

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF TECHNICAL STUDENTS
TOWARDS THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES: A CASE STUDY OF
NKORANZA TECHNICAL INSTITUTES IN THE BONO EAST REGION**



2023

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**A Dissertation in the Department of Social Studies Education,
Faculty of Social Sciences Education, Submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in Partial fulfilment**

**of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of
Master of Education
(Social Studies Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

DECEMBER, 2023

DECLARATION

I, Martha Baffoe hereby declare that, except for references made to other persons' works that have been duly acknowledged, this dissertation is original research undertaken by me and has not been presented in part or in whole for the award of a degree in this university or elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

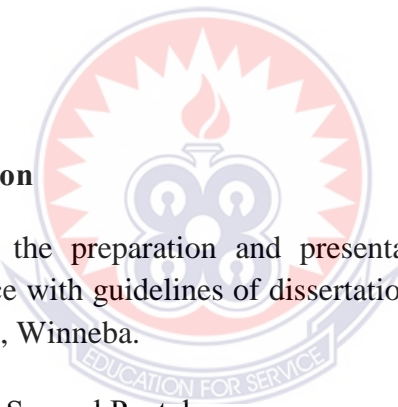
Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Samuel Poatob

Signature:

Date:



DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my lovely husband Mr. Michael Yaw Mensah and my children Adom, Nhyira and Aseda Mensah.



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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of technical students towards the teaching of Social Studies in the Nkoranza Technical Institute in the Bono East region of Ghana. This study adopted interpretivism paradigm. The researcher used the case study design for the study in the Nkoranza technical Institute in the Bono East Region of Ghana. Qualitative research approach was used in this study. The sample for this study was 15 form two students of which eight were males and seven were females. Convenience sampling technique was used in selecting the sample for the study. The researcher used interview guide in collecting data for the study. The findings showed that technical students often expressed a sense of disconnection between Social Studies and their core technical courses. Theoretical concepts in Social Studies were perceived as unrelated to their technical education, making it challenging to see the subject's relevance. It was therefore, recommended that Social Studies teachers should employ a variety of teaching methods, including hands-on activities, group discussions, and case studies, to cater for the diverse learning preferences of technical students. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with TVET should allocate adequate resources for Social Studies, including updated textbooks, online materials, and access to relevant information sources, to support students' learning and keep them engaged.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In the global educational landscape, the importance of technical education and its integration with broader subjects, such as Social Studies, has gained increasing recognition. The changing dynamics of the modern workforce require individuals with not only technical skills but also a well-rounded understanding of societal, cultural, and ethical issues. As industries become more interconnected on a global scale, graduates from technical institutions are expected to possess a holistic perspective that extends beyond their specialized fields. The integration of Social Studies into technical education aligns with the broader movement in education towards producing graduates who are adaptable, culturally aware, and socially responsible in an increasingly interconnected world (Smith et al., 2017; UNESCO, 2015).

In the African context, technical education plays a crucial role in equipping students with practical skills that are essential for economic development and addressing societal challenges (African Union, 2023). African economies are diversifying and incorporating technology-driven industries, making technical education pivotal for fostering innovation and sustainable growth (African Union, 2023). However, there is a growing recognition that technical education should not solely focus on vocational skills but also include a well-rounded education that encompasses social and civic education. This perspective aligns with efforts to produce graduates who can contribute meaningfully to their communities, engage in informed citizenship, and

comprehend the societal implications of their technical work (Eisemon & Yinger, 2011).

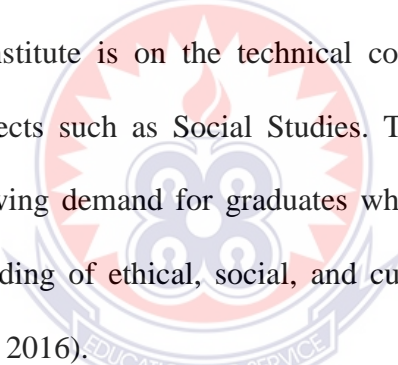
In the Ghanaian context, the integration of Social Studies into technical education holds significance within the broader framework of educational reform and national development. The educational system in Ghana has been evolving to address the changing needs of the workforce and society. Technical and vocational education has been recognized as a key driver of economic transformation, and efforts have been made to align it with national development goals such as industrialization and entrepreneurship (Ministry of Education, Ghana, 2017). Moreover, the inclusion of Social Studies in technical education is in line with Ghana's commitment to producing responsible citizens who can actively participate in democratic processes, contribute to social cohesion, and address community challenges (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2017). Despite these global, African, and Ghanaian imperatives, there is a paucity of research examining the perceptions of technical students towards the teaching of Social Studies. Nkoranza Technical Institute, situated in the Bono East Region of Ghana, provides a valuable case study for exploring these perceptions and their implications for curriculum design and educational policy.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In an ideal educational context, technical students should receive a well-rounded education that encompasses not only vocational skills but also a comprehensive understanding of social, cultural, and civic issues. This integration is vital for producing graduates who are not only technically proficient but also socially conscious and responsible citizens (Smith et al., 2017; UNESCO, 2015).

However, at Nkoranza Technical Institute in the Bono East Region of Ghana, it appears technical students do not give much attention to the learning of Social Studies as in the case of their technical subjects. This deficiency raises concerns about the holistic development of students and their ability to engage effectively with the broader societal challenges beyond their technical specialization.

Over the years, measures have been put in place to address this issue. The Ghanaian Ministry of Education has made efforts to align technical education with broader educational goals, emphasizing the importance of producing graduates who can contribute positively to their communities and society as a whole (Ministry of Education, Ghana, 2017). Despite these efforts, technical students focus at the Nkoranza Technical Institute is on the technical courses at the expense of other equally important subjects such as Social Studies. This is particularly an issue of concern given the growing demand for graduates who possess both technical skills and a strong understanding of ethical, social, and cultural dimensions (Eisemon & Yinger, 2011; UNECA, 2016).



The persistence of this problem has several adverse effects. Graduates who lack a solid grounding in Social Studies may struggle to comprehend the broader implications of their technical work on society. They might also face challenges in engaging in civic activities, participating in democratic processes, and addressing community issues effectively (African Union, 2007; National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2017). This gap in education could hinder Ghana's progress towards economic development, social cohesion, and sustainable growth.

The pressing need to bridge this gap in technical education and its implications for both individual graduates and the nation at large forms the fundamental reason for this

study. Despite the recognition of the importance of integrating Social Studies into technical education, there remains a dearth of empirical studies specifically investigating the perceptions of technical students towards the teaching of Social Studies in Technical schools. The existing studies have primarily focused on broader aspects of technical education and its outcomes, often overlooking the nuanced perspectives of students (Douny, 2018; Mensah & Boateng, 2019). Thus, this study aims to fill this research gap by exploring the perceptions of students at Nkoranza Technical Institute regarding the teaching of Social Studies in technical schools and understanding the factors influencing these perceptions.

