global geographical issues (NaCCA, 2024) These aims align in principle with broader curriculum goals of equipping SHS graduates with 21st-century

competencies—critical thinking, spatial analysis, and responsible citizenship (NaCCA, 2024).

2.9 Organization of Content

The 2010 Senior High School Geography syllabus structures the subject area of Landscape and Geographic Learning into three comprehensive, thematically organized sections, designed to be progressively delivered across the three-year programme (CRDD, 2010). The first section, Physical Geography**,** provides the foundational scientific basis for the discipline. It emphasizes core areas of geomorphology, climatology, and biogeography, systematically covering Earth's systems and the dynamics of the physical environment to build students' understanding of natural processes and landforms (MoE, 2010; Ababio & Dumba, 2013). The second section, Human and Regional Geography**,** shifts the focus to the interplay between human societies and their environments (CRDD, 2010; Ababio & Dumba, 2013). It explores critical themes including patterns of human settlement, diverse economic activities, causes and consequences of regional disparities, and the processes and problems associated with rapid urbanisation (Zhang, 2016). The third section**,** Practical Geography, is dedicated to developing applied, technical competencies. It focuses essential skills in map reading, spatial data interpretation, and field-based techniques such as basic surveying and systematic environmental observation, aiming to translate theoretical knowledge into actionable skill sets (MoE, 2010; Ababio & Dumba, 2013). This tripartite organization reflects an intent to deliver a balanced geographical education that integrates theoretical knowledge, human-environment understanding, and practical application (Reinfried & Hertig, 2011).

2.10 Critical Commentary and Limitations

Despite its structured and comprehensive framework, the 2010 Senior High School Geography syllabus has been subject to several critiques in recent literature, which highlight significant gaps between its design and effective implementation(Lambert & Morgan, 2010). A primary criticism concerns its overemphasis on content recall**.** Analyses indicate that the original syllabus underrepresents the acquisition of essential 21st-century competencies. Its instructional design primarily emphasizes recall and recognition of factual information, with considerably less weighting placed on higher-order skills such as application, analysis, and critical thinking, thereby limiting students' ability to engage deeply with geographical concepts (NaCCA, 2024).

A further significant limitation is the weak emphasis on competency skills and inclusivity. The syllabus has been noted for its lack of gender-responsive, equitable, and inclusive (GESI) approaches. This omission not only restricts access and engagement for disadvantaged learners but also fails to promote a modern, inclusive Geography education that reflects diverse perspectives and experiences (NaCCA, 2024).

Persistent resource and pedagogical constraints also critically undermine the syllabus's intentions. Although it explicitly includes practical components, teachers consistently report that implementation is severely limited by a chronic lack of essential resources, including fieldwork equipment, up-to-date maps, and teaching aids. This scarcity often forces a reliance on traditional, teacher-centered instructional approaches, which contradicts the curriculum's aims for experiential learning (NaCCA, 2024).

Finally, a disconnect exists between theoretical cohesion and practical execution. As detailed by Ababio and Dumba (2013), while the syllabus exhibits a holistic structure that thoughtfully bridges physical processes and human-environment interconnections, the practical integration of content and the facilitation of active learning experiences

remain insufficient. This gap highlights the need for clearer feedback mechanisms, more robust teacher support systems, and structured guidance to translate the syllabus's theoretical ambitions into consistent classroom practice (Ababio & Dumba, 2013).

2.11 Discussion of the review in relation to stated objectives

Overall, the 2010 Senior High School Geography syllabus represents a holistic and thoughtfully organized curriculum that seeks to integrate physical, human, and practical geographical knowledge into a cohesive framework for secondary education. Its design reflects an intent to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of spatial relationships, environmental systems, and human-environment interactions. However, significant implementation challenges have been well-documented in the literature, including an overemphasis on content recall at the expense of higher-order thinking skills, a noticeable lack of integration of 21st-century competencies, persistent resource limitations that hinder practical application, and insufficient structural support for inclusive, learner-centered pedagogical approaches. These collective shortcomings have contributed substantially to the curriculum's under-implementation in actual classroom settings, creating a discernible gap between its theoretical aspirations and practical execution.

These identified gaps provide strong justification for the present study's focused investigation into how the syllabus was actually enacted in real classroom environments, what specific limitations teachers encountered in their daily practice. This critical analysis of the 2010 syllabus's strengths and limitations directly supports the study's research objectives: it informs Objective 1 by providing context for understanding teachers' views and perceptions of the curriculum; it substantiates Objective 2 by highlighting the pedagogical challenges that influence teaching methods; it validates Objective 3 by documenting the systemic and resource- based challenges that impede

effective implementation of the curriculum. Through this multidimensional examination, the study aims to contribute meaningful insights into curriculum implementation processes and inform future educational reforms in geography education.

2.12 Concepts of Teaching & Learning

2.12.1 Concept of Teaching in Geography Education

Contemporary educational theory increasingly understands teaching as a dynamic, relational process that extends far beyond the mere transmission of content knowledge. This modern conceptualization positions the teacher as a facilitator of student inquiry, an architect of learning environments that enable active engagement, and a scaffold for developing higher-order thinking skills (Kong & Liu, 2024). Within the specific context of Geography education, this translates into effective teaching practices that strategically combine clear conceptual instruction with interactive, spatially-oriented methodologies. These include structured spatial reasoning tasks, hands-on map interpretation exercises, and extended project-based learning that connects classroom theory to real-world geographical issues.

Kong and Liu, 2024 provide a robust empirical argument that teachers who consciously adopt autonomy-supportive approaches which involve providing students with meaningful choices, explicitly fostering the personal relevance of content, and actively encouraging self-directed learning consistently achieve deeper student engagement and stronger conceptual understanding. These specific autonomy-support strategies are particularly well-aligned with the fundamental goals of competency-based curricula, including the aims of modern Geography education which emphasize the application of knowledge and the development of transferable skills.

However, within the Ghanaian context, a significant implementation gap exists. Recent

teacher surveys indicate that few Geography educators implement autonomy-supportive pedagogy in a consistent or comprehensive manner. Instead, most classroom lessons remain predominantly teacher-directed, prioritizing rapid content coverage over genuine student inquiry and exploratory learning (Adams & Mu, 2025). This limited pedagogical flexibility likely stems from a confluence of challenging contextual factors, including large class sizes, the demanding breadth of the syllabi, and limited opportunities for specialized pedagogical training that focuses on these facilitative methods.

By systematically exploring how teachers conceptualize their role and, crucially, how they enact teaching in their daily practice, this study will shed critical light on whether the aspirations of a learner-centered geography education, as envisioned by curriculum developers, are being realized at the classroom level. This investigation directly and substantively addresses Objective 2, which focuses on analysing teaching and learning methods.

2.12.2 Concept of Learning in Geography Education

Learning in geography is fundamentally an active process of constructing meaningful mental maps, comprehending complex spatial relationships, and applying this understanding to analyze and address real-world environmental and social issues (Nshimiyimana & Ndayambaje, 2025). This constructivist view posits that geographical understanding is best fostered through active, enquiry-based, and social learning methods pedagogical approaches that are particularly suited to a discipline that inherently integrates scientific, environmental, and social dimensions.

Empirical research strongly supports the efficacy of these methods. A study by Carow, (2024) demonstrates that active learning techniques such as cooperative group tasks, map-based problem solving, and authentic real-world project work significantly

enhance Geography students' spatial reasoning, critical thinking, and analytical skills compared to traditional, passive lecture-based instruction. These approaches engage students in the authentic practices of geographers, moving beyond memorization to the application and creation of knowledge.

Despite this clear alignment between the subject matter and active learning pedagogies, a significant disconnect exists in practice within Ghanaian Senior High School classrooms. Studies consistently report that instruction remains persistently teacher-centered, characterized by rote memorization and whole-class lectures, with limited opportunities for learners to engage in hands-on exploration, collaborative discussion, or critical reflection (Roque, et al., 2025) This profound mismatch between the theoretical ideals of how students learn geography most effectively and the actual pedagogical practices prevalent in classrooms is a major contributing factor to the learner outcomes gap highlighted in the problem statement, where students often struggle to apply geographical concepts practically.

Investigating the prevalent learning approaches through both direct classroom observations and an analysis of teacher perceptions will help pinpoint whether actual learning experiences align with the competency-based goals of the curriculum. This focus provides critical insights into the pedagogical mechanisms that either support or hinder meaningful learning, thereby linking closely to Objective 2 (teaching and learning methods) and Objective 3 (implementation challenges).

To summarize, the prevailing theoretical constructs of effective teaching and learning within geography education emphasize active, learner-centered, autonomy-supportive, and enquiry-driven pedagogical approaches. These methods are particularly well-suited to the discipline's integrative nature, which combines scientific inquiry, social analysis, and spatial reasoning to address complex real-world issues. Yet, empirical evidence

from the Ghanaian context suggests a persistent disconnect between these theoretical ideals and classroom reality, with instructional practices remaining predominantly teacher-driven and content-focused. This pedagogical misalignment significantly limits the realization of geography's full educational potential, particularly in developing students' critical thinking, spatial competencies, and ability to apply knowledge to authentic situations.

This study seeks to determine the extent to which these research-supported approaches are present or absent in daily classroom interactions by systematically examining actual teaching and learning practices within the specific context of Senior High School geography education in the Ellembelle District. This investigation is directly aligned with the research objectives and problem statement, as it aims to identify the specific factors that either facilitate or hinder the implementation of pedagogical methods that can bridge the gap between curriculum aspirations and educational outcomes. The findings will provide crucial insights into how teaching and learning practices either support or constrain the development of the geographical competencies that the curriculum intends to foster.

2.13 Importance of Geography Education

Geography is widely regarded as a vital discipline within secondary education because it develops learners' understanding of the complex interrelationships between people, places, and environments. The subject provides a framework for analyzing spatial patterns and human–environment interactions while also equipping students with the knowledge and skills to address pressing challenges such as climate change, urbanization, resource management, and sustainable development (Dixit & Dixit, 2024). Globally, Geography education is seen as integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 13 on

climate action. It fosters environmental literacy, critical thinking, and civic responsibility, enabling learners to become active citizens capable of contributing to sustainable futures (UNESCO, 2023). For example, in countries such as the UK and Australia, geography curricula emphasize sustainability education, enquiry-based learning, and integration of digital geospatial tools to prepare learners for 21st-century citizenship (Clayton, et al., 2024).

Within the national context of Ghana, Geography plays a crucial role in preparing students for higher education and professional pathways in environmental management, urban planning, disaster risk reduction, and natural resource governance (Addae-Kyeremeh & Boateng, 2024). By equipping learners with spatial awareness and analytical skills, the subject supports the country's socio-economic development priorities. A recent policy review emphasizes that Ghana's capacity to address deforestation, flooding, and land-use conflicts is strengthened by geography education at the secondary and tertiary levels (Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023).

Beyond content knowledge, Geography provides students with practical skills such as map interpretation, data collection, statistical analysis, and field observation. These skills are not only academic but also transferable to other disciplines and professions (Carow, 2024). Studies show that active, skill-based geography learning enhances problem-solving abilities and supports lifelong learning competencies (Kong & Liu, 2024). However, it is noted that Ghana's 2010 syllabus has been criticized for underemphasizing practical components such as fieldwork and GIS applications, which has limited the skill-based benefits of the subject (Bariham, 2019).

Furthermore, Geography also cultivates values of environmental stewardship, global awareness, and social responsibility. Students who study Geography are more likely to demonstrate pro-environmental attitudes and sustainable lifestyle choices

(Nshimiyimana & Ndayambaje, 2025). This moral and civic dimension underscores Geography's relevance not just as an academic discipline but as a cornerstone of responsible citizenship.

The established literature unequivocally champions the profound importance of Geography education, outlining its critical role in fostering global citizenship, promoting sustainable development, and equipping students with essential practical and analytical skills (Dixit & Dixit, 2024; UNESCO, 2023). Within the Ghanaian context, the subject is similarly recognized as a vital contributor to national development and human capital formation, preparing students for key roles in addressing pressing environmental and spatial challenges (Addae-Kyeremeh & Boateng, 2024; Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023).

However, a significant disconnect exists between this recognized potential and the documented reality within Ghanaian Senior High Schools. As Aboagye and Yawson (2020) critically point out, the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus has not fully delivered on its promise. This underperformance is attributed to chronic implementation challenges, including an overemphasis on content coverage and rote memorization for high-stakes examinations, which has come at the expense of the practical, enquiry-based learning the subject is meant to promote. This is further exacerbated by well-documented obstacles such as inadequate resources, insufficient integration of technology, and limited opportunities for fieldwork (Anlimachie, 2019). Consequently, the gap between the intended aims of Geography education and the actual classroom experience for Ghanaian students remains wide.

2.14 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed literature on the implementation process of the 2010 Geography curriculum, meaning of curriculum, implementation of curricula and programmes,

Geography teaching approaches, challenges affecting Geography education in Ghana, senior high school Geography teaching syllabus (2010), concept of teaching, concept of learning, the importance of Geography education, Gaps in the 2010 SHS Geography Curriculum. This chapter had a critical look on the themes, and it had a relation to the findings of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter focuses entirely on the methodology that was utilised in the study. Sub-themes, which are discussed include: study area, study population, research design, and sample technique, source of data, data collection tools, validation and administration of instrument and data analysis plan.

3.1 Study Area

The study area is Ellembelle District. Ellembelle District is one of the 260 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana and forms part of the 14 MMDAs in the Western Region. The Ellembelle District is located on the southern part of the region between longitudes 2º05' W and 2º35' W and latitude 4º40N and 5º20N. It covers a total area of about 1,468 Square kilometres, which constitutes about 9.8% Percent of the total land mass of the Western Region. The district was carved out of the then Nzema East Municipal in December 2007 by (LI) 1918 and has Nkroful as its capital (Ellembele District Assembly, 2006). The Ellembelle District Assembly (EDA) was created in December 2007 by L.I. 1918 and inaugurated in February 2008. It was carved out of the then Nzema East District, now Nzema East Municipal (DPCU, 2014). The district lies within the wet semi-equatorial climatic zone of the West African Sub-region. The area experiences an all – year-round rainfall with the highest or maximum monthly mean of rainfall occurring around May and June. Mean Annual rainfall figures ranges from 26.8mm to 42.6mm. The average temperature in the district is about 29.40ºC with variation in mean monthly ranging between 40ºC to 50ºC throughout the year as shown in the table for 2008 and 2008 below: 51 The high rainfall pattern and the long periods of the rainfall has resulted in the presence of many rivers like Ankobra and

Mufre in the District which can, using the right technology, easily be harnessed to provide potable water and water transport the communities. They can also be a good source of Inland fishing as well as for irrigation farming in order to provide employment and improve the nutritional status of the people ((DPCU), 2014).

The population of Ellembelle District, according to Ghana Statistical Service, (2014) is 87,501 constituting 3.7 percent of the total population in the Western Region. Males constitute 48.4 percent and females represent 51.6 percent. About 79.4 percent of the population resides in rural and 20.6 percent in urban areas. The district has a sex ratio of 93.7. The population of the district depicts a broad base population pyramid which tapers off with a small number of elderly persons. The age dependency ratio for the district is 82.2, the age dependency ratio for males is lower (40.5) than that of females (42.3).

According to GES (2020), there are five second cycle schools in the Ellembelle district, these schools are as follows; Bonzo-Kaku Senior High School located at Awiebo, Uthman Bin Afam Senior High School located at Kamgbunli, Nkroful Agric. Senior High School which it located at Nkroful, Esiama Senior High/Tech School located at Esiama, and Kikam Technical institute which is located at Kikam. Out of these schools only four offer Geography and they are Bonzo-Kaku Senior High School, Uthman Bin Afam Senior High School, Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School and Esiama Senior High/Tech School.

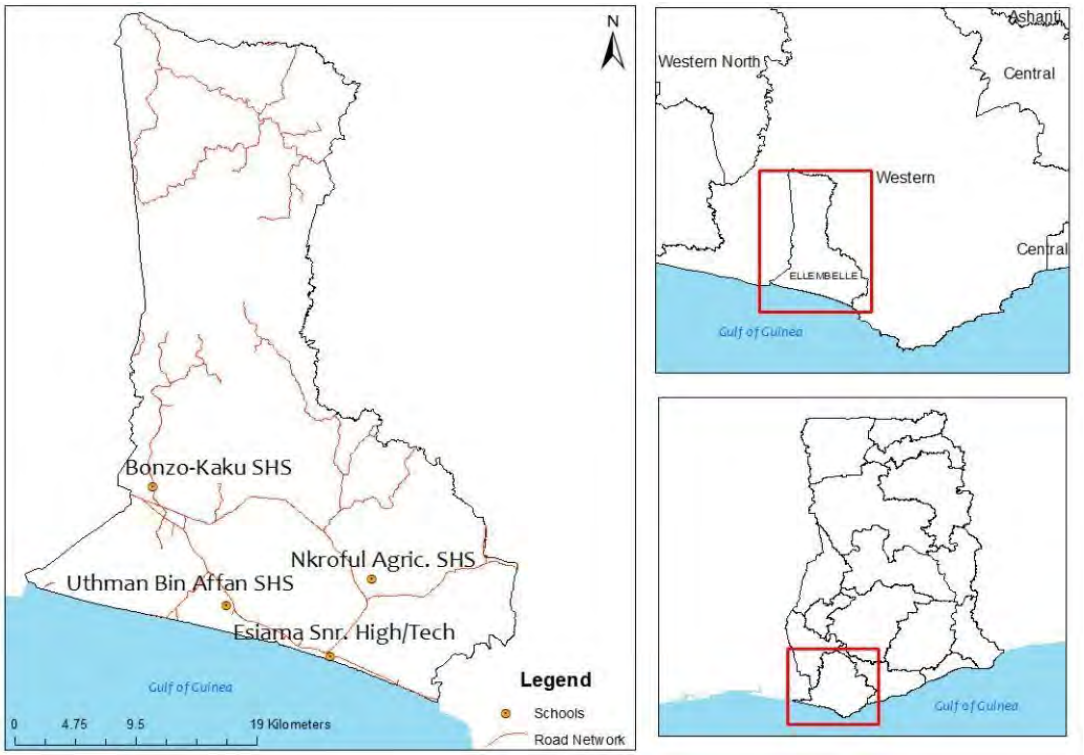

Figure 2: Map showing Study District of Ellembelle and location of Senior High Schools

Source: Author's construct (2024)

3 .2 Research Paradigm

The researcher aligned to the interpretivist paradigm due to the qualitative nature of the study. Interpretivism, as a philosophical paradigm, provides a robust framework for qualitative research by emphasising the subjective meanings and social processes that shape human experiences (Malterud, 2016). When applied to this study of evaluating of the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum, interpretivism offers a nuanced approach to understanding how the curriculum is enacted and experienced by various stakeholders, including teachers, students, and administrators.

Core Principles of Interpretivism has core values that includes subjective reality, contextual understanding, interaction and interpretation and meaning-making process

(Putnam, 2017). In the subjective reality, interpretivism asserts that reality is socially constructed and subjective. This paradigm acknowledges that individuals interpret and give meaning to their experiences based on their unique contexts (Schwandt, 1994 cited in Savin-Baden & Major, 2023). In the context of the 2010 Geography Curriculum, this means recognising that the implementation and impact of the curriculum may be perceived differently by different stakeholders. Interpretivists with regards to contextual understanding emphasise the importance of context in shaping human Behaviour and interactions (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). By focusing on the specific contexts within which the Geography curriculum is implemented, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing its success or challenges. In the area of interaction and interpretation, interpretivism values the interactions and interpretations of participants. It seeks to understand how individuals make sense of their experiences through dialogue and engagement (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). This approach is particularly useful for evaluating the implementation of an educational curriculum, as it allows for the exploration of how teachers interpret the curriculum and how students respond to it. Central to interpretivism is the process of meaning-making as expressed by (Krauss, 2005; Ugwu, et al., 2021). Researchers aim to uncover the meanings that individuals attach to their experiences and actions. In the case of the Geography curriculum, this involves exploring how teachers and students understand and experience the curriculum and its objectives.

The application of the interpretivism paradigm offers numerous benefits such that the qualitative nature of interpretivist research yields rich, detailed data that can provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation process. Interpretivism allows for flexibility in research design and methods, making it possible to adapt the study to the specific contexts and needs of participants. By prioritising the perspectives and

experiences of participants, interpretivism ensures that the evaluation is grounded in the lived realities of those directly affected by the curriculum. Interpretivism's focus on context and meaning-making provides a holistic view of the implementation process, capturing the complexities and nuances that quantitative approaches might overlook (Zhale, 2021).

Applying interpretivism to examine the implementation of the 2010 Geography Curriculum, it become necessary to engage with teachers through interviews and the researcher gathered rich qualitative data on how the curriculum is being implemented and experienced. This approach allows for the capture of diverse perspectives and insights into the practical realities of the Geography curriculum. The implementation of the curriculum may vary significantly across different schools and regions such that it facilitates an in-depth exploration of these contextual variations, helping to identify factors such as school resources, teacher training, insufficient time allocation, and traditional teaching methods that influence the effectiveness of the curriculum implementation.

Interpretivism, with its emphasis on subjective meanings, contextual understanding, and the meaning-making process (Putnam & Banghart, 2017), is an ideal philosophical paradigm for evaluating the implementation of the 2010 Geography Curriculum. It enables researchers to delve deeply into the experiences and perspectives of teachers, students, and administrators, providing a comprehensive and nuanced evaluation of the curriculum's impact and effectiveness. Through interpretivist approaches, researchers can uncover valuable insights that can inform future curriculum development and implementation strategies (De Villiers, 2005; Pulla & Carter, 2018).

3.4 Research Approach

The research adopted a qualitative approach to examine the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum in selected senior high schools in the Ellembelle District. Qualitative research emphasises understanding human experiences through narrative data collection, focusing on interpretation and meaning-making (Kuranchie, 2016). The case study approach enabled the researcher to explore how teachers and students interact with and interpret the curriculum in their natural settings, offering a detailed understanding of the processes involved. This aligns with the first dimension of the CIPP model "Context Evaluation" which seeks to explore Geography teachers' views on the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus in Ellembelle District. By examining teachers' perceptions on syllabus's relevance, content adequacy and alignment with student needs, this evaluation will help determine whether the curriculum is appropriately designed for its intended setting. Process Evaluation, the third dimension, relates to the study's second and third objectives, which. This component focuses on the actual delivery of the curriculum in classroom settings, analysing pedagogical approaches, student engagement strategies, and adherence to syllabus guidelines. By focusing on real-life implementation, the case study offered a platform for identifying specific challenges such as teacher preparedness, resource constraints, and contextual variations. By assessing these factors, the study can pinpoint operational weaknesses and recommend adjustments to enhance curriculum implementation.

This methodological approach not only highlighted the practical realities of curriculum evaluation but also demonstrated how the CIPP Model provides a comprehensive evaluation structure to ensuring continuous improvement in the education system (Kuranchie, 2016; Zhale, 2021).

3.5 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative case study research design to examine the implementation of the 2010 Senior High School (SHS) Geography curriculum in selected schools within the Ellembelle District. A case study design is appropriate when a researcher seeks to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Harrison et al., 2017). In this study, curriculum implementation is not an isolated event, but a complex process shaped by contextual factors such as teacher preparedness, school resources, student characteristics, and institutional support systems. Therefore, an in-depth and context-sensitive design was necessary.

The choice of a qualitative case study design is closely aligned with the interpretivist research paradigm underpinning this study. Interpretivism emphasises understanding social phenomena from the perspectives of those directly involved (Putnam & Banghart, 2017; Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). Since this research seeks to explore Geography teachers' views on the 2010 syllabus, the teaching and learning methods employed, and the challenges affecting implementation, it was essential to engage participants within their natural school settings. The case study design enabled the researcher to obtain rich, detailed data through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis.

Furthermore, the design aligns directly with the theoretical framework of the study, which is grounded in the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) model developed by Stufflebeam (1971) and refined by Stufflebeam and Coryn (2023). The CIPP model requires a comprehensive examination of curriculum implementation from multiple dimensions:

Context Evaluation, which examines teachers' perceptions of the relevance, adequacy, and suitability of the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus;

Input Evaluation, which considers the availability of resources, training, and institutional support;

Process Evaluation, which focuses on how the curriculum is delivered in classroom settings; and Product Evaluation, which considers the outcomes and effectiveness of the curriculum.

A case study design provides the contextual depth necessary to examine these dimensions holistically. By focusing on selected senior high schools in the Ellembelle District as a bounded system, the study was able to explore how the 2010 Geography curriculum is interpreted, enacted, and experienced in practice.

Additionally, the design allowed for triangulation of data sources, interviews and classroom observations thereby enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. The qualitative case study approach was therefore deemed most appropriate for answering the research questions and achieving the objectives of the study, as it facilitated a detailed, contextually grounded evaluation of curriculum implementation.

3.6 Target Population

The target population refers to the entire group of individuals or institutions to whom the findings of a study are intended to generalise (Kuranchie, 2016). For this study, the target population comprised all Senior High Schools and Geography teachers implementing the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District. This includes all Geography teachers responsible for delivering the 2010 syllabus, as well as the broader school environments within which the curriculum is enacted.

Although there are five Senior High Schools in the Ellembelle District, not all of them offer Geography as a subject. However, the broader interest of the study remains centred

on all institutions and educators responsible for implementing the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum within the district.

3.7 Study Population

The study population refers to the accessible portion of the target population from which the researcher actually collects data. In this study, the study population consisted of the four Senior High Schools in the Ellembelle District that offer Geography as a subject. From these four schools, Geography teachers directly involved in the implementation of the 2010 curriculum constituted the primary participants. In total, eight (8) Geography teachers were purposively selected for in-depth interviews based on their experience and active involvement in curriculum delivery. These teachers were considered information-rich participants capable of providing meaningful insights into the realities of curriculum implementation.

In addition to the teachers, Geography students were included indirectly through classroom observations. Although students were not interviewed, observing them during instructional periods provided valuable insights into student engagement, participation, and responsiveness to teaching methods. This allowed the study to capture both teacher perspectives and classroom enactment dynamics.