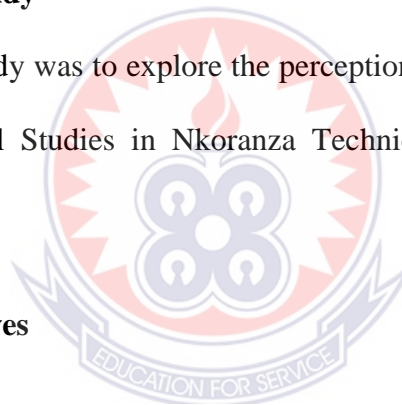
1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of technical students towards the teaching of Social Studies in Nkoranza Technical Institute in the Bono East Region of Ghana.

1.4 Research Objectives

The study seeks to:

1. explore the perceptions of technical students at Nkoranza Technical Institute towards the teaching of Social Studies in the Technical schools.
2. Assess the challenges that technical students encounter when studying Social Studies at Nkoranza Technical Institute.
3. examine how the challenges encountered by Technical students of Nkoranza Technical Institute could be addressed.



1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the perceptions of students of Nkoranza Technical Institute regarding the teaching of Social Studies in Technical Schools?
2. What are the challenges technical students face when studying Social Studies at the Nkoranza Technical Institute?
3. What measures could be put in place to address the challenges faced by technical students in Nkoranza Technical Institute in their quest to learn Social Studies?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study would inform policymakers about the need to enhance the Social Studies curriculum to make it more relevant and engaging for technical students. Policymakers can advocate for the inclusion of practical applications, real-world examples, and cross-disciplinary approaches to connect Social Studies concepts with technical skills. Policymakers can use the study's insights to develop guidelines for effective pedagogical methods in teaching Social Studies to technical students. These guidelines can emphasize interactive approaches, hands-on activities, and strategies that align with students' preferred learning styles. The study can prompt policymakers to consider ways of making Social Studies more inclusive of technical education. By demonstrating the connections between the humanities and vocational training, policies can be developed to promote a more holistic educational experience. Educators can benefit from the study's findings by adopting teaching strategies that resonate with technical students. Practical and interactive methods, as suggested by the study, can be incorporated to create a more engaging learning environment. The study underscores the importance of tailoring educational approaches to students'

preferences and needs. Educators can use the insights gained to personalize instruction, taking into account the diversity of learning styles and backgrounds.

The study advocates for the integration of Social Studies themes into technical subjects. This approach can be practically implemented to show students the interconnectedness of different subjects and their real-world applications.

The study contributes to learning theory by highlighting the impact of students' perceptions on their engagement and academic outcomes. It supports the idea that a positive perception of a subject can enhance the learning experience and retention of knowledge. The study aligns with constructivist approaches to education, emphasizing the importance of active engagement, collaborative learning, and the integration of prior knowledge into new contexts. The study resonates with sociocultural theory by acknowledging the role of social interactions and cultural contexts in shaping student perceptions. It supports the notion that educational experiences are influenced by a complex interplay of social factors.

1.7 Delimitations

The study specifically focused on Nkoranza Technical Institute in the Bono East Region of Ghana. The findings may not be directly applicable to other technical institutes or educational settings in different regions or countries, as factors such as regional culture, curriculum variations, and teaching approaches can differ significantly.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The entire research work was organized under five different chapters which were coherently arranged starting from chapter one up to chapter five. The role of each chapter is unique but carefully linked to other ensuing chapters to facilitate research

cohesiveness. The upscale chapter of this study which is chapter one, discusses the introduction of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study, the delimitations of the study, and organization of the study. Chapter two would review the relevant literary works of other researchers while chapter three discusses the research design, population, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, mode of data analysis and the ethical issues. Chapter four deals with data analyses and presentation whiles Chapter five presents a summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature related to the current study. It also examines various themes in literature which include:

- a. Theories that provide the framework for the study
- b. The role of Social Studies in Technical education
- c. Technical students' perception on the teaching of Social Studies in the Technical schools
- d. Challenges faced by technical student in their quest to learn Social Studies
- e. Measures that could be used to make technical student develop interest for Social Studies

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Value Expectation Theory

The theory that was used as a framework for this study was the Value Expectation Theory. The Value Expectancy Theory, also known as the Expectancy-Value Theory, has been developed and expanded upon by various researchers over time. One notable contributor to the theory is Martin Fishbein, an American psychologist (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The theory emphasizes that individuals' motivation and behavior are influenced by their beliefs about the value of an outcome and their expectations of achieving that outcome.

According to the Value Expectancy Theory, individuals are more likely to engage in a particular behavior if they perceive the outcome as valuable and have a high

expectation of success (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In the context of education, this theory suggests that students' motivation and academic achievement are influenced by their beliefs about the value of education and their expectations of success.

Research has shown that when students perceive education as valuable and have high expectations of success, they are more likely to be motivated, set challenging goals, and persist in their academic pursuits (Eccles & Wigfield, 2018). For example, if students believe that obtaining a higher education degree will lead to better career opportunities and personal fulfillment, they are more likely to be motivated to invest time and effort into their studies.

The Value Expectancy Theory has been widely applied in the field of education to understand students' motivation and academic achievement (Eccles et al., 2022). By considering the value students place on education and their expectations of success, educators can design learning environments and instructional strategies that foster motivation and engagement. For instance, educators can emphasize the real-world relevance of academic content, highlight the potential benefits of learning, and provide opportunities for students to experience success and build confidence in their abilities (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020).

It is important to note that the Value Expectancy Theory has evolved over time, and different researchers have contributed to its development. While Martin Fishbein is associated with the theory, other scholars such as Albert Bandura and Jacquelynne S. Eccles have also made significant contributions to the understanding and application of expectancy-value models in various domains, including education (Bandura, 2001; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020).

The Value Expectation theory is a theoretical framework that can be applied to the study of how challenges experienced by technical students influence their perceptions of the subject. This theory posits that individuals' attitudes and behaviors are shaped by their perceived value and expectations regarding a particular subject or activity (Eccles&Wigfield,2020). According to this theory, individuals are more likely to engage in activities or subjects they perceive as valuable and expect positive outcomes from Simpkins et al. (2006).

The relevance of the Value Expectation theory to the study of technical students' perceptions of Social Studies lies in its ability to provide insights into how challenges impact their attitudes, motivation, and career aspirations. By exploring the interplay between perceived value, expectations, and challenges, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that shape students' perceptions of Social Studies and their subsequent engagement with the subject.

Applying the Value Expectation theory in this context offers several benefits. Firstly, it helps identify the specific challenges that technical students face in studying Social Studies, such as the lack of practical application or difficulty in understanding. By understanding these challenges, educators and policymakers can develop targeted interventions and strategies to address them, thereby enhancing students' engagement and learning outcomes.

Additionally, the Value Expectation theory allows researchers to uncover the underlying reasons behind students' negative attitudes or decreased motivation towards Social Studies. By examining students' perceived lack of value or relevance to their technical education or future careers, educators can tailor the curriculum, teaching methods, and career guidance to bridge the gap between Social Studies and

technical subjects. This can help students recognize the importance of a well-rounded education and the potential benefits of interdisciplinary knowledge.

Empirical studies have provided support for the Value Expectation theory in various educational contexts. For example, a study by Wigfield and Eccles (2000) investigated how students' value beliefs and expectations influenced their motivation and achievement in different academic domains. The findings demonstrated that students who perceived higher value and had positive expectations regarding a subject were more motivated and performed better academically. This supports the central tenets of the Value Expectation theory regarding the influence of perceived value and expectations on student outcomes.

Similarly, a study by Simpkins et al. (2006) examined the role of value expectations in shaping students' career aspirations. The results showed that students who perceived greater value in a subject were more likely to express interest in pursuing careers related to that field. This underscores the connection between perceived value, expectations, and career aspirations, supporting the premises of the Value Expectation theory.

2.3 The Role of Social Studies in Technical Education

The integration of Social Studies within technical education is of paramount significance in preparing students for the multifaceted challenges of the modern workforce (Cuban, 2017). Technical institutes traditionally focus on imparting specialized knowledge and skills specific to particular industries or professions. However, the world beyond the technical sphere is intricate and shaped by social, cultural, political, and economic dynamics. By integrating Social Studies, technical

education transcends its insular boundaries, providing students with a broader perspective on these contextual factors that influence their chosen fields.

This integration equips students with the ability to analyze issues from diverse angles, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2015). For instance, a future engineer with an understanding of Social Studies can navigate complex infrastructure projects with sensitivity to environmental, ethical, and social considerations, ensuring sustainable and responsible development.

Social Studies education contributes to the holistic development of technical students by nurturing their civic and social awareness, ethical reasoning, and interpersonal skills (Oliver & Bullard, 2015). Beyond technical proficiency, students learn to appreciate the interconnectedness of their work with broader societal issues. This holistic approach fosters a sense of civic responsibility and ethical leadership, preparing students to be not just proficient technicians but also responsible citizens and leaders within their communities.

Furthermore, Social Studies promote cultural competence, encouraging technical students to engage effectively in a diverse and globalized world (Banks, 2017). They learn to understand and respect the perspectives and values of individuals from various backgrounds, which is increasingly vital in a workforce characterized by diversity.

Numerous studies underscore the real-world applicability of Social Studies concepts in technical fields. For instance, research has shown how knowledge of history and geography is instrumental in designing infrastructure projects that consider the historical and cultural significance of the areas they impact (Hartman & Baron, 2019).

Additionally, an understanding of economics informs decisions in resource allocation and financial management, essential aspects of technical projects (Capie, 2018). Social Studies concepts like ethics and citizenship play a pivotal role in guiding the ethical behavior and social responsibility of technical professionals (Beder, 2016). Engineers, for example, need to consider the societal implications of their work, especially when dealing with projects that impact public safety and well-being.

Generally, the integration of Social Studies within technical education is essential for producing well-rounded technical professionals. It provides them with a broader perspective, fosters critical thinking and ethical reasoning, and equips them with the skills needed to navigate the complex and interconnected world of modern technical fields.

2.4 Attitudes of technical students towards Social Studies

Students' attitudes towards Social Studies as a subject have been the focus of numerous studies in the field of education. Research by Andreou et al. (2018) found that students' attitudes towards Social Studies were influenced by their perceptions of the subject's relevance to their lives. When students perceived Social Studies as directly connected to their personal experiences and the world around them, they exhibited more positive attitudes. Conversely, when Social Studies was seen as abstract and disconnected, students tended to exhibit less enthusiasm. Moreover, studies by Lee and Kim (2017) have revealed that student attitudes towards Social Studies can be shaped by the teaching methods employed by educators. When instructors utilize interactive and experiential teaching strategies, such as simulations, debates, and real-world case studies, students are more likely to view Social Studies as engaging and relevant.

Several factors can influence students' interest and engagement in Social Studies classes. One key factor is the teaching approach. Research by Ainley and Ainley (2011) suggests that pedagogical methods that foster active learning, critical thinking, and student participation can enhance engagement. In contrast, passive learning environments where students are passive recipients of information tend to diminish interest and engagement. Another influencing factor is the perceived relevance of Social Studies content. A study by Fazio (2017) found that students were more engaged in Social Studies when they could see its practical applications in their lives. This suggests that connecting Social Studies concepts to current events or issues that students care about can boost engagement.

Research has consistently demonstrated a positive correlation between students' attitudes towards Social Studies and their academic performance. A study by Sowe and Tamboukou (2018) found that students who held more positive attitudes towards Social Studies tended to perform better in related academic assessments. This correlation can be attributed, in part, to increased motivation and effort among students who find the subject engaging. Additionally, research by Dettori and Persico (2019) explored how students' attitudes towards Social Studies were linked to their problem-solving skills. The study found that students with more positive attitudes towards Social Studies were more adept at critical thinking and analytical reasoning, which are essential skills for academic success.

In general, the literature on student engagement and attitudes towards Social Studies underscores the significance of making the subject relevant, engaging, and interactive. Positive attitudes towards Social Studies have been consistently linked to improved

academic performance, highlighting the importance of creating a learning environment that fosters enthusiasm and active participation.

2.5 Relevance of Social Studies to Technical Curriculum

Understanding how students perceive the relevance of Social Studies to their technical education is crucial to assessing the effectiveness of its integration. Research by Johnson and Smith (2016) highlights that students often enter technical institutes with the expectation of receiving highly specialized training, which can sometimes lead to skepticism about the inclusion of broader subjects like Social Studies. However, studies have shown that students' perceptions of the relevance of Social Studies evolve as they progress through their technical programs. For example, a study by Martinez and Gonzalez (2019) found that students who initially questioned the value of Social Studies came to appreciate its relevance as they encountered complex, real-world technical challenges. These challenges often required a multifaceted approach, where Social Studies concepts, such as ethics and environmental impact assessment, played a critical role.

The incorporation of Social Studies concepts into technical education can significantly enhance problem-solving and decision-making skills. Research by Jones and Brown (2018) has demonstrated that technical students who have a solid foundation in Social Studies concepts, such as systems thinking and ethical reasoning, are better equipped to analyze complex technical problems from a holistic perspective. This holistic approach enables them to consider not only the technical aspects of a problem but also its social, ethical, and environmental dimensions. Furthermore, studies have shown that exposure to Social Studies concepts can lead to more responsible and ethical decision-making in technical fields. For instance,

research by Williams et al. (2020) found that students who received ethics education through Social Studies were more likely to make ethically sound decisions in engineering scenarios where moral considerations were essential. This indicates that Social Studies can instill a sense of responsibility and ethical awareness among technical students, qualities highly valued in professional settings.

The literature on the relevance of Social Studies to the technical curriculum underscores that students' initial skepticism often transforms into appreciation as they progress through their programs and encounter real-world challenges. Moreover, Social Studies concepts have been consistently shown to enhance problem-solving and decision-making skills among technical students, making them more effective and responsible professionals.

2.6 Teaching Methods in Social Studies

Social Studies education encompasses a variety of teaching methods aimed at fostering students' understanding of complex societal issues. These methods can be broadly categorized into traditional lecture-based approaches and more interactive and experiential strategies.