3.8 Sample and Sampling Technique

A study sample refers to a subset of the population of interest selected to provide data that can address the research objectives effectively. For this study, careful consideration was given to ensure that the sample fairly represented the population under investigation. A total of eight Geography teachers were selected from four senior high schools in the Ellembelle District using purposive sampling, which allowed for the inclusion of both experienced and new teachers. Qualitative research typically focuses on depth rather than breadth, and smaller sample sizes can still yield rich, meaningful

insights. Studies using phenomenological, narrative, or case study approaches often employ small samples. According to Guest, et al. (2006) as cited by Ahmed 2025, they found that thematic saturation, i.e., the point at which no new information emerges was reached within 6-12 interviews in their study of qualitative data. They concluded that for relatively homogeneous study populations, as few as six interviews could be sufficient to develop meaningful themes. Mason (2010) also based on a review of 560 PhD studies, found that qualitative research often relies on small sample sizes. The review also found that many studies reached saturation with fewer than 20 participants, and some even with fewer than 10. The review further indicated that the appropriate sample size depends on factors like the research design, study population, and theoretical framework**.** Thus, since this research is highly focused and involves a homogeneous sample**,** and follows thematic analysis**,** a sample size of eight (8) is justified.

Purposive sampling was employed due to its ability to select participants who possess specific knowledge and experiences relevant to the research (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2024). The teachers chosen were identified based on their direct involvement with the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum. These individuals were deemed "experts" because of their practical experience teaching the curriculum, as well as their roles within the schools, which provided them with valuable insights into its challenges and successes. Each of the four selected schools offered Geography as a subject and met the necessary criteria, including accessibility for interviews and classroom observations. This ensured that the study explored a range of perspectives while focusing on schools central to the research scope.

Students' perspectives were integrated into the research primarily through classroom observations, which allowed the researcher to capture how they engaged with the 2010

Geography curriculum during instructional periods. Observing students in their natural learning environments provided insights into their participation, responsiveness to teaching methods, and overall learning experiences. While interviews were not conducted directly with students, their observed Behaviours, such as interaction with teachers and classroom resources, contributed to understanding the effectiveness of curriculum delivery. This approach aligns with the research aim of evaluating the curriculum's implementation by examining both teacher and student experiences. Including students' observations alongside teacher interviews provided a comprehensive view of how the curriculum was enacted in practice and highlighted contextual factors influencing its success or challenges.

3.9 Pre-Interview and Observation Procedures

Before visiting the participating schools and conducting interviews, contacts were made with the school's authorities. Teachers who were sampled were individually contacted face to face with the list of topics for the interview and also the researcher made use of the opportunity to discuss their comfortable participating in the research process.

3.10 Data Instrumentation

The primary data collection method for this study was semi-structured in-depth interviews, supported by classroom observations where the researcher acted as a non-participant observer. Semi-structured interviews allowed for open-ended discussions with Geography teachers to capture their experiences, perspectives, and interpretations regarding the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum. These interviews facilitated detailed feedback from stakeholders, particularly teachers who are at the forefront of curriculum delivery, enabling the researcher to understand the challenges, successes, and areas for improvement in the curriculum implementation process. The flexibility of semi-structured interviews ensured that the conversations could explore

new insights while remaining aligned with the research objectives (Rowley, 2012). Classroom observations, on the other hand, provided direct evidence of how the curriculum was enacted in practice, highlighting teacher-student interactions, the use of teaching resources, and students' engagement during lessons.

The data collection methods for the study supports only three dimension of the CIPP Model. Context data identifies needs and problems through interviews and document reviews. Input data examines resources, strategies, and structural designs necessary for effective curriculum delivery. Process data focuses on the actual delivery of the curriculum in classroom settings, analysing pedagogical approaches, student engagement strategies, and adherence to syllabus guidelines while Product data measures the extent to which the intended learning outcomes are achieved, but this dimension does not fit any of the researchers'' objective.

3.11 Data Collection Procedures

3.11.1 Interviews

The interview method of data collection is a hallmark of case study investigation, as it allows the researcher to record and quote the words and expressions of the participant. It allows the researcher access, through words, to an individual's constructed reality and interpretation of his or her own experience (Mtisi 2022). In-depth interviews allow the researcher to pursue an understanding of participants' insight of their experiences or situations through repeated uncompromising encounters. Jones and Donmoyer (2021), states that "interviewers are essential, as most case studies are about people and their activities" and interviewees "provide important insights and identify other sources of evidence".

The researcher collected data through in-depth interviews that were semi structured. Semi-structured interview has specific topic areas that needs to be covered during the course of the interview, however the order of the questions and the exact wording of the questions are left to the discretions of the interviewer (Buys, et al., 2022). Its purpose is to sustain a sense of structure and to allow the retrieval of important information, whiles allowing discussion and elaboration by the informant. The main strengths of the semi-structured interview are to not only allow the informant to express an opinion, but to explain why the respondent holds that opinion. The researcher also had the flexibility to immediately respond to issues raised by participants and was able to ask probing questions that allowed participants to discuss issues considered to be of high relevance to them.

The researcher conducted individual interview, each lasting about 45 minutes to one hour. The researcher talked to the participants thoroughly and allowed them to tell their own stories and provide the researcher with their own views. Some precise questions asked were in the interview guide. The main questions were arranged to follow a progression of participants' view and experiences about the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum.

The researcher made Interview questions available to each participant few days before each interview, which enabled them, prepare adequately for the interview. The Interviews were conducted face to face at each participant's school premises. Permission to tape-record each interview was sought from each participant. Interview transcripts were later sent back to each participant for them to verify.

Limitations associated with the interviews

Interviewing as a research method has many advantages but they do also have limitations too. Conducting the interview was time consuming, one of the participants

refused to be audiotaped during the interview due to personal reasons. The geographical location of the four schools was a problem. These selected schools were far from each other, and it made it very tedious, moving from one school to the other embarking on face-to-face interview.

3.11.2 Observation

The researcher also made use of direct observation as a tool. The researcher visited a class in each of the four sampled schools to observe the teaching and learning methods employed and the availability of resources. Furthermore, all the other issues observed that were in line with the research question were probed during the interviews.

The observation was carried out to gather information on the implementation of the 2010 Geography Curriculum in the selected schools. According to Minh (2025), observations in qualitative research is unstructured and flexible. The researcher can shift focus from one thing to another as the need arises. The researcher can also choose either to observe or participate in the activities taking place (Lim, 2025). A writing book and a pen were my data recording tools.

Observation takes place in real world settings, in places and under conditions that are comfortable and familiar to the participants (Patton, 2014). Dumont (2023) suggests immersion involves actively participating in the ongoing dynamics and activities of the research setting, while observation entails engaging with and experiencing the everyday life of the chosen setting for the study The researcher at a point entered the participants' world and through on-going lesson sought the participants' perspectives and meanings.

Observation Checklist

This consists of some set of guiding principle that the researcher wrote down to guide him on what to look out for during the observation process. The observation checklist was used to guide the researcher on what to look out for on the field when observing

participants, (Lim 2025). The observation check list was also used as a check list to follow and observe specific characteristics of both students and the teachers during lessons. It aided the researcher in observing the actions, events, movements and relationship between students and teacher during the lessons.

Interview Guide

This was made up of a set of questions which guided the researcher to stay focused on the interview and ask questions which aligned with the objectives of the study and also maintaining consistency with all the participants. In collecting qualitative data by means of individual interviews, an interview guide is an important tool in supporting the interviewer's ability to pose questions relevant for the topic of interest (Pedersen et al., 2016).

Limitations of Observation

Observation, as a data collection method, presented both advantages and limitations during the study. One notable limitation was the restriction imposed by the district education office, which prevented the researcher from taking pictures of the classroom activities. Additionally, the presence of the researcher as a non-participant observer led to changes in student Behaviour. Some students exhibited shyness or reluctance to actively engage in class discussions and activities, while others initially altered their Behaviour in response to the presence of a stranger. This observer effect subsided over time as students became accustomed to the researcher's presence, but it remained a potential source of bias. Another challenge was the non-interference aspect of observation, which, while advantageous for maintaining natural interactions, limited the researcher's ability to seek immediate clarifications from participants during the process.

To mitigate these limitations, the study employed data triangulation by combining observations with semi-structured interviews. Triangulation enhances the validity and reliability of qualitative research by using multiple sources of data to gain a fuller understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2014). For instance, interviews with teachers provided valuable insights into teaching methods, challenges, and curriculum delivery, complementing the observational data. This approach helped to counterbalance the limitations of observation, offering a more comprehensive view of how the 2010 Geography curriculum was implemented and experienced in the classroom. By integrating multiple methods, the study ensured that the findings reflected both observed Behaviours and participants' perspectives.

3.11.3 Source of Data

The data were drawn from both primary and secondary sources. The main source of primary data was from the field that is going down to the people and interacting with them. The primary data provided current evidence on the field. Meanwhile, the secondary source of data was obtained from published materials such as; books, journals, internet etc. The conclusion presented in this paper was however the build-up of the analysis drawn from the data and information from all these sources.

3.11.4 Validation of the Selected Data Collection Instruments

The research supervisors and classmates validated research questions by vetting it. The interview guide was piloted with classmates to help ensure the questions are without errors.

3.12 Data Collection

3.12.1 Participant's Profile

The researcher interviewed participants and collected their demographic data, and then used that to write their profiles. The profiles included general information about their

background and experiences in order to develop each participant's image. The researcher provided a detailed description of the data collection procedure and analysis process that aided the study of the research topic, by provided a description of the sampling procedure utilised in the study.

3.12.2 Data Reduction

Data reduction involves the process of selecting, simplifying, and extracting themes and patterns from written field notes, transcripts, and other resources available. In order to achieve this, the researcher repeatedly read the interview transcripts while searching for similarities and differences in themes. The researcher named the themes by giving each theme code names and then arranged them into categories of related issues, conceptions, ideas and patterns that emerged from participants' viewpoints.

3.12.3 Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which a research account is believed and appropriate, with particular reference to the level of agreement between participants and the researcher. The researcher enhanced the credibility through triangulation. In order to enhance credibility in the study, the researcher made it clear to the participants that they had the right to participate or withdraw from the research. The participants who participated in individual interviews were genuinely willing to take part in the study and offer data freely. This was done to produce credible data. Detailed thick description was another strategy used to promote credibility of this research. This helped the researcher to convey the actual investigated situations. The researcher also examined previous research studies to assess the degree to which the study findings were congruent to previous research studies. This was targeted at transporting the reader to the setting and to give the discussion an element of shared experiences.

3.12.4 Triangulation

Triangulation is viewed as an essential means of cross-checking multiple data collection sources to establish validity. The researcher undertook triangulation in this study, data were then collected through interview and observations. Triangulation provided both reliable and validity checks by permitting the comparison of themes in the different data groups. Interviews and observations were particularly useful in identifying issues and included the participants' perspective in Geography teaching and learning problems concerning the 2010 curriculum in the classroom with some depth while the questionnaire provided the demographic data on participants together with information on time allocation, number of periods, number of teachers, teaching methods and modes of assessment.

In the process of the triangulation, the researcher also made use of a variety of informants, and these informants were teachers in the participating schools. Their individual views were then verified against each other's and a rich picture of the evaluation of the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum in the selected school was drawn based on their contributions.

Triangulation was achieved by the participation of informants from different schools to reduce the effect of the study to a single institution. Another strategy that was employed was member checking. The researcher took the final report of specific description or themes back to participants to determine whether report reflected their views. Dempsey (2024) suggested that triangulation is the most accurate way to ensure the "validity" and "reliability" of a research study. The researcher would check informally with participants for accuracy of information during data collection. They stated that "validity" and "reliability" in data gathering result when we "cross-check our work through member checks". The researcher made the transcribed notes available to the

participants to check the accuracy of the transcription and also makes corrections where there are mistakes. This assured the participants that, the researcher was actually noting their thoughts and opinions.

3.12.5 Dependability

In this research, the researcher made use of individual interviews to enhance dependability. The way the study was carried out was described in detail to enhance dependability. Such a detailed description allows the reader to access the extent to which proper research practices have been followed. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that, the use of an 'inquiry audit' allows review to examine both the process and the research for consistency. A permanent record of the original data for analysis and researchers' comment has been kept to allow others to examine the thought process involved in the research and also enable them assess the accuracy of the conclusions drawn.

3.12.6 Transferability

The researcher provided information that could be used by readers to determine whether the findings were applicable to any new situation in order to allow transferability. Eisner (1991) stated that, this is a form of 'retrospective generalisation' that can allow us to understand our past/future experiences in the new way. This study described the characteristics of both teachers and the pupils in terms of teaching and learning.

3.12.7 Confirmability

The findings of this study were the results of the perceptions, experiences and ideas of the informants rather than the preferences of the researcher. The researcher offered a modest thoughtful examination of the methodology used in the research in order to enrich conformability.

3.13 Limitation of the Study

Limitations are constraints upon the study that are acknowledged in order to avoid misrepresentation or those conditions beyond the control of the researcher that may place restrictions on the conclusion of the study and the application to other situations (Best, & Kahn, 1993). The researcher encountered a variety of limitations in the study. The researcher found it difficult getting some of the teachers due to the double track system, some of the teachers were out of town and so the researcher had to wait for them because their track was on vacation and this delayed the researcher to an extent. The researcher lost some of the data collected on her phone because the phone was stolen.