Traditional lecture-based methods have long been a staple in education. In Social Studies, this often involves instructors delivering content through lectures, textbooks, and readings (Eggen & Kauchak, 2019). While this method can effectively convey information and provide a structured framework, it tends to be passive for students, limiting opportunities for active engagement and critical thinking. In contrast, interactive and experiential approaches have gained prominence in recent years. These methods include problem-based learning, case studies, simulations, debates, role-playing, and the use of multimedia resources (Mills & Tincher, 2017). These

approaches prioritize active learning, critical thinking, and student participation, making Social Studies education more dynamic and engaging.

Traditional lecture-based methods are often characterized by the transmission of knowledge from the instructor to the students. While they can efficiently deliver content to a large audience, they may lead to passive learning experiences (Shulman, 2018). Students may become recipients of information, limiting their opportunities for deeper exploration and understanding. Conversely, interactive and experiential approaches actively involve students in the learning process. For example, consider a traditional lecture on a historical event versus a role-playing simulation where students take on the roles of historical figures and engage in debates and discussions. The latter approach not only imparts historical knowledge but also hones critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills. Additionally, these methods often provide students with a deeper understanding of the social, cultural, and ethical dimensions of the subject matter (Meyer & Crawford, 2018). Interactive methods are often characterized by collaborative learning, where students work together to solve problems or explore complex issues (Johnson et al., 2019). This collaborative aspect can enhance teamwork and communication skills, which are highly valuable in professional settings.

Numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of teaching strategies in engaging technical students in Social Studies. A study by Bell and Smetana (2020) compared traditional lecture-based instruction with project-based learning in a technical college setting. The findings indicated that project-based learning led to higher levels of engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills among technical students.

Similarly, research by Johnson et al. (2019) explored the use of simulations in teaching Social Studies to technical students. The results showed that simulations enhanced student engagement, fostered collaborative skills, and improved understanding of complex social issues. Studies by Eggen and Kauchak (2019) have emphasized the importance of incorporating multimedia resources, such as documentaries and interactive websites, in Social Studies education. These resources can capture students' attention and provide a multisensory learning experience, enhancing engagement.

In conclusion, the literature underscores that interactive and experiential teaching methods in Social Studies education tend to be more effective in engaging technical students compared to traditional lecture-based approaches. These methods promote critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and active participation, aligning well with the needs of modern technical education.

2.7 Integration of Social Studies and Technical Curriculum

The integration of Social Studies topics into technical coursework represents a dynamic approach to education, emphasizing the interconnectedness of various disciplines. This educational strategy has garnered attention in recent years as educators recognize the value of cross-disciplinary learning. Research by Adams and Simmons (2018) delves into the integration of Social Studies concepts into engineering education. Their study explores how engineering students benefit from understanding the social, ethical, and environmental dimensions of their field. They argue that by incorporating topics like sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility, engineering students can better appreciate the broader implications of their work. Additionally, studies by Jacobsen and Alroe (2018) have examined the inclusion of

Social Studies topics in agricultural and environmental science education. Their research demonstrates that integrating Social Studies helps students comprehend the complex relationships between agriculture, the environment, and society. This understanding is crucial for addressing contemporary challenges like sustainable farming practices and environmental conservation.

Cross-disciplinary learning, including the integration of Social Studies into technical coursework, offers several potential benefits. Firstly, it promotes a holistic understanding of complex issues. When students in technical fields are exposed to Social Studies concepts, they gain a broader perspective on the societal and ethical dimensions of their work (Roberts & Bybee, 2018). For example, engineers who learn about the ethical implications of their designs are better equipped to make responsible decisions in their professional practice.

Secondly, cross-disciplinary learning fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Research by Breslow et al. (2016) highlights that when students are encouraged to explore topics from multiple angles, they develop enhanced analytical and decision-making abilities. This is particularly valuable in technical fields where innovative solutions often require consideration of diverse factors. Moreover, cross-disciplinary learning promotes teamwork and collaboration. When students from different backgrounds and disciplines collaborate on projects that integrate Social Studies, they learn to appreciate the value of diverse perspectives and develop effective communication skills (Jacobsen & Alroe, 2018).

Lastly, cross-disciplinary learning prepares students to be responsible and socially conscious professionals. Understanding the societal and ethical aspects of their field

equips them to contribute positively to society and make ethically informed decisions in their careers (Adams & Simmons, 2018).

2.8 Challenges and Barriers in Teaching Social Studies to Technical Students: African and Ghanaian Perspectives

Andreou et al. (2018), in the educational landscape of Ghana and many African countries, the integration of Social Studies into technical education poses a unique set of challenges. While the importance of Social Studies in fostering a well-rounded education is widely recognized, educators often encounter difficulties when attempting to deliver this subject effectively to technical students. This paper explores the specific challenges and barriers faced by educators in Ghana and Africa as a whole when teaching Social Studies to technical students. It also discusses the factors contributing to these challenges, such as perceived irrelevance, time constraints, and curricular pressure. Finally, it presents strategies suggested by researchers to address these issues.

2.8.1 Challenges Faced by Educators in Teaching Social Studies to Technical Students

One of the primary challenges in teaching Social Studies to technical students in Ghana and Africa is the perception of irrelevance. Technical students often view Social Studies as disconnected from their core technical subjects, such as engineering or agriculture (Nketsia, 2003). This perception can lead to disinterest and apathy, making it challenging for educators to engage students effectively.

Technical education in Ghana and Africa is often characterized by rigorous and demanding curricula that leave limited room for subjects outside of the core technical disciplines (Higginbotham, 2016). As a result, educators face time constraints when

incorporating Social Studies into the curriculum. Finding adequate time for in-depth Social Studies instruction can be challenging, leading to superficial coverage of important topics. The pressure to cover technical subjects comprehensively, often driven by national exams and industry demands, can sideline Social Studies (Brew, 2008). Educators face the dilemma of balancing the need to prepare students for technical careers with the importance of imparting knowledge about societal and ethical aspects of their fields.

2.8.2 Factors Contributing to These Challenges

Examination-Centric Education System

The examination-centric education system in Ghana and Africa places a heavy emphasis on technical subjects and standardized testing (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). This system tends to undervalue Social Studies, making it less prioritized in both curriculum design and student perception (Asare&Nti,2022).

Insufficient Teacher Training

In many cases, educators in technical institutes may not have received adequate training in teaching Social Studies effectively (Owusu-Ansah, 2017). This can result in less engaging instruction and difficulty in connecting Social Studies concepts to technical subjects.

Lack of Integration Strategies

The absence of well-defined strategies for integrating Social Studies into technical education contributes to the challenges faced by educators (Adu-Gyamfi & Baek, 2017). There is often a gap between the theoretical understanding of the importance of integration and its practical implementation in the classroom.

2.8.3 Strategies to Address These Challenges

Curriculum Integration

A more integrated curriculum design, where Social Studies concepts are woven into technical subjects, can help overcome perceived irrelevance (Brew, 2008). This approach encourages students to see the practical applications of Social Studies in their technical fields.