3.14 Data Analysis Procedures

According to Patton (2014), data analysis entails the organisation of what is collected into patterns and categories while looking for relationships and linkage. Organising and analysing of the data were guided by the strategies of Patton (2014). The fourth objective of this study, which seeks to examine the extent to which the gaps identified in the 2010 Senior High School (SHS) Geography curriculum have been addressed in the revised 2023 SHS Geography curriculum, was pursued through content analysis design. Initial organisation of the data that occurred as field notes were written in longhand and reflective comments and questions recorded of interviews were written and reviewed. As an observer, the researcher began reflecting on events as they occurred and began to identify emerging themes; this is called interim analysis (Patton, 2014). Field notes were transcribed into word processed form and coded by date. Responds from interviews were also organised. All information was read vividly to “get a sense of the whole” (Patton, 2014). The analytic strategy of sketching ideas was done by jotting down ideas in the margin of the text (Sandelowski, 1995).

The researcher followed Sandelowski's suggestion of writing out the findings in the form of memos and summaries of field notes. Based on the research questions, the researcher developed categories to group the data. (Patton 2014) describes the close look at the data as one of inductive analysis searching for themes, patterns and categories to emerge, also known as "open coding". This was done by clustering comments into themes and taken a step further by linking the themes with verbatim example. By this point, as Patton (2014) suggested, the researcher reflected deeply enough on the experience to feel "grounded" or immersed in the data. The researcher then organised and wrote a description of the study. The analytical framework employed in this phase of the study was deductively structured, drawing on established models of curriculum evaluation. Tyler's (1949) Objectives Model provided a foundational lens for evaluating the alignment between stated educational aims, learning experiences, and assessment strategies. Additionally, selected elements of the Context, Input, Process, and Produc (CIP) model developed by Stufflebeam (1971) was adapted to provide a structured and flexible framework for systematically analysing the contextual conditions, resource inputs, and implementation processes influencing the effectiveness of the 2010 Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District.

3.15 Ethical Considerations

Several ethical considerations were observed while conducting this study to address credibility, fairness, and respect for stakeholders involved. First, research on this topic upheld informed consent and voluntary participation during data collection from teachers, and students. Participants were fully aware of the purpose of the study, how their responses would be used, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Additionally, confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, especially when discussing challenges faced by specific

schools or teachers, to protect their reputations and professional standing (Bryman, 2016).

Another key ethical concern is bias and misrepresentation of findings. The researcher ensured accurate presentation of data and avoid selectively reporting results to fit a predetermined narrative (Bell & Waters, 2018). Furthermore, plagiarism and intellectual honesty were upheld by properly citing sources and acknowledging previous research contributions (American Psychological Association [APA], 2020).

3.16 Chapter Summary

The Chapter three (3) focused on methodology used in the study. Research design, participants, sampling procedures, research instruments, and data collection procedures were detailed and justified. The next chapter sets out to analyse, present and interpret data collected.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Overview

This chapter examines the results and discussion from observations and the teacher's interviews, which was used to gather information regarding teacher's opinion about the implementation of the 2010 Geography syllabus on the selected schools in the Ellembelle District.

This chapter is divided into 4 sections. The first section describes Geography teacher's views on the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus, teaching and learning strategies, challenges that affect the successful implementation of the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum and also examines the extent to which the gaps in the 2010 SHS Geography Curriculum has been addressed in the 2023 Geography Curriculum. The second section examines information gathered from observation. A class in each of the schools was observed. The third section deals with the discussion and interpretation of the study.

Table 1 Background Information of Teachers

Teacher	Age	Sex	School of Teaching	Years of Experience in Teaching	Area of Geography	Educational Qualification
Participant 1	32	Male	Bonzo-Kaku Senior High School	7 years	Practical Geography	BA Social Science (Major: Political Science minor: Geography)
Participant 2	48	Male	Bonzo-Kaku Senior High School	21 years	Physical and human, Geography	MPhil Geography Education, BA Social Science (Major: Geography; minor: Political Science)
Teacher	**Age**	**Sex**	**School of Teaching**	**Years of Experience in Teaching**	**Area of Geography**	**Educational Qualification**
Participant 3	42	Male	Uthman Bin Afam Senior High School	12 years	Human and Physical Geography	BA Social Science (Major: Political Science; minor: Geography)
Participant 4	37	Male	Uthman Bin Afam Senior High School	5 years	Human Geography	BA Social Science (Major: Economics; minor: Geography)
Participant 5	36	Male	Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School	9 years	Practical Geography	BA Social Science (Major: Political Science; minor: Geography)

Participant 6	50	Male	Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School	23 years	Physical and practical Geography	BA Social Science (Major: Political Science; minor: Geography)
Participant 7	39	Male	Esiama Senior High/Tech School	16 years	Human Geography	PGDE, BA Social Science (Major: Social Studies; minor: Geography)
Participant 8	29	Male	Esiama Senior High/Tech School	2 years	Physical Geography	BA Social Science (Major: Economics; minor: Geography)

Source: Field data, 2021.

Table 1 provides a detailed profile of the study participants, focusing on their age, sex, teaching school, years of teaching experience, area of specialisation in Geography, and educational qualifications.

Table 1 shows that all participants are male, with ages ranging between 29 and 50 years. The youngest teacher, Participant 8 (29 years), had the least teaching experience of 2 years, while the oldest teacher, Participant 6 (50 years), had the most extensive experience of 23 years. This variation in teaching experience suggested that while some teachers possessed decades of practical knowledge, others were relatively new to the field. The schools represented include Bonzo-Kaku Senior High School, Uthman Bin Afam Senior High School, Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School, and Esiama Senior High/Technical School, reflecting a diverse set of institutional contexts for Geography curriculum implementation.

Regarding areas of specialisation, teachers' expertise covered Human Geography, Physical Geography, and Practical Geography. For instance, Participant 1 and

Participant 5 specialised in Practical Geography, while Participant 4 and Participant 7 specialised in Human Geography. Participant 2 and Participant 6 possessed broader expertise, covering Physical and Human Geography or Physical and Practical Geography.

In terms of educational qualifications, most participants hold a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Social Science, with majors and minors in Geography, Political Science, Economics, or Social Studies. Notably, Participant 2 holds an MPhil in Geography Education, the highest qualification among the group, which implies advanced training and a strong foundation in Geography teaching. Additionally, Participant 7 holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), indicating formal teacher training alongside his Social Science degree.

Overall, the results reflect a relatively experienced teaching cohort with varied specialisation areas and qualifications. The significant representation of teachers with a minimum of two (2) years and a maximum of twenty-three (23) years of experience, coupled with diverse knowledge in different areas of Geography, provides a strong foundation for implementing the 2010 Geography curriculum. However, the absence of female teachers among the participants is notable and points to gender imbalances within the Geography teaching profession in the selected schools.

4.1 Findings

This section covered the discussion of the results from the data presentation and analysis. The discussion of the findings was presented based on the research questions. The researcher conducted eight interviews. The participants who were teachers were asked to express their experience with the implementation of the 2010 Geography syllabus in relation to the teaching of Geography at their various schools. The participants expressed shared concerns under the research questions:

1. What are Geography teachers' views on the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus in the Ellembelle District?
2. What teaching and learning methods are employed by teachers in the implementation of the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District?
3. What challenges affect the successful implementation of the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District?

4.1.1 Views on the 2010 SHS Geography Syllabus in the Ellembelle District

The researcher sought to find out from teachers their views on the 2010 Geography curriculum under the following themes: *Time Allocation, Availability of resources, Geography teachers available, qualification of Geography teachers, scheme of work, various forms of assessments*.

4.1.2 Time Allocation

The emerging themes on time allocation for Geography across schools in the district were insufficient periods, rushed lessons, and difficulty exhausting the syllabus, misalignment between the breadth of the Geography curriculum and the limited time allocated for its delivery. Additionally, administrative inaction and disparities in subject prioritisation were highlighted as factors affecting instructional quality and the achievement of termly targets. Below are some comments from the Geography teachers:

"Since I came to this school, I have complained that the time for Geography is not enough but nothing has bee done about it and the school expect me to exhaust the syllabus, how can I? (Participant 5)

"Some subjects are given more periods a week but Geography is given just 3 periods, meanwhile the Geography subject is very broad, I pray someday my school authorities will do something about this, and then we can have enough time for the subject." (Participant 7)

"The schedule provides enough time to teach both theoretical and practical aspects of Geography effectively. We have enough time to conduct fieldwork and other hands-on activities that make the subject more engaging." (Participant 1)

"The time allocation is well-balanced, ensuring that we don't feel rushed and that we can cover the material at a reasonable pace. There is enough time to review and assess students' understanding before moving on to new topics." (Participant 2)

"The time allocation allows for a variety of teaching methods, including lectures, discussions, group work, and independent research, ensuring that all learning styles are addressed." (Participant 4)

"I teach 40 minutes per period but the time allocated to me is completely inadequate and this leads to rushed lessons and eventually affecting depth of understanding." (Participant 4)

"I struggle to meet termly targets, affecting the overall quality of my teaching. (Participant 3)

The Table 2 shows the distribution of times allocation as reported by participants in the sampled schools.

Table 2 Distribution of Time Allocation

Schools & Participants	Number of hours per period	Number of periods per week	Total number of hours per week
Bonzo Kaku SHS			
Participant 1	30 minutes	12 periods	6 hours
Participant 2	30 minutes	18 periods	9 hours
Uthman Bin Afam SHS			
Participant 3	40 minutes	6 periods	4 hours
Participant 4	40 minutes	6 periods	4 hours
Nkroful Agric SHS			
Participant 5	1 hour	3 periods	3 hours
Participant 6	1 hour	3 periods	3 hours
Esiama Senior High/Tech			
Participant 7	1 hour	3 periods	3 hours
Participant 8	1 hour	3 periods	3 hours

Source: Field data, 2021.

Table 2 presents data on time allocation for teaching Geography across four senior high schools in the Ellembelle District: Bonzo Kaku SHS, Uthman Bin Afam SHS, Nkroful Agric SHS, and Esiama Senior High/Technical School.

Participant 1 teaches 12 periods per week, with each period lasting 30 minutes, leading to a total of 6 hours per week. However, Participant 2 teaches 18 periods per week at the same school, also with each period being 30 minutes, resulting in a total of 9 hours per week. The disparity between the two teachers in the number of periods highlights a lack of uniformity in the distribution of teaching loads. Although Participant 2 has more hours, the 30-minute duration per period may not provide enough time for in-depth explanations, practical activities, or student engagement, particularly for topics that require detail, such as Physical Geography or Practical Geography.

Participant 3 teaches 6 periods per week, with each period lasting 40 minutes, totaling 4 hours weekly. Participant 4 also 6 periods per week, with each period lasting 40 minutes, totaling 4 hours weekly. Both participants having only 4 hours weekly, is significantly constrained, limiting the ability to cover topics comprehensively affecting instructional depth and lesson flow, or conduct practical sessions.

Participant 5 teaches 3 periods per week, with each period lasting 1 hour, giving a total of 3 hours weekly. Similarly, Participant 6 teaches 3 periods per week, with each period lasting 1 hour, giving a total of 3 hours weekly. Here, while Participant 5 & 6 benefits from 1-hour periods, the total teaching time of 3 hours weekly is inadequate for covering the extensive syllabus, especially for topics that require hands-on activities.

Participant 7 teaches 3 periods of 1 hour each, totaling 3 hours per week, while Participant 8 teaches also having the same allocation, 3 periods of 1 hour each, totaling 3 hours per week. Both participants have relatively short total weekly hours, However, 1-hour periods allows for better instructional flow and activity integration.

The data reveals significant disparities in time allocation across schools found in the same District, both in the number of periods taught and the duration of each period. While some teachers (e.g., Participant 2) have 9 hours per week, others (e.g., Participant 5 and Participant 7) have only 3 hours per week. Such inconsistencies hinder the uniform delivery of the 2010 Geography curriculum. Teachers with shorter periods (30 minutes) expressed challenges in achieving lesson objectives due to limited time for explanations, discussions, and practical exercises. On the other hand, participants with fewer hours overall struggled to cover the syllabus comprehensively, leading to rushed lessons or skipped content.

From the results, four of the teachers reported that, they were not able to achieve all their lesson objectives due to the time allocated for Geography, they were of the view that, the time is not enough. Three of the schools (Esiama Senior High/Tech School, Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School and Bonzo-Kaku Senior High School) reported that, the responsibility for drawing up the time table and ensuring it is adhered to typically falls under the purview of the school administration, specifically, the Assistant Headmaster/Headmistress in charge of Academics and the other school (Uthman Bin Afam Senior High School) reported that the responsibility for drawing up the time table and ensuring its adherence is delegated to a time table committee made up of 5 teaching staff. Once the timetable is established, it is the responsibility of both teachers and students to adhere to the schedule, effective communication between teachers, and the school administration is crucial to address any issues related to the timetable and to make necessary adjustments when required.

Per the teaching syllabus for Geography (Senior High School 1-3) Geography must be allocated 6 periods of 40 minutes each per week. It is very clear from the study that out of the 4 schools and 8 participants, only Uthman Bin Afam Senior High School reported that their school go by the prescribed time allocation by the Ghana Education Service.