Teacher Professional Development

Investing in teacher professional development programs that equip educators with effective teaching strategies for Social Studies is crucial (Owusu-Ansah, 2017). Continuous training can help students engage students and demonstrate the relevance of Social Studies.

Interdisciplinary Projects

Encouraging interdisciplinary projects that require technical and Social Studies skills can bridge the gap between the two domains (Adu-Gyamfi & Baek, 2017). Such projects provide hands-on experience and demonstrate the practical value of Social Studies concepts.

Contextualized Curriculum

Developing a Social Studies curriculum that is relevant to the specific cultural and societal contexts of Ghana and Africa can enhance student engagement (Nketsia, 2003). Students are more likely to connect with the subject matter when it reflects their own experiences.

In general, teaching Social Studies to technical students in Ghana and Africa presents a series of challenges rooted in perceptions of irrelevance, time constraints, and

curricular pressure. However, by addressing these challenges through curriculum integration, teacher professional development, interdisciplinary projects, and a culturally contextualized curriculum, educators can create a more engaging and meaningful learning experience for technical students. Social Studies can and should play a vital role in nurturing well-rounded, socially responsible professionals in Ghana and across the African continent.

2.9 Technical Students' Perceptions About the Teaching of Social Studies in Technical Schools

Understanding students' perceptions of Social Studies education is essential for tailoring effective teaching strategies and curriculum development. This section explores relevant studies that have directly investigated students' perceptions of Social Studies education, highlighting findings related to students' attitudes, opinions on teaching methods, and their suggestions for improvement.

2.9.1 Studies Investigating Student Perceptions

Several studies have delved into the perceptions of students regarding Social Studies education, providing valuable insights into how students perceive this subject. In a study conducted by Morrison and Schifter (2017), students were asked about their experiences with Social Studies education. Findings revealed that students often valued Social Studies as a subject that helped them understand the world around them. They particularly appreciated lessons that used real-world examples and encouraged critical thinking.

Kouritzin and Strohan (2018) explored students' attitudes toward Social Studies in a Canadian context. They discovered that students often found Social Studies topics

relevant and engaging when they related to contemporary issues and allowed for discussion and debate.

2.9.2 Attitudes and Opinions of Students Social Studies

Students' attitudes toward Social Studies are influenced by various factors, including their perceptions of the subject's relevance, teaching methods, and classroom experiences:

- **Relevance:** Studies consistently show that students' attitudes toward Social Studies are more positive when they perceive the subject as relevant to their lives (Andreou et al., 2018). For instance, when students can connect Social Studies concepts to current events or personal experiences, their interest and engagement tend to increase.
- **Teaching Methods:** Students' attitudes can also be shaped by the teaching methods employed by educators. Research by Lee and Kim (2017) found that students held more positive attitudes toward Social Studies when instructors used interactive and experiential teaching strategies, such as simulations, debates, and real-world case studies.

2.9.3 Suggestions for Improvement

Students often have valuable suggestions for improving their Social Studies education, which can inform pedagogical approaches and curriculum development:

- **Interactive and Experiential Learning:** Many students express a preference for interactive and experiential learning methods (Johnson et al., 2019). They appreciate activities like debates, role-playing, and hands-on projects that make the subject come alive.

- **Real-World Applications:** Students often suggest that Social Studies lessons should emphasize the real-world applications of the subject matter (Mills & Tincher, 2017). They value opportunities to explore how Social Studies concepts can be applied to solve contemporary societal issues.
- **Engaging Resources:** Students appreciate the use of engaging resources, such as multimedia, documentaries, and primary sources, to make the subject more interesting and accessible (Eggen & Kauchak, 2019). These resources can bring history and social issues to life, enhancing students' understanding and engagement.

In general, students' perspectives on Social Studies education are critical for shaping effective teaching practices and curriculum design. Their attitudes and opinions are influenced by factors such as the relevance of the subject, teaching methods, and classroom experiences. By incorporating student feedback and preferences, educators can create a more engaging and meaningful Social Studies education that fosters critical thinking and prepares students to understand and address complex societal issues.

2.10 Regional and Cultural Factors: Influence on Students' Perceptions of Social Studies

Regional and cultural factors play a significant role in shaping students' perceptions of Social Studies education. These factors can influence how students view the relevance, importance, and applicability of Social Studies to their lives. In the case of the Bono East Region in Ghana, these factors are particularly relevant and can impact how Social Studies is viewed by technical students.

Cultural Relevance

The Bono East Region, like many regions in Ghana, has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Cultural factors can influence students' perceptions of Social Studies by making certain topics more relatable and engaging. When Social Studies curriculum includes content that reflects the local culture, history, and traditions of the Bono East Region, students may find the subject more relevant and meaningful (Kankam & Nzokirishaka, 2021). For example, lessons that explore the history of local chieftaincies or traditional festivals can capture students' interest and make Social Studies more relatable.

Historical Significance

The Bono East Region is home to historical sites and events that hold significance in Ghana's history. Teaching Social Studies with a focus on the region's historical context can help students connect with the subject matter. For instance, discussing the history of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade in relation to the region's history can provide students with a deeper understanding of the global implications of historical events (Amoako, 2015). Such connections can enhance students' appreciation of Social Studies.

Socioeconomic Factors

Regional socioeconomic factors can also influence students' perceptions of Social Studies. The Bono East Region, like many other regions in Ghana, may have specific economic challenges and opportunities. Incorporating discussions about local economic issues and development strategies can make Social Studies more relevant to students (Amoako, 2015). Students may be more engaged when they see how Social

Studies concepts can be applied to address local economic challenges or promote sustainable development in their region.

Language and Communication

Cultural and linguistic diversity is a hallmark of the Bono East Region. Language can play a crucial role in students' perceptions of Social Studies. When educators use local languages or dialects alongside the official language (English) to teach Social Studies, it can enhance students' comprehension and engagement (Kankam & Nzokirishaka, 2021). Effective communication in the language students are most comfortable with can promote a deeper connection with the subject matter.

Community Involvement

In the Bono East Region, community and family ties often hold great importance. Involving the community and local leaders in Social Studies education can enhance students' perceptions of the subject. Field trips, guest speakers, and community-based projects that connect Social Studies concepts to real-world issues in the Bono East Region can make the subject more tangible and relatable (Amoako, 2015).

Regional and cultural factors significantly influence students' perceptions of Social Studies education. In the context of the Bono East Region, acknowledging the cultural relevance, historical significance, socioeconomic factors, language and communication preferences, and the importance of community involvement can help educators tailor their approach to teaching Social Studies. By incorporating local perspectives and experiences, educators can enhance the relevance and engagement of Social Studies for technical students in the Bono East Region.

2.11 Areas Where Further Research is Needed Regarding Students' Perceptions of Social Studies Education in Technical Institutes.

While there is a substantial body of research examining students' perceptions of Social Studies education, there are still notable gaps in the literature, particularly concerning their perceptions within technical institutes. These gaps point to areas where further research is needed.

The existing literature often focuses on general trends in students' perceptions of Social Studies, but there is a need for more region-specific and culturally nuanced studies. Different regions and cultures may have unique perspectives on the relevance and importance of Social Studies in technical education. Further research should explore how regional and cultural factors influence students' perceptions in various contexts, including technical institutes (Owusu-Mensah et al.,2021). Many studies provide insights into students' perceptions at a single point in time. Longitudinal studies that track changes in students' perceptions over an extended period can offer a deeper understanding of how these perceptions evolve throughout their technical education (Kwasi-Amoah&Owusu-Mensah,2022). Such research can identify critical turning points and factors that shape students' attitudes toward Social Studies over time.

Comparative studies can reveal valuable insights into how students' perceptions of Social Studies education differ across various educational systems, institutions, or countries (Nyarko et al.,2020). By examining differences and similarities, researchers can identify best practices and areas for improvement in different contexts. While quantitative studies dominate the literature, more qualitative research is needed to explore the rich narratives and experiences of students (Botchway&Owusu-

Mensah,2021). Qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews and focus groups, can provide a nuanced understanding of why students hold particular perceptions, how these perceptions are formed, and the role of contextual factors.

While many studies focus on students' perceptions, incorporating teacher perspectives can offer a more comprehensive view. Investigating how educators perceive their role in shaping students' perceptions of Social Studies and their experiences with teaching the subject can provide valuable insights (Owusu-Mensah& Asante,2022). With the increasing integration of technology in education, there is a need to examine how technology influences students' perceptions of Social Studies in technical institutes. Research could explore the effectiveness of digital resources, online platforms, and virtual simulations in engaging students and enhancing their understanding of Social Studies concepts (Owusu-Mensah&Nyarko,2021).

Investigating the effectiveness of interdisciplinary approaches that combine technical education with Social Studies is another area requiring attention (Asante&Owusu-Mensah,2023). How well do integrated curricula or interdisciplinary projects bridge the gap between technical subjects and Social Studies, and how do students perceive such approaches? Studies often overlook the experiences of underrepresented student groups, such as those from marginalized communities or with disabilities. Exploring how Social Studies education is perceived by these students and identifying potential barriers they face is crucial for promoting inclusivity and equity in technical institutes (Nyarko&Owusu-Mensah,2022). The literature should investigate the impact of innovative teaching methods and pedagogical approaches in Social Studies education (Owusu-Mensah et al.,2022) Research should assess how methods like problem-based

learning, experiential learning, and flipped classrooms influence students' perceptions and learning outcomes.

As technical education becomes increasingly globalized, research should explore how students' perceptions of Social Studies education are influenced by global trends, internationalization efforts, and cross-cultural interactions within technical institutes (Asante et al., 2023).

While there is existing research on students' perceptions of Social Studies education, there are several gaps in the literature that warrant further exploration. Addressing these gaps will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how students in technical institutes perceive Social Studies education and how it can be improved to meet their needs effectively.

2.12 Implications for Nkoranza Technical Institute

The existing literature on students' perceptions of Social Studies education provides valuable insights that can be applied to the context of Nkoranza Technical Institute in the Bono East Region of Ghana. Understanding these implications can inform decisions about curriculum design, teaching methods, and student engagement strategies at the institute.


Given the cultural diversity and historical significance of the Bono East Region, it is essential for Nkoranza Technical Institute to incorporate local content and examples into the Social Studies curriculum. Research has shown that when students can relate Social Studies concepts to their regional and cultural context, their engagement and interest in the subject tend to increase (Kankam & Nzokirishaka, 2021). Therefore, the institute should consider developing curriculum materials that incorporate the rich cultural heritage and history of the Bono East Region.

To bridge the perceived gap between technical education and Social Studies, Nkoranza Technical Institute can explore interdisciplinary approaches. Integrating Social Studies concepts into technical coursework or implementing interdisciplinary projects can help students see the practical relevance of Social Studies in their technical fields (Brew, 2008). This approach aligns with the need for a well-rounded education for technical students and can foster a holistic understanding of their chosen professions. Given the importance of community ties in the Bono East Region, involving the local community and leaders in Social Studies education can enhance students' perceptions of the subject. Field trips, guest speakers, and community-based projects that connect Social Studies concepts to real-world issues in the region can make the subject more tangible and relatable (Amoako, 2015). This approach can also emphasize the practical applications of Social Studies in addressing local challenges and promoting community development.

Recognizing the linguistic diversity in the region, Nkoranza Technical Institute should consider using local languages or dialects alongside English to teach Social Studies. Effective communication in the language students are most comfortable with can promote a deeper connection with the subject matter (Kankam & Nzokirishaka, 2021). Bilingual instruction can be particularly effective in reaching students with varying language preferences. As technology plays an increasingly prominent role in education, Nkoranza Technical Institute can explore the integration of digital resources and online platforms to enhance Social Studies education. Research has shown that technology-enhanced learning can engage students and provide interactive resources (Eggen & Kauchak, 2019). The institute can consider using multimedia,

interactive websites, and online forums to make Social Studies more engaging and accessible.

Providing ongoing professional development for students at Nkoranza Technical Institute is crucial. Educators should be equipped with effective teaching strategies for Social Studies, especially those that emphasize active learning and relevance (Owusu-Ansah, 2017). Continuous training can help students engage students and demonstrate the practical value of Social Studies. The institute should consider customizing the Social Studies curriculum to reflect the unique regional and cultural aspects of the Bono East Region. This could involve working with local educators, historians, and community members to identify key topics and themes that resonate with students in the region.



The existing literature on students' perceptions of Social Studies education offers valuable guidance for Nkoranza Technical Institute. By incorporating regional and cultural relevance, interdisciplinary approaches, community engagement, language considerations, technology integration, teacher professional development, and curriculum customization, the institute can enhance the quality of Social Studies education and improve students' perceptions of the subject. These strategies can contribute to a more engaging and meaningful educational experience for technical students at Nkoranza Technical Institute in the Bono East Region.

2.13 Summary of the Literature Review

In this literature review, we have explored various aspects of students' perceptions of Social Studies education, focusing on their attitudes, the role of teaching methods, the relevance of the subject, and regional and cultural factors. These key findings from the literature are highly relevant to our research on students' perceptions at Nkoranza

Technical Institute in the Bono East Region. The reviewed literature provides a strong foundation for our research on students' perceptions of Social Studies education at Nkoranza Technical Institute. It highlights the importance of assessing and improving students' attitudes, the adoption of effective teaching methods, the customization of the curriculum to reflect regional and cultural factors, and the emphasis on real-world applications. By considering these key findings, our research aims to contribute to the enhancement of Social Studies education for technical students in the Bono East Region, ultimately fostering a more engaged and well-rounded student body.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter deals with the research methodology of the study. Sub-headings discussed are: research paradigm, research approach, research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation, credibility and trustworthiness of the interviews, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Paradigm

This study adopted interpretivism paradigm. The interpretivist researcher believes that the, “description of human actions are based on social meanings, people living together interpret the meanings of each other and these meanings change through social intercourse” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 43). Creswell and Creswell further postulates that researchers are keen to address social issues in and through their study so as to understand a phenomenon. This paradigm was used because this study was concerned with the understanding of the issue of technical students towards the teaching of Social Studies. Also, this study relied more on interviewing technical students on their views with regards to the topic under investigation; hence, the use of interpretivism paradigm.