It is of a great concern that some schools choose not to go by what the Ghana Education Service has prescribed for all schools to follow with regards to time allocation for the Geography subject. There is a reason for the allocation of time for Geography by the teaching syllabus for Geography and so all schools are supposed to strictly adhere to it. Also, the study shows that some of the authorities in charge of the timetable are not able to adjust the allotted time for Geography to enable teachers have adequate time to teach. The teachers were asked if they were able to exhaust the syllabus at the end of the academic year with the times allocated to Geography, out of the eight (8) teachers, only three (3) were able to exhaust their topics they are to treat in the academic year devising strategies, due to the disparities in the time allocation for some of these schools. This might eventually affect the students in the final year because they will not be able to cover all the topics but they will be expected to sit for their final exams. At that stage it is assumed they have covered all the topics in the SHS syllabus.

Teachers generally expressed concerns about time constraints preventing them from completing curriculum objectives. These time inconsistencies significantly impact the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. The 2010 Geography curriculum requires adequate time for theoretical teaching, practical activities, and student engagement. Effective curriculum change and implementation demand sufficient time allocation, personal interaction, in-service training, and strong people-based support (Kaur et al., 2023). Topics such as map work, landform analysis, and GIS concepts demand more time and continuity, which shorter periods cannot provide. Teachers with fewer total

hours struggle to meet curriculum objectives, leading to gaps in learning and poor student performance, especially in Practical Geography. Additionally, the disparity in teaching time allocation across schools raises questions about equity in the education system. Students in schools with fewer hours or shorter periods are at a disadvantage compared to their peers, as they receive less exposure to key Geography concepts and practices.

During classroom observations, it became evident that the time allocated for Geography lessons was insufficient for comprehensive syllabus coverage, particularly for Practical Geography. In most cases, teachers had to rush through topics to complete the required content within the limited instructional periods. This time constraint was especially noticeable in lessons involving map interpretation, where students required additional time for hands-on practice and detailed explanations. Teachers often struggled to balance theoretical instruction with practical applications due to the limited lesson periods. As a result, practical activities, which are essential for reinforcing key geographical concepts, were either reduced in scope or omitted altogether. Additionally, some lessons were frequently interrupted due to school-wide activities, further reducing the available teaching time. It was observed that teachers attempted to manage this challenge by assigning extra reading and practical exercises as homework. However, the lack of structured in-class practice meant that some students struggled to grasp critical skills independently.

A key issue highlighted in the study is that the majority of the teachers expressed concerns about inadequate time to complete the syllabus, a situation that could negatively impact students' preparedness for final examinations. Participants teaching with 30-minute periods found it challenging to provide comprehensive explanations, conduct practical sessions, or facilitate student engagement in discussions. These

findings align with research on effective instructional time management, which emphasises that longer, uninterrupted periods foster better learning outcomes (Ambrose et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the study found that the responsibility for timetable structuring varies across schools. While three schools reported that the Assistant Headmaster/Headmistress in charge of academics oversees time allocation, Uthman Bin Afam SHS indicated that a timetable committee is responsible. This inconsistency in timetable management could contribute to the observed variations in time allocation for Geography.

As Gouëdard, et al. (2020) emphasise, curriculum implementation is never automatic; it is shaped by local contexts, teacher agency, resource availability, and institutional support. Thus, successful implementation requires more than a well-written syllabus as it depends on the capacity of teachers and schools to actualise the curriculum's intentions. Since teachers plays an integral role with regards to curriculum implementation, the researcher sought to find out their views on the 2010 Geography Curriculum on the following issues: time Allocation, availability of resources, Geography teachers available, qualification of Geography teachers, scheme of work, forms of assessments. The study employed CIPP model and has Context evaluation as the first dimension of the model which aligns with the researchers first objective, which seeks to explore Geography teachers' views on the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum in Ellembelle District. By examining teachers' interpretations of the syllabus within their specific institutional settings, the study assessed whether the curriculum design aligns with contextual demands which includes the needs, challenges, and opportunities that influence curriculum implementation. By examining teachers' perceptions on *time allocation, resources availability for teaching, Geography teachers availability,*

qualification of Geography teachers, scheme of work and forms of assessment the successes of the curriculum implementation can be made known. Curriculum implementation is widely acknowledged to be shaped by local contexts and teacher agency rather than being an automatic translation of policy into practice (Gouëdard et al., 2020; Wedell & Grassick, 2017).

In conclusion, the analysis highlights a misalignment between actual time allocation for Geography in senior high schools and the GES-prescribed instructional framework. The inconsistencies in period durations and total weekly hours raise concerns about equitable access to quality education. Given that subjects like Geography require extensive explanation, practical sessions, and critical thinking exercises, adherence to the prescribed time allocation would be beneficial for ensuring uniform curriculum delivery and optimising student learning outcomes. It is recommended that school authorities strictly adhere to the time allocation framework set by GES to provide students with equal opportunities for academic success.

4.1.3 Availability of Resources for Teaching

The themes on availability of resources for teaching revealled significant inadequate provision of teaching and learning resources, with both GES and school management failing to supply essential instructional materials. Teachers frequently rely on personal resources and unreliable internet sources, highlighting institutional neglect and infrastructural challenges. There is a pronounced lack of practical tools, field equipment, and digital technologies, which undermines effective delivery of Physical and Practical Geography. Additionally, insufficient professional development opportunities and limited support for fieldwork contribute to reduced student engagement and declining interest in the subject. The following quotations highlight the experiences of Geography teachers:

"GES is not providing schools with the necessary resources to compliment the provisions in the syllabus; the school's management too have refused to provide the necessary resources to support teaching and learning. The teacher further added that, the school does not have enough teaching resources and the ones used in teaching are personal materials purchased by the teacher to aid in the teaching and learning process." (Participant 2)

"The school does not have resources to facilitate teaching and learning and I always resort to images from the internet which is not the best due to the unreliable nature of the internet". (Participant 1)

"The school can only boast of a globe and some few old maps. When I am to use any teaching material that is not available, I am left with no choice than to teach like that". (Participant 6)

"Sometimes it becomes challenging to get access to certain teaching aid such as; topographical sheets for practical works and projector to show landform features during Physical Geography lessons." (Participant 4)

"Lack practical tools and field equipment, prevents students from gaining practical experience. Also, there is a severe shortage of technology or digital tools to enhance Geography lessons, such as GPS, laptops, projectors etc. Our school does have access to reliable internet or multimedia equipment for effective teaching." (Participant 7)

"We aren't given enough opportunities for training in modern teaching methods or to update our knowledge of geographical developments. Field trips and practical work are essential for Geography, but we're often unable to organise them due to lack of funding or support from the administration." (Participant 5)

"Students are losing interest in Geography because they do not see its practical relevance due to the lack of hands-on learning experiences. (Participant 5)

Systematically documenting the availability of resources for teaching within the sampled Senior High Schools in the Ellembelle District is a crucial undertaking. This investigation will provide concrete, localized evidence to clarify the external factors that impede effective curriculum implementation, offering a tangible explanation for the gap between policy intent and classroom reality. Abubakari, et al. (2025), are of the view that instructional materials and teaching resources are things that teachers can access to help them do some aspect of their job better as part of the

professional development process (either pre-service or in-service), this is important

because the quality of teachers has been highlighted as the most important factor in determining the effectiveness of a school system. Teaching resources could be defined as the instruments of presentation and transmission of the prescribed educational material. These include, amongst others: images, maps, photographs, sketches, diagrams, films, and written material such as newspaper clippings or articles from scientific and technical literature (Bušljeta, 2013).

The purpose of utilising teaching resources in class is to assist the teacher with the presentation and transmission of educational content and the achievement of educational objectives, whilst aiding the students in acquiring knowledge and profiling different abilities and values. Examples of some common goals of using teaching resources are, student motivation, developing creativity, evoking prior knowledge, encouraging the process of understanding, decoding, organising and synthesising the educational content, logical thinking and reasoning, communication and interaction, and contributing to the development of different skills and the acquisition of values of students, as well as the retention of desirable knowledge, skills and attitudes (Bušljeta, 2013). The 2010 teaching syllabus outlines some resources needed for Geography education and they are listed below:

- Assorted map extracts for map reading,
- Survey instruments such as: prismatic compass, chain, tape measure, arrow, ranging poles,
- Global Position System (GPS) Globes, Digital Camera, Computer, CDs of various geographical features

All the eight (8) teachers reported that, resources for teaching are not enough in the various schools. These are comments from the teachers to support the unavailability of some resources to enhance their teaching.

All the eight (8) teachers made it clear that there were not enough teaching and learning materials for teaching Geography in the schools and some of the teachers had to provide some of the materials with their own resources. It is evident that instructional resources were not readily available for use in all the schools, instruments such as Stephenson screen, wind vane, rain gauge, satellites images, and geographical library were not found in any of the sampled schools. This is a very worrying development because most of the students will complete SHS without knowing how some of these instruments look like. It was observed in a classroom where a teacher tried to project some images for his lesson, but due to the difficulty in trying to connect a faulty projector the teacher spent about 20 minutes of the allocated time to fix the projector but at the end the projector could not work and so the time spent was wasted for nothing.

The teachers' responses suggest that the curriculum emphasises practical components like map interpretation and fieldwork, which are intended to equip students with skills for further studies and real-world applications. However, these objectives are not being met due to resource inadequacies.

Similarly, Participant 2 noted that while the curriculum is comprehensive, it remains "demanding" and difficult to implement effectively without the necessary resources and training.

The curriculum's focus on practical skills is valuable for real-world applications, but the inability to deliver these components compromises its effectiveness. As Participant 5 pointed out, students are losing interest in Geography because they do not see its practical relevance due to the lack of hands-on learning experiences.

This undermines the curriculum's goal of preparing students for further academic pursuits and careers in Geography-related fields, such as cartography, environmental management, and urban planning.

During classroom observations, it was evident that the availability of essential teaching resources for Geography was inadequate. Many schools lacked assorted maps, updated atlases, ICT tools, which are critical for effective teaching and learning. In some cases, teachers had to rely on outdated materials or improvised teaching aids to explain key geographical concepts. This limitation significantly affected the delivery of both theoretical and practical lessons, particularly in aspects such as map interpretation and projection of geographical features. Furthermore, the absence and the poor usage of ICT facilities in most schools meant that students had minimal exposure to modern Geography tools, limiting their ability to develop practical skills relevant to real-world applications. Some teachers attempted to bridge this gap by using printed diagrams and sketches, but these were not as effective as interactive digital resources. It was also observed that fieldwork, an essential component of Geography education, was rarely conducted due to financial and logistical constraints. Without adequate funding for transportation and necessary equipment, many students missed the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings.

4.1.4 Availability of Geography Teachers

On availability of Geography teachers teachers expressed insufficient Geography teachers, heavy workload, large class sizes and combined classes reduce teaching effectiveness and limit student engagement. The shortage of staff also constrains the provision of individualised attention, particularly for struggling students and limited human resources negatively affect instructional quality and undermine the learner-centred vision of the syllabus. Responses from Geography teachers are outlined below:

"We have two Geography teachers in our school… Sometimes, the workload is overwhelming because we have to teach multiple classes across different levels." (Participant 2)

"We sometimes have to combine classes or split attention between multiple streams, which reduces the effectiveness of teaching." (Participant 6)

"The limited staff also makes it difficult to give students individualised attention, particularly those who struggle with the subject."
(Participant 5)

"The limited number of teachers means we handle multiple classes across different year groups, which is overwhelming and can affect the quality of delivery." (Participant 3)

"With limited teaching staff and growing student numbers, it becomes difficult to give each class the attention they deserve." (Participant 4)

"*large class sizes make it hard to provide practical lessons or engage students effectively, which contradicts the syllabus's vision of enabling students to "participate effectively in the teaching and learning process." (Participant 7)*

The Geography syllabus has been organised into three inter-related branches according to the MoE (2010) as follows:

1. Physical Geography (Geomorphology, Climatology and BioGeography): This is the study of landforms, climate, weather, plant and animal life.
2. Human and Regional Geography: This is the study of human economic activities and their classification on the basis of districts, regions and zones.
3. Practical Geography: This involves the application of skills of map reading, map interpretation, data collection and analysis

The 2010 Geography syllabus for Senior High Schools (SHS) in Ghana explicitly recommends that three teachers should teach the subject simultaneously, with each teacher handling one of the three branches. This structure aims to ensure that all branches are taught concurrently throughout the three years of study, promoting competency acquisition, student participation, and reflective learning. However, the interview responses highlight significant deviations from this ideal situation, which raises concerns about the curriculum's effective implementation.

The Participants were asked the number of Geography teachers in their schools and the answers provided were presented in Table 3:

Table 3 Number of Geography Teachers in the Sampled Schools

School	Teacher	Numbers of Geography Teachers
Bonzo Kaku Senior High	Participant 1	2
	Participant 2	2
Uthman Bin Afam Senior High	Participant 3	2
	Participant 4	2
NkrofulAgric Senior High	Participant 5	2
	Participant 6	2
Esiama Senior High/ Tech	Participant 7	2
	Participant 8	2

Source: Field Data, 2021.

Table 3 shows that all four sampled senior high schools, Bonzo Kaku SHS, Uthman Bin Afam SHS, Nkroful Agric SHS, and Esiama Senior High/Tech, each have only two Geography teachers. This uniform shortage of teaching staff across all schools highlights a significant gap between the recommended number of three teachers per school, as stipulated in the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus, and the actual staffing levels. The insufficiency places a heavy workload on the available teachers, who are required to handle multiple classes and teach all branches of Geography (Physical, Human, and Practical), which affects the quality of instruction and student learning outcomes.

Participants expressed that the shortage of teachers creates workload challenges, particularly as they are required to teach multiple classes across different levels. For example:

The shortage of teachers compromises the principle of teaching the three branches of Geography simultaneously. Instead of dividing responsibilities as envisioned by the syllabus, teachers are forced to teach all branches of Geography, which is overwhelming

and reduces their ability to deliver high-quality, focused instruction.

The responses indicate that the teacher shortage leads to large class sizes and limited ability to provide individualised attention to students. This is particularly concerning for students who struggle with the subject, as teachers cannot meet the diverse needs of learners effectively.

Similarly, Participant 7 highlighted that large class sizes make it hard to provide practical lessons or engage students effectively, which contradicts the syllabus's vision of enabling students to "participate effectively in the teaching and learning process." This mismatch between the syllabus structure and actual teaching conditions reduces opportunities for student-centered approaches, such as group work, practical activities, and interactive discussions, which are crucial for reflective learning and skill development.

With only two teachers available in each school, Geography teachers are tasked with covering the entire syllabus for all three branches across multiple classes and year groups. This overwhelming workload limits the teachers' ability to prepare adequately for lessons, engage deeply with each topic, or innovate their teaching strategies. For instance:

The inability to share responsibilities among three teachers as recommended in the syllabus negatively impacts curriculum coverage, particularly for Practical Geography, which requires time, resources, and hands-on activities. Teachers are forced to adopt surface-level teaching methods, focusing on theoretical aspects while neglecting practical components due to time constraints. With only two teachers handling all branches, the simultaneous teaching of Physical, Human, and Practical Geography becomes practically impossible. Teachers may prioritise certain branches over others, often neglecting Practical Geography due to its resource-intensive nature. This

undermines the syllabus's goal of ensuring competency-based learning and reflective student participation.

4.1.5 Scheme of Work

The emerging themes highlight inconsistencies in the preparation and implementation of schemes of work across schools. Time constraints and heavy workload significantly affect teachers' ability to plan and follow structured schemes. Weak monitoring and limited institutional support contribute to non-compliance among some teachers. Additionally, resource limitations and inadequate teacher preparedness hinder effective curriculum planning and delivery. The following excerpts reflect the views of Geography teachers:

"If I decide to prepare scheme of work per the time table. I will not be able to follow it so I just teach, if we are able to cover everything at the end of the academic year fine, if not I encourage the students to read more." (Participant 3)

"There's not enough time allocated for me to properly prepare a detailed Scheme of Work given the other responsibilities I have. With the heavy workload, I often find myself rushing through the planning process, which affects the quality of the scheme." (Participant 6)

The researcher asked participants if they prepared scheme of work to guide their lessons in their Geography class and six (6) out of the eight (8) teachers said yes, they do prepare scheme of work to guide their Geography lessons. The other two did not prepare any scheme of work above quotation indicates what they had to say.

A scheme of work is a document which summarises the content of a course of instruction, and which divides the course content into manageable portions for logical and organised teaching and assessment (Dave, & Wilson, 2023). The importance of using scheme of work is that, it helps organise learning more effectively than syllabus content alone might indicate. Subject areas, or elements of wider topic areas, may not fall neatly into a single lesson-length. Some topics may require input over several individual lessons. Links between topics may need to be considered, as do the ways in

which learning may need to be stepped up from foundational principles towards more-involved or detailed knowledge and understanding. A factor which is important to consider is that a scheme of work offers the teacher some latitude in the ways in which topic areas within a course may be sequenced and addressed. Five (5) teachers may have the same job: to teach a particular course. But each teacher may devise schemes of work which are different from each other. The scheme of work allows a teacher to tailor the content specified by the syllabus to their strengths as educators, and perhaps also to the particular class groups being taught. A teacher is not merely a deliverer of educational content; it is within the role of the teacher to mould, shape, select and sequence the learning which they are providing, and the scheme of work provides a means of doing this (Dave, & Wilson, 2023).

Scheme of work is an important tool to help the teacher plan for his lessons and so if teachers do not prepare scheme of work as indicated by participants it is not a good practice. The scheme of work is a central planning tool, and the key mechanism by which a teacher organises and prepares for teaching and learning at the whole-course level. The scheme of work also demonstrates and evidences to oneself and others a thorough understanding of the syllabus aims and objectives, and from that, the approaches to teaching and learning which will be adopted throughout the delivery. A well-conceived scheme of work also allows for articulation of a teacher's style as an educator, and the varied and creative ways in which they engage learners, through appropriate and distinctive teaching, and through a careful consideration of the interplay between pedagogic theory and classroom interaction (Dave, & Wilson, 2023).

Usually, the scheme of work will need to be seen by managers and/or external auditors (Gravells, 2017). There is little or no effective monitoring in some of the schools that is why some teachers do not prepare any scheme of work for their lessons. If there is

effective monitoring by the school authorities it will be realised that some teachers do not prepare any scheme of work and they will be questioned or the teachers will prepare the scheme of work because they know their supervisors can ask of it at any point in time.

The researcher also observed that, the curriculum was not adequately updated to reflect current geographical issues, global trends, or local contexts, potentially leading to a gap between academic content and real-world situations.

During the observations, it was noted that the preparation of the scheme of work for Geography varied across schools. While some teachers had well-structured schemes aligned with the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum, others either lacked a comprehensive scheme or relied on outdated versions that did not fully reflect the syllabus requirements. In several cases, teachers prepared their schemes of work at the beginning of the term but struggled to follow them consistently due to challenges such as time constraints, lack of teaching resources, and interruptions in the academic calendar. Additionally, some teachers developed their schemes of work independently, while others collaborated within subject departments to ensure consistency. However, it was observed that due to the vast nature of the Geography syllabus, some topics, particularly those requiring practical demonstrations, were either rushed or omitted altogether. The limited instructional time further contributed to difficulties in completing planned topics as scheduled. Overall, while most teachers recognised the importance of a well-prepared scheme of work in guiding lesson delivery, practical constraints often hindered its full implementation.

In a classroom, a teacher was observed struggling to answer a question posed by a student, the teacher had to throw the question back to the students after struggling to answer, so he opened the floor for anyone to help answer the question and this was

fostering discussions rather than providing definitive answers. The students were confused at the end of the discussion. There was occasional gaps or limitations in their understanding of complex geographical theories or specific terminology. However, the teacher encouraged the students to research and explore topics independently. It was found out that this teacher was a fresh graduate who was posted to the school, the teacher minored in Geography and that explained why he was struggling in the class.

In the literature review, Metz and Bartley (2012) mentioned that to sustain and develop implementation of a curriculum there must be financial sustainability in order to avoid challenges. In this study, it was found that there were challenges such as unavailability of some resources for teaching and learning and lack of adequate teachers among others, which can be connected to financial challenges which does not allow the government to employ enough teachers and also buying of the resources needed for teaching and learning materials.

4.1.6 Forms of Assessment

Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning (Huba, & Freed, 2000). The purpose of assessments in education is two-fold, it first helps the students to demonstrate their learning, provide feedback on the errors they've been making, and help provide opportunities to better their performance with each assessment, secondly for the teachers, it works as an excellent tool to figure out if their teaching methodology is working or not (Ruppert, & Pisano, 2021).

Table 4 presents participants' responses on the various forms of assessments they employ.

Table 4 Forms of Assessment Used by Teachers

Teacher	Forms of Assessment Used
Participant 1	Class Exercise, homework, class test and project work
Participant 2	Class Exercise, Midterm Test, End of Term Examination and Group Presentation
Participant 3	Every month the school organise class test for the School Base Assessment, they conduct exercise and Exams
Participant 4	Assignment, class exercise, oral test, end of term examination
Participant 5	Class Exercise, Midterm Test, End of Term Examination.
Participant 6	Every month the school organise class test for the School Base Assessment, Exercise and End of Term Exams
Participant 7	Class exercise, oral test, end of term examination
Participant 8	Assignment, class exercise, and end of term

Source: Field Data, 2021.

Table 4 reveals that Geography teachers in the sampled schools use a variety of assessment methods to evaluate student performance, with a heavy reliance on class exercises, tests, and end-of-term examinations. All participants reported using class exercises as a frequent form of assessment, indicating a focus on immediate, short-term evaluation to check understanding during lessons. Additionally, end-of-term examinations were mentioned by Participants 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, highlighting the prominence of summative assessments to gauge students' overall performance at the end of instructional periods. Midterm tests and school-based assessments (SBAs), as noted by Participants 2, 3, 5, and 6, are also integral components, providing interim feedback on student progress and contributing to cumulative evaluations.

However, the use of project work and group presentations, which are vital for fostering

critical thinking and practical application of knowledge, appears limited, mentioned only by Participant 1 and Participant 2, respectively.

4.1.7 Teaching Methods

The emerged theme revealed challenges in implementing interactive teaching strategies due to limited time, large class sizes, resource constraints, and a broad syllabus. They highlight the effectiveness of learner-centred approaches such as role play, project work, group presentations, and oral assessments in promoting engagement, critical thinking, and real-world application of knowledge. Participants also emphasize the limitations of lecture-based teaching in addressing diverse learning preferences and fostering active participation. Additionally, concerns about equitable participation and student anxiety, particularly in oral assessments and fieldwork, emerge as important considerations in instructional practice. Below are some of the comments made by the participants:

"*Organising field trips is challenging because of costs, transportation, permissions, and lack of available time. This means that practical, real- world learning experiences are often limited."* He also added, "*When classes are large, it's difficult to ensure that every student gets meaningful hands-on experience during fieldwork activities. Not all students can engage in the same way." (Participant 3)*

"Project Works are great for engaging students, but they require a lot of preparation, resources, and time to manage effectively. It's sometimes difficult to fit projects in your lesson delivery with all the other teaching demands." (Participant 1)

"Role play is an excellent method for engaging students in Geography lessons. This allows them to explore different perspectives and understand the complexities of real-world geographical issues. I have observed that students become more confident in expressing their ideas and are better able to retain information when they actively participate in these scenarios." (Participant 3)

"As a teacher, I have found role play to be an effective strategy for making abstract Geography concepts more relatable but due to the broad nature of the syllabus It becomes challenging to employ this technique more frequently." (Participant 6)

"When the teaching is limited to lectures, students often tune out and don't actively participate. Geography is a dynamic subject that requires more interaction than a lecture can provide." (Participant 1)

"While lectures may provide a lot of information, they don't encourage students to think critically or engage in discussions. It's hard to get students to ask questions or connect

the material to their lives." (Participant 7)

"Some students prefer hands-on learning or visual stimuli, but a lecture- based approach doesn't accommodate these different learning preferences. This can make it hard for all students to fully grasp the concepts." (Participant 8)

I find project work and group presentations to be highly effective assessment tools in my Geography lessons. They allow students to go beyond rote memorisation and apply their knowledge to real-world situations. For example, when assessing students on environmental degradation, I assign them to research local environmental issues, propose solutions, and present their findings to the class. This method enhances their research, critical thinking, and teamwork skills while also encouraging them to take ownership of their learning. I have observed that students tend to be more engaged and motivated when working on projects that connect to their everyday experiences." (Participant 1)

"I have integrated project work and group presentations into my assessment strategies because they encourage active participation and deeper understanding. Recently, I assigned my students a project on urbanisation, where each group had to analyse the effects of urban expansion in their community. They collected data, conducted interviews, and presented their findings using maps and charts. This approach allowed me to assess not only their grasp of geographical concepts but also their ability to work collaboratively, communicate effectively, and use analytical skills. I believe this form of assessment provides a more comprehensive evaluation of students' learning than traditional exams alone." (Participant 2)

"*Oral tests are an effective way to assess students' understanding of key Geography concepts, especially when evaluating their ability to explain ideas in their own words. I use oral assessments to gauge students' analytical thinking and communication skills. For example, when teaching map reading, I ask individual students to interpret different map features aloud. This method helps me identify misconceptions immediately and provide instant feedback. However, I have noticed that some students, especially the shy ones, struggle with oral tests due to anxiety, so I try to create a relaxed environment to encourage their participation." (Participant 8)*

"I have found oral tests useful for engaging students in active discussions while assessing their comprehension. When covering topics like climate change or population dynamics, I conduct quick oral quizzes where students respond to questions on the spot. This allows me to assess their ability to recall facts, apply concepts, and express their ideas clearly. I also use oral tests as a revision tool before written exams to reinforce key points. However, I recognise that some students may feel nervous about speaking in front of their peers, so I sometimes conduct

one-on-one oral assessments to ensure every student gets a fair chance to demonstrate their understanding." (Participant 7)

Table 5 Teaching Techniques Used by Teachers

Teachers	Teaching Techniques
Participant 1	Lecture, brainstorming and activity-based method
Participant 2	Group discussions, lecture method
Participant 3	Discussions, role play, question and answer and field trip
Participant 4	Group discussion, question and answer
Participant 5	Discussions, questions and answers
Participant 6	Question and answer, cooperative discussion, discussions, and role play
Participant 7	Lecture method and brainstorming method
Participant 8	Brainstorming, lecture method and question and answers

Source: Field data, 2021.