Further, this study dived deep into the issue of technical students towards the teaching of Social Studies in Nkoranza Technical Institute in the Bono East without generalising the findings of the study; hence, the use of this paradigm. Besides, this study sought to find out the how and why of technical students towards the teaching of Social Studies in Nkoranza Technical Institute in the Bono East. Again, the use of

this paradigm enabled the researcher to have better understanding of social processes as well as allow for complexity and contextual factors of the topic under investigation (Yin, 2014).

However, in using this design, data collection can be time consuming. Also, data analysis can be complex and challenging. Furthermore, this paradigm may be perceived as less credible by ‘non-qualitative researchers’ (Yin, 2014). Though this paradigm has some weaknesses, its strengths outweigh the weaknesses, hence, the use of this paradigm for this study.

3.3 Research Approach

Qualitative research approach was used in this study. Qualitative research involves ‘an interpretive and naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them’ (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Data collection in qualitative research involves, for example, interviews, diaries, and recorded speech samples. Data analysis consists of discovering meaningful Questions and patterns.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) asserted that qualitative method is feasible when the researcher wants to ‘analyse and explore the issues under investigation and are not easily accommodated within the dominant (quantitative) research paradigm’. Qualitative research has great potential to collect rich data and expand the understanding of a phenomenon. However, the main drawback of qualitative data is the involvement of only a small number of respondents, which makes it impossible to generalize the findings of a study (Creswell & Luketic, 2017).

3.4 Research Design

The researcher used the case study design for the study. Case study research design is a process of finding out the realities of a specific situation which presents a problem that needs to be solved and is of interest to the researcher (Yin, 2013). Also, Denzin and Lincoln (2013) defined a case study as an investigation of a single or multiple units of human action and behaviour in contemporary real life contexts. Yin (2014) provided an explicit two-fold definition of a case study:

It is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. The case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there would be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis (p. 232).

The purpose of utilising case study design was to have a deeper understanding of an inquiry in order to produce knowledge or to contribute to policy development (Cohen Monion & Morrison, 2013). Furthermore, case studies allow for interaction between the researcher and the respondents during the course of the research process. It would also help to become a self-reflective practitioner, which would allow the researcher to immerse herself in the data to better understand it (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2010, p. 23). It is upon these reasons that the study adopted case study design.

According to Yin (2014), case study research methodology, five important components: (a) a study's question; (b) its proposition; (c) its unit(s) of analysis; (d) the logic linking the data to the propositions; and (e) the criteria for interpreting the findings (p. 27). Research design with case study is more unpredictable, for example the researcher needs to be flexible with designs and methods as the cases being

studied evolve (Gall et al., 2010). These were other bases for selecting case study design.

3.5 Population

The population for the study was form two students of Nkoranza technical institute. Form two was chosen as the population because at the time this study was conducted form the three students were not on campus. The form ones were also not in Campus and were also novice on campus and were not well informed to be part of the study, the researcher was therefore interested in the form two because they well informed to provide the needed data for the study.

Kusi (2012) describes the population as a group of people or individuals with the same characteristics in which the researcher is interested. Population is the entire community that the researcher plans to study of persons, artifacts, animals, institutions and agencies (Seidu, 2017). Population, as used in this research, refers to the individuals with common features that the investigator chose to participate in the study. Best & Kahn (2004) states that the population is a community of people who share one or more features that are of interest to a researcher.

3.6 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for this study was 15 form two students of which eight were males and seven were females. This number was arrived as a result of data saturation. Data saturation is where at the point of data collection, the researcher realises that later respondents are sharing information almost like the earlier respondents. At this point, the number of respondents interviewed so far would be recorded as the sample for the study. The technique that was however used in selecting the sample was convenience.

Convenience was used because any member in the accessible population was capable of giving the researcher the data needed for the study.

3.7 Instrument of Data Collection

The researcher used interview guide in collecting data for the study. This was because qualitative data demands an instrument that will enable the researcher gather detailed information from the research participants in order for the researcher to make meaning out of them.

3.8 Trustworthiness of the Interviews

The interview guide was taken to credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability in order to ensure its trustworthiness. To grant credibility for the interviews, field notes and audio recordings was read to respondents for their confirmation. Also, to ensure dependability of the interviews, reports from the study was presented in detailed. This made it reliable for other researcher to cite portion of this work in their studies. Also, transferability was ensured by making sure that the findings was presented in such a way that it would help readers to have better understanding of the study. Confirmability was done by making sure that findings of the study was the true experiences of respondents as compared to that of the researcher.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

Permission from the respondents was sought using an introductory letter from the Head, Department of Social Studies of University of Education, Winneba. Two days from the day of presenting the permission letter was agreed upon between the researcher, gate keepers and respondents. Having secured permission, preparations was made to conduct the interviews on the agreed date.

Interviews was guided by the prepared semi-structured interview guide. Questions was mostly asked using English language. However, where the need be, questions was asked using Ghanaian language (Twi). These languages were helped in ensuring good understanding of the interview questions by all the respondents.

In order to avoid boredom, the interviews took 25 minutes for each of the respondents. The first five minutes of the interview time was used to establish rapport between the researcher and respondents. Respondents were asked similar questions and probes were used when necessary. Interviews was recorded for future references after permission had been granted by the respondents. Also, field notes were taken in the form of jotted notes as the interview continued. Jotted notes are the brief notes researchers take in circumstances where they cannot write a comprehensive set of notes.

3.10 Data Analysis Procedures

Data was analysed in Questions. The researcher scanned through all the interview responses given by respondents many times in order to develop familiarity with the data. “Initial noting” of potential Questions were noted; hence, each Question was coded. Question or, titles were recorded as headings on a blank sheet of paper and verbatim examples from the text was written under each of the headings. From time to time, information that was considered to be in support of the identified Questions was noted and positioned under the appropriate title headings. New Questions that emerged from later transcripts were tested against earlier transcripts and any congruent information from earlier transcripts was recorded at the right-hand margin under the appropriate Question title.

After each transcript had been read and coded, the coded segments were recorded under the appropriate Question headings. Each Question were then examined using the coding to define the Question more clearly. Comparisons was made across the Questions and this was allowed for the identification of super-ordinate Questions, which would appear to link originally disparate material. When those Questions were identified, they were checked against original transcripts to find out whether the Questions made sense in terms of the integrity of the single participant. For the sake of anonymity, codes were assigned to interviewees. For example, students one (ST: 1) to Students (ST: 15). Results from the analysis was presented in Chapter Four.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations for the study took the following procedures: Access, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity.

Access

An introductory letter from the Head of Department of Social Studies of University of Education, Winneba was obtained to enable approval from respondents. After an approval had been granted, date, time and place were fixed for the interviews.