Table 5 shows that teachers employ a mix of lecture-based methods, interactive approaches like group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and student-centered strategies such as brainstorming, role play, and field trips. While lecture method was the most frequently reported (used by Participants 1, 2, 7, and 8), interactive approaches like group discussions (Participants 2, 4, 5, and 6) and question and answer sessions (Participants 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8) are also widely used to engage students.

Notably, only Participant 3 mentioned the use of field trips, which aligned with the practical goals of the 2010 Geography curriculum but is underutilised overall. Although field trips are incorporated in teaching techniques, Methods such as role play (Participants 3 and 6) and activity-based learning (Participant 1) provide opportunities for active student participation but remain limited. The dominance of lecture methods suggests a reliance on teacher-centered approaches, which may hinder the development of practical competencies emphasised in the curriculum.

A closer analysis of the results showed that while teachers attempt to diversify their teaching strategies, the frequent reliance on lecture methods (reported by Participants 1, 2, 7, and 8) raises concerns about achieving the curriculum's practical and participatory objectives.

During the observation of Geography lessons, even though teachers mentioned variety of teaching techniques to deliver the subject content, the most commonly used methods included lecture-based instruction, teacher-led discussions, and the use of chalk-and-talk approaches. In many instances, teachers relied heavily on verbal explanations, with minimal student participation beyond responding to direct questions. This approach, while effective for covering theoretical concepts, often limited interactive learning and critical thinking opportunities for students. In some classrooms, teachers incorporated visual aids such as maps and diagrams to enhance students' understanding of geographical concepts. However, the availability of these resources varied across schools, and in cases where ICT tools were lacking with some non-functioning, teachers had to rely on traditional teaching materials. A few teachers attempted to integrate ICT by using mobile Phones but the absence of structured digital learning resources made this method inconsistent. Fieldwork and practical demonstrations were notably underutilised due to time constraints and financial limitations. While teachers acknowledged the importance of hands-on activities in Geography, logistical challenges often restricted their ability to organise field trips or conduct map interpretation exercises effectively. Group work and peer discussions were occasionally used to encourage collaborative learning, but the effectiveness of this approach depended on class size and student engagement levels.

The 2010 syllabus emphasises competency-based learning, requiring interactive and hands-on approaches such as inquiry-based methods, project work, and field exercises.

However, teachers appear constrained by resource limitations, large class sizes, and insufficient time allocation, making it difficult to incorporate these more effective strategies.

For instance, methods like group discussions and question-and-answer sessions (used by Participants 2, 4, 5, and 6) are interactive and can promote student engagement and critical thinking, aligning well with the curriculum's goals of fostering reflective learning. However, their effectiveness is contingent on class size and teacher-student interaction. Participants 3 and 6 stand out for including role play and field trips in their methods. Role play enhances students' understanding of Human Geography concepts, while field trips provide hands-on experiences for practical and physical topics. Unfortunately, the limited use of field trips indicates a gap in implementing practical learning, which is crucial for bridging theory and real-world geographical applications as required by the syllabus.

The predominant use of lecture methods, particularly by Participants 1, 2, 7, and 8, reflects a heavy reliance on teacher-centered approaches. While lectures are useful for delivering large volumes of information, they do not align well with the syllabus's objective of promoting active participation and practical skills. The absence of inquiry-based or project-based learning suggests that students may not be fully engaged in exploring geographical concepts independently or collaboratively. This shortfall hinders students' comprehension, retention, and ability to apply theoretical knowledge, especially in Practical Geography, where hands-on learning is essential.

In summary, while teachers employ a mix of methods, the limited use of practical, inquiry-based, and project-focused strategies undermines the goals of the 2010 Geography syllabus. Teachers' efforts to engage students through discussions and brainstorming are commendable, but structural challenges such as resource constraints,

lack of time, and large class sizes prevent them from fully implementing the recommended participatory and practical teaching methods. To improve curriculum implementation and align teaching strategies with syllabus objectives, schools must prioritise field trips, provide resources for hands-on activities, and offer professional development to train teachers in more interactive and student-centered methodologies. Similarly, oral tests (Participants 4 and 7) are underutilised, although they can help assess students' ability to articulate geographical concepts.

During classroom observations, it was evident that oral tests were a commonly used assessment method by Geography teachers. Teachers primarily used oral questioning to evaluate students' understanding of key concepts, often integrating these assessments into lesson discussions. In some instances, teachers called on individual students to answer questions aloud, while in other cases, they facilitated group responses. This approach allowed for immediate feedback and encouraged student participation.

The limited variety of assessment methods, particularly the minimal emphasis on practical, inquiry-based, or field-related assessments, suggests a misalignment with the 2010 Geography syllabus, which emphasises the development of competencies and practical skills.

The interview responses indicate that while teachers employ a variety of assessment methods, such as class tests, homework, assignments, oral tests, and end-of-term examinations, there is a consensus that the current assessment practices are not fully suitable for the curriculum's objectives or students' needs. The 2010 Geography curriculum emphasises practical skill development through activities like map work, field observations, and geographical surveys; however, teachers face significant constraints in incorporating these forms of assessments. Participants 2, 4, 6, and 7 noted that while they recognise the importance of practical and fieldwork-based assessments

for connecting theory to real-world applications, these activities are rarely conducted due to resource shortages, time constraints, and logistical challenges. As Participant 8 stated, the reliance on theoretical assessments limits the development of essential practical skills, which undermines the curriculum's intent to foster competency-based learning. Moreover, several teachers (e.g., Participants 3, 5, and 6) mentioned that although they attempt to include map drawing and geographical feature interpretation, the lack of tools, materials, and financial support makes these assessments infrequent. Group activities and practical tasks, as highlighted by Participants 1 and 4, are seen as effective for engaging students and enhancing their understanding, particularly in Human Geography. However, these methods are often sidelined due to systemic challenges. The overreliance on class exercises and end-of-term examinations, which focus heavily on theory, does not align with the goals of the syllabus of practical and reflective learning.

4.1.8 Challenges that affect the successful implementation of the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District

The emerging themes highlight inadequate teaching and learning resources, particularly for Practical Geograph, insufficient time allocation as a major barrier to covering the broad syllabus effectively, lack of professional development and limited ICT competence, which restricts the integration of modern geographical techniques into teaching. Additionally, financial constraints and weak administrative support hinder fieldwork activities and effective curriculum implementation. Responding to the challenges affecting the successful implementation of the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum in their respective schools and the district at large, the participants provided the following responses.

"One of the biggest challenges I face in teaching Geography is lack of assorted maps and other essential resources for Practical Geography. Without these tools, I am forced to rely heavily on theoretical instruction, which does not give students the hands-on experience they need to fully grasp geographical concepts. Teaching map interpretation, for example, is ineffective when students do not have access to physical or digital maps." (Participant 1)

"Time allocation for Geography lessons is too limited, making it difficult to cover all the topics outlined in the curriculum. The syllabus is broad, and the practical aspects require additional time for practical work. Unfortunately, the tight school timetable forces us to rush through topics, which affects students' understanding and engagement with the subject." (Participant 2)

"Many of us are trying our best to ensure that our students understand concepts being taught using our traditional methods because we lack the technical knowledge to integrate modern geographical techniques into our teaching." (Participant 3)

"Field trips are supposed to be an integral part of Geography learning, but we hardly organise them due to financial and logistical constraints. Without field experiences, students struggle to connect classroom theories to real-world geographical phenomena. The school administration does not prioritise funding for such activities, which makes it even harder to implement the curriculum effectively." (Participant 4)

"Professional development is crucial for Geography teachers, yet there are very few opportunities for us to upgrade our skills. I believe training workshops, particularly on how to incorporate ICT in our lessons, would help us align our teaching with the curriculum's expectations. However, without such training, we are left to figure things out on our own, which is not always effective." (Participant5)

"Teaching Practical Geography without the necessary resources is a major limitation. We need fieldwork tools, Globes, weather instruments among others, but most of these are not available in our schools. As a result, students miss out on the practical learning experiences that would help them develop essential geographical skills." (Participant 6)

"The lack of administrative support for Geography teaching makes it difficult to implement the curriculum effectively. We have proposed several times that the school invest in better Geography resources and training, but little has been done. Without support from school leadership, it is challenging to introduce innovative teaching methods and conduct practical activities." (Participant 7)
"The combination of limited resources, inadequate time allocation, and lack of training makes it almost impossible to teach Geography as the curriculum intends. Practical lessons require both time and equipment, but we often lack both. If these issues are not addressed, students will continue to miss out on the critical skills that Geography education is supposed to develop." (Participant 8)

The third objective also aligns with Process Evaluation a third dimension to the CIPP model. In this study, process evaluation was conducted through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations that explored challenges that affects the

successful implementation of the curriculum. Through process evaluation, level of adherence to syllabus guidelines can be made known. These factors can pinpoint operational weaknesses and recommend adjustments to enhance curriculum implementation.

During the observation of Geography lessons in various schools, several challenges hindering the effective implementation of the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum became evident. One of the most prominent issues was the inadequate teaching and learning resources. Many classrooms lacked essential instructional materials such as maps, globes, atlases, weather instruments, laptops and projectors. In schools where these resources were present, they were often outdated or insufficient to cater to the number of students. This limitation made it difficult for teachers to effectively deliver practical aspects of the curriculum, particularly in areas such as map interpretation and fieldwork. Another significant challenge was the limited time allocation for Geography on the school timetable. Teachers frequently expressed concerns that the allocated periods were insufficient to cover the syllabus comprehensively. This issue was particularly critical for Practical and Physical Geography, which requires hands-on exercises, fieldwork, and in-depth discussions. The time constraints often forced teachers to rush through topics, reducing opportunities for students to engage in active learning and apply concepts practically.

The interview responses revealed a clear consensus among teachers regarding the challenges affecting the successful implementation of the 2010 Geography SHS curriculum. The most prominent issue cited by all participants is the lack of teaching resources, particularly for Practical Geography, which is emphasised in the syllabus. Teachers highlighted the unavailability of essential tools such as assorted maps, globes, weather instruments, fieldwork instruments among others are crucial for practical

lessons. For example, Participant 6 noted that teaching Practical Geography without resources significantly limits its delivery, while Participant 1 emphasised that reliance on traditional methods alone is ineffective. The absence of these tools means that teachers often default to theoretical teaching, depriving students of the hands-on experiences needed to grasp geographical concepts and skills effectively.

Another recurring challenge is insufficient time allocation for Geography on the school timetable, which prevents teachers from covering the broad syllabus comprehensively. Participants 2, 4, and 8 emphasised that the limited time forces them to rush through lessons, leaving little room for student engagement, practice, or mastery of concepts. This is particularly concerning for Practical Geography, where more time is needed for activities such as map drawing, fieldwork, and data analysis. Additionally, teachers lamented the lack of professional development opportunities to enhance their skills in delivering the practical components of the curriculum. Participants 3, 5, and 7 expressed the need for training workshops, particularly in emerging areas like GIS, to align their teaching with the curriculum's requirements.

Furthermore, limited administrative support for organising field trips exacerbates the challenges in] implementing the practical aspects of the curriculum. Participants 2, 4, and 6 pointed out that logistical and financial constraints prevent schools from facilitating fieldwork, which is essential for bridging the gap between theory and practice. Without these experiences, students miss the opportunity to apply what they learn in real-world contexts, undermining one of the curriculum's core objectives. Overall, the challenges, i.e., inadequate resources, insufficient time, lack of training, and poor administrative support significantly hinder the successful implementation of the 2010 Geography SHS curriculum and limit its ability to achieve its intended outcomes. The findings reveal several interconnected challenges affecting the successful

implementation of the 2010 Geography SHS curriculum, notably the lack of teaching resources, insufficient time allocation, limited professional development opportunities, and poor administrative support for fieldwork. These findings align with existing literature, which underscores the importance of adequate resources, time, and teacher capacity for effective curriculum delivery. The lack of essential tools for Practical Geography, such as assorted maps, fieldwork tools among others are critical limitation noted by all participants. According to Ababio and Dumba (2013), the effective teaching of Geography requires hands-on tools and resources to provide students with practical experiences that connect theory to real-world applications. Similarly,

UNESCO (2005) emphasises that without adequate teaching materials, subjects like Geography, which rely heavily on practical activities, are reduced to theoretical lessons, diminishing their impact on student learning outcomes.

The issue of insufficient time allocation further compounds the challenges identified. Participants 2, 4, and 8 noted that the limited time on the school timetable prevents teachers from covering the broad curriculum comprehensively, particularly for Practical Geography. This finding aligns with Cobbold (2017), who argues that time constraints force teachers to prioritise theoretical content over practical exercises, which undermines the development of critical skills such as map interpretation and fieldwork. Practical Geography topics require extended time for activities like map interpretation, field observations, and map drawing, yet the current time allocation limits these essential learning opportunities. Inadequate time for practical components contradicts the 2010 Geography syllabus's emphasis on competency-based learning, which seeks to ensure students acquire practical, reflective, and problem-solving skills.

The findings also highlight the need for professional development and training opportunities to build teachers' capacity to deliver the practical aspects of the

curriculum. Participants 3, 5, and 7 expressed the need for workshops, particularly in emerging areas like GIS, which are critical for modern Geography education. Edu, (2025), who asserts that continuous professional development is essential for equipping teachers with the skills to adapt to curriculum innovations and incorporate new teaching methods effectively. Without such training, teachers may lack the confidence and technical know-how to teach practical topics, further perpetuating reliance on traditional, teacher-centered methods.

Moreover, the lack of administrative and financial support for fieldwork represents a significant barrier to implementing the curriculum as intended. Participants 2, 4, and 6 noted that logistical and financial constraints prevent schools from organising field trips, which are crucial for bridging the gap between theory and practice. According to Amoako (2010), fieldwork in Geography helps students develop observational and analytical skills while enhancing their understanding of real-world geographical phenomena. However, without administrative commitment and funding, these opportunities remain inaccessible, leaving students unable to achieve the practical learning outcomes outlined in the curriculum.

The findings from Table 5 highlight a significant reliance on lecture-based teaching methods, with limited use of practical and student-centered strategies. While some teachers incorporate interactive techniques like group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and brainstorming, these methods alone are insufficient for achieving the practical learning outcomes outlined in the 2010 Geography curriculum. This situation is further compounded by the lack of professional development training, as reported by participants in the study. Teachers indicated a need for training workshops, particularly in emerging areas such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which are crucial for modern Geography education.

The limited adoption of practical teaching methods reflects broader systemic issues, including inadequate training opportunities for teachers. According to Edu, (2025) as cited by Fullan, (2015), continuous professional development is essential for equipping teachers with the skills necessary to adapt to curriculum changes and integrate innovative instructional methods. However, in the study, participants expressed concerns about the absence of professional development programmes, leaving them ill-equipped to implement practical components of the syllabus effectively. This aligns with the findings of Abakah (2023), who argues that without structured in-service training, teachers are likely to default to traditional, teacher-centered methods, which limit student engagement and practical skill development.

The findings also have implications for perception, practice, and supervision within the education system. The persistent use of lecture methods suggests that teachers may not perceive practical methods as feasible within the existing constraints of time, resources, and administrative support. This perception, if unchallenged, could lead to a normalisation of theoretical teaching at the expense of hands-on learning. Effective supervision and monitoring by educational authorities are crucial in addressing these challenges. As noted by Canton (2021), structured professional development programmes should be coupled with active supervision and mentoring to ensure teachers adopt and sustain best practices in teaching Geography.

From a policy implementation perspective, the lack of training opportunities undermines the competency-based approach that the curriculum seeks to promote. The Ghana Education Service (GES) has established guidelines emphasising active, experiential learning, yet the findings suggest a disconnect between these standards and classroom realities. To bridge this gap, targeted policy interventions are required, including increased funding for teacher training, incorporation fieldwork methodologies into in-

service programmes, and stronger administrative support for practical learning activities. Anlimachie (2019) underscores that for practical subjects like Geography, investment in teacher training directly correlates with improved student performance and engagement.

In conclusion, the findings emphasise the urgent need for enhanced professional development training to enable teachers to effectively implement the practical components of the Geography syllabus. Without adequate training, teachers remain constrained by outdated instructional practices, limiting students' ability to develop essential geographical skills. A multi-pronged approach involving structured in-service training, improved supervision, and policy alignment with practical learning goals is necessary to ensure effective curriculum implementation. Addressing these issues will enhance the quality of Geography education and better prepare students for both academic and real-world applications.

4.2 Conclusion

This chapter outlined data gathered from respondents during the interview, observation of lessons and discussion of the data gathered, the findings of the study affirms the need for quality as the theory of the study stated. In the next chapter, the researcher will give summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

This chapter provides the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the summary of the study. The second section discusses the conclusions which was based on the various findings of the study and are reported as responses to the research questions for the study. In conclusion, recommendations towards the way forward after evaluating the implementation process of the 2010 Geography curriculum for some Senior High Schools in the western region (Ellembelle district) are provided.

5.1 Summary

The problem studied was the evaluation of the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum in some selected Senior High Schools in the western region (Ellembelle district).

The study population comprised four Senior high schools in the Ellembelle district namely; Bonzo-Kaku Senior High School, Uthman Bin Afam Senior High School, Nkroful Agricultural Senior High School and Esiama Senior High/Tech School. Purposive sampling was to select Geography teachers for the study. A convenient sample of eight teachers were selected from the four school. Interviews and observations were the main tools for collecting data from the sampled schools. The researcher used qualitative method in analysing the data obtained through the interviews and observations. Organising and analysing of the data were guided by the strategies of Patton (2002). The essential findings of the study are discussed comprehensively.

The data that were obtained from observations of the classroom activities and the interviews conducted from this study, drew attention to the critical issues that pertained

to the implementation process of the 2010 Geography curriculum for senior high schools in the Ellembelle district, literature was reviewed. The researcher touched on the issues regarding the implementation process of the 2010 Geography curriculum, outlining the challenges faced in the implementation process.

5.2 Summary of key findings

- The objective 1 of the study revealed significant inconsistencies in time allocation for teaching Geography across schools, with only one school goes by the GES standard of six weekly periods. These disparities led to incomplete syllabus coverage, inadequate preparation for exams, and inequities among students. Geography teaching resources were also grossly inadequate, forcing teachers to rely on improvised materials and limiting students' exposure to practical and modern applications. Staffing shortages further compounded the challenge, as most schools had only two Geography teachers instead of the recommended three, resulting in heavy workloads and neglect of practical Geography. The teachers' credentials highlighted a serious issue out of the eight participants, only one majored in Geography and had a Masters' degree in Geography teaching; the other participants minored in Geography and majored in other subjects. Additionally, while schemes of work were recognized as important, some of the teachers did not prepare any scheme of work to guide them in teaching. Assessment practices were found to be heavily summative, with limited use of project work or interactive methods that foster critical thinking and practical skills.
- This section discusses the objective 2 of the study; the researcher found out that some teachers were stuck to the traditional teaching method where the teacher will explain on the topic and the students take notes. Even though this technique is useful on some occasions, the syllabus emphasises on the creation of learner- centred

classrooms using creative approaches to teaching and learning as strategies to ensuring learner empowerment and independent learning. Therefore, as education has evolved over the years, teachers are also expected to learn more teaching techniques and develop on their teaching methods. Also, the research revealed inadequacy of teaching and learning materials in some schools. The Global Education Monitoring Report as cited in Daniel (2010) argues the need to provide textbook for students by stating that, every leaner should have a textbook and the amount a country spends on learning materials is a good indicator of its commitment to providing a quality education for all. Teaching and learning materials play a critical role in improving student- learning achievements.

- The Objective 3 findings indicated that the effective implementation of the 2010 SHS Geography curriculum is hindered by several interconnected challenges, including inadequate teaching and learning resources, insufficient time allocation, limited professional development opportunities, and poor administrative support for fieldwork. Teachers highlighted the absence of essential tools such as maps, globes, and weather instruments, which forces them to rely heavily on theoretical instruction at the expense of practical learning. In addition, the limited time on school timetables prevents comprehensive coverage of the broad syllabus, particularly in Practical Geography. Professional development opportunities are scarce, leaving teachers without the skills to integrate modern geographical techniques into their lessons.

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by unveiling the challenges and inconsistencies in how some schools implement the 2010 Geography curriculum, particularly in their failure to strictly follow the syllabus. The CIPP model

developed by Daniel Stufflebeam provided a structured and decision-oriented framework for evaluating the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District. Its Context, Input, and Process dimensions enabled a systematic examination of local conditions, resource adequacy, teacher preparedness, and classroom practices, thereby identifying gaps between the intended and enacted curriculum. Although the Product component was not applied, its exclusion aligned with the qualitative and implementation-focused nature of the study. The model's flexibility, as refined by Chris Coryn, enhanced analytical coherence and generated policy-relevant insights for curriculum improvement. The research Gap this study sought to fill was to examine the implementation of 2010 Geography curriculum in the Ellembelle District which has not been done by anyone since its inception of the curriculum and the research has filled the gap by bringing to light the lapses in adherence to the Geography curriculum, challenges faced by some schools with the implementation of the 2010 Geography curriculum.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Ministry of Education should ensure strict adherence to the curriculum by ensuring uniform time allocation for Geography in Senior High Schools especially in the Ellembelle District to address discrepancies in curriculum implementation. Regular assessments and monitoring methods are needed to track curriculum progress, while professional development programmes should equip educators with practical methods to cover the curriculum effectively.
2. Academic Heads in the various schools in the District should ensure teacher collaboration, best practice sharing, and mentorship opportunities to enhance

3. teaching strategies and student engagement, to ultimately improve learning outcomes.
4. Ghana Education Service in the Ellembelle District should ensure adequate provision of teaching and learning resources, standardize time allocation, conforming to the model of three specialised Geography teachers, administrative support to conduct field trips, ensuring mentorship training or transition period for newly assigned teachers.
5. Again, Ministry of Education together with must implement effective monitoring system to ensure that teachers adhere to the demands of the syllabus in order to enhance the implementation process.

5.6 Areas for further Studies

The present study examined the 2010 SHS Geography syllabus in the Ellembelle District by examining teachers' views, their teaching and learning methods, the challenges that constrained curriculum delivery. While these findings may contribute to knowledge on curriculum evaluation in Ghana, there are several areas that remain open for further investigation.

- To start with, future studies can expand the geographical scope of this research to include multiple districts or regions. This is because, a wider sample would allow for comparative insights across different contexts, especially between rural and urban schools, and help to establish whether the challenges observed in Ellembelle are systemic or context-specific.
- It is also suggested that future studies explore the perspectives of other stakeholders like students, head teachers, curriculum officers, and parents. This is as a result of the fact that, this study only focused on teachers' views Therefore, the addition of the voices of learners and other stakeholders would provide a more deeper understanding

of how the 2010 syllabus functioned in practice and its impact on teaching and learning.

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APENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT
Interview Guide (Teachers)

SECTION 1: Background Information

1. Age (… .....)

2. Sex (….....)

3. Highest educational qualification? ( )

4. Years of teaching experience (… .....)

1. To explore Geography Teachers' view on the 2010 SHS Geography Curriculum with regards to their interpretation of the syllabus and how it affects student's performance in Ellembelle.

a. Time Allocation

i. How many periods per minutes do you teach in a week?

ii. Are you able to achieve your lesson objectives per the allotted time?

b. Availability of resources

i. Do you have all the resources for teaching and learning?

If “yes” mention them ……., ……., ……..,.....,

If “No” what are the reasons ……

c. How many Geography teachers do you have in your school?

d. Do you prepare a Scheme of work to guide your lessons?

e. What are the various forms of assessment that you employ?

f. How do you see the students’ performance as to what you expect from what you teach them?

g. How well are you familiar with the 2010 Geography Curriculum?

2. To examine the teaching and learning methods employed by SHS Geography teachers in the Ellembelle District

a. What are the various teaching and learning methods you employ in teaching?

i. …….

ii. …….

iii. ……

3. Examine the Challenges that affects the successful implementation of the 2010 Geography SHS Curriculum in the selected schools.

a. What challenges do you face with regards to the implementation of the curriculum?

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Section 1: General Information

- School Name:

  ……

- Date of Observation: ……
- Observer's Name:

  …….

- Class Level Observed (SHS 1/2/3): ……
- Number of Students Present: ……

Section 2: Teaching and Learning Activities

Indicator	Yes	No	Comments
Teacher follows the 2010 Geography curriculum guidelines in lesson delivery.	☐	☐	
Lesson objectives are clearly stated and aligned with the curriculum.	☐	☐	
Teacher uses a variety of teaching methods (lecture, discussions, practicals, group work).	☐	☐	
Integration of ICT tools (projectors, internet resources) in teaching.	☐	☐	
Students actively participate in discussions and activities.	☐	☐	
Teacher uses real-world examples and case studies to explain concepts.	☐	☐	
Practical activities, such as fieldwork, are incorporated into lessons.	☐	☐	

Section 3: Availability and Use of Teaching Resources

Indicator	Yes	No	Comments
School has sufficient Geography textbooks for students.	☐	☐	
Maps, globes, atlases, and other visual aids are available and used.	☐	☐	
ICT resources (computers, projectors,) are available for Geography lessons.	☐	☐	
Adequate classroom space and facilities for Geography instruction.	☐	☐	
Resources are accessible to both teachers and students.	☐	☐	

Section 4: Assessment and Evaluation Methods

Indicator	Yes	No	Comments
Teacher uses diverse assessment methods (quizzes, presentations, practical exercises).	☐	☐	
Formative assessment (classroom exercises, assignments) is conducted regularly.	☐	☐	
Students are given opportunities to apply concepts through practical exercises.	☐	☐	
Exam questions align with curriculum objectives.	☐	☐	

Section 5: Challenges and Areas for Improvement

- What are the main challenges observed in curriculum implementation?

  ……
  ……
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  ……
  ……

- What recommendations can be made for improvement?

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  ……

Observer's Signature: ……Date: ……