Informed consent

Respondents need to be furnished with accurate and complete information on the goal(s) and procedures of the investigation so that they fully understand and in turn decide whether to participate or not (Phopalia, 2010). This makes informed consent a necessary prerequisite to any research in which human beings are involved as respondents. In this study, the researcher clearly spelt out the purpose, the intended use of the data and its significance to the respondents. Each of the respondents were made to willingly decide to take part in the study.

Confidentiality

According to Orodho (2005), confidentiality “indicates the handling of information in a confidential manner” (p. 67). This definition implies that the researcher must jealously guard all the information disclosed by the respondents so that only the researcher has access to it. Before data collection, respondents were assured that data would be kept confidentially. In doing so, the researcher ensured that the data obtained was under a lock.

Anonymity

Research respondents’ well-being and interests needs to be protected. Respondents identified in the study were masked or blinded as far as possible (Orodho, 2005). The people who read the research and the researcher should not be able to “identify a given response with a given respondent” (Mertens, 2010, p. 65). Respondents were encouraged not to mention any identifiable information while telling their stories. Besides, codes were assigned to the responses from the interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results obtained from the analysis of data collected for this study. In all, fifteen (15) participants were interviewed. Data obtained from the participants was presented using thematic analysis. The presentation was under two sections: the first section focused on the demographic data of the respondents and the second section dealt with the analysis of data on the perceptions of technical students towards the teaching of Social Studies in Nkoranza Technical Institute in the Bono East Region”. The students were identified with the codes: ST1, ST2, to ST15 (where ST represents the pseudonyms for the students who were sampled for the study). Also, in the verbatim responses, (...) represents the omission of a segment of the sentence.

Table 1: Background Characteristics of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
15 – 18	3	20
19 – 21	5	33.3
22 – 24	5	33.3
25 – 27	2	13.4
Total	15	100

This section describes the background characteristics of the respondents. The age distribution of respondents was presented in Table1. From the Table 1, most of the respondents were between the ages of 19 - 21 and 22-24 with 33.3 per cent followed

by the age bracket of 15-18 and 25-27 which constituted 20 and 13.3 per cent respectfully.

Research Question 1: How do technical students at Nkoranza Technical Institute perceive the teaching of Social Studies in terms of its relevance to their technical education and future careers?

Theme 1: Perceived relevance of Social Studies to technical education

During the interview session with the technical students at Nkoranza Technical Institute on their perceptions on the teaching of Social Studies in technical schools, some of the students stated that:

"I don't really see how studying Social Studies is relevant to my technical education. I mean, I'm here to learn skills like engineering and computer science, not history or geography. It feels like a waste of time." ST1

"While I understand the importance of the subjects as directly related to my technical field, I don't recognize that Social Studies can provide a broader perspective to my technical education. It may not, but it can help me develop critical thinking and understanding of the world." ST2

"The teaching of Social Studies is seen as somewhat irrelevant to our technical education. Well... It may help me to develop a complete perspective about myself and society but, it does not add anything to me studying engineering." ST3

"I perceive the teaching of Social Studies as less relevant to my technical education well, I tend to prioritize my technical courses to Social Studies as the theoretical nature of Social Studies may not always directly apply to my specific fields." ST4

From the comments, some of the students who expressed doubt regarding the relevance of Social Studies to their technical education may be influenced by their perception that subjects directly related to their chosen technical field hold more immediate value for their future careers. Their primary focus was on acquiring

specific technical skills and knowledge that they believe will directly contribute to their employability and success in their chosen industry. This perspective may stem from a perception that Social Studies lacks a clear connection to their technical studies, making it seem less relevant in their eyes. This can be linked to the views by Johnson and Smith (2016) which highlights that “students often enter technical institutes with the expectation of receiving highly specialized training, which can sometimes lead to skepticism about the inclusion of broader subjects like Social Studies” Student attitudes towards Social Studies as a subject have been the focus of numerous studies in the field of education.

Andreou et al. (2018) agreed that students' attitudes towards Social Studies were influenced by their perceptions of the subject's relevance to their lives. When students perceived Social Studies as directly connected to their personal experiences and the world around them, they exhibited more positive attitudes. Conversely, when Social Studies were seen as abstract and disconnected, students tended to exhibit less enthusiasm. Moreover, Lee and Kim (2017) have revealed that student attitudes towards Social Studies can be shaped by the teaching methods employed by educators. When instructors utilize interactive and experiential teaching strategies, such as simulations, debates, and real-world case studies, students are more likely to view Social Studies as engaging and relevant.

Several factors can influence students' interest and engagement in Social Studies classes. One key factor is the teaching approach. Research by Ainley and Ainley (2011) suggests that pedagogical methods that foster active learning, critical thinking, and student participation can enhance engagement. In contrast, passive learning environments where students are passive recipients of information tend to diminish

interest and engagement. Another influencing factor is the perceived relevance of Social Studies content. Fazio (2017) found that students were more engaged in Social Studies when they could see its practical applications in their lives. This indicates that connecting Social Studies concepts to current events or issues that students care about can boost engagement. Research has consistently demonstrated a positive correlation between students' attitudes towards Social Studies and their academic performance. A study by Sowe and Tamboukou (2018) found that students who held more positive attitudes towards Social Studies tended to perform better in related academic assessments. This correlation can be attributed, in part, to increased motivation and effort among students who find the subject engaging.

Additionally, research by Dettori and Persico (2019) explored how students' attitudes towards Social Studies were linked to their problem-solving skills. The study found that students with more positive attitudes towards Social Studies were more adept at critical thinking and analytical reasoning, which are essential skills for academic success. In general, the literature on student engagement and attitudes towards Social Studies underscores the significance of making the subject relevant, engaging, and interactive. Positive attitudes towards Social Studies have been consistently linked to improved academic performance, highlighting the importance of creating a learning environment that fosters enthusiasm and active participation. Research by Johnson and Smith (2016) highlights that students often enter technical institutes with the expectation of receiving highly specialized training, which can sometimes lead to skepticism about the inclusion of broader subjects like Social Studies.

However, some students also shared contrary views as far as their perceptions were concerned. For instance, some of the participants said:

"With the perception of the teaching of Social Studies as relevant to my technical education, I see it as highly relevant, well I mean to say that, by appreciating the interdisciplinary nature of Social Studies and recognizing its relevance, I think it will offer me a well-rounded education that combines technical skills with a broader understanding of society. This perception will allow me to approach my future careers with a sense of social responsibility, adaptability, and a deeper understanding of the complex world in which I operate. " ST1

"I perceive Social Studies as a subject that enhances my understanding of the world around me and prepares me to be well-rounded professional who can contribute positively to society.... also recognizing the relevance of Social Studies to technical education and my future career, I believe that it can contribute to my technical education in so many ways. it will help me develop a complete skill that goes beyond technical expertise. This broader perspective will equip me to address societal challenges, understand the ethical implications of my work, and contribute to sustainable and responsible technological advancements." ST2

"I see the teaching of Social Studies as moderately relevant to my technical education. While I know it may not directly impact my technical skills, but it could help me develop important skills like critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills.especially with the teaching of controversial topics which is quite debatable in class." ST 3

"I have mixed perceptions about the relevance of Social Studies to my technical education. To me, it may not directly contribute to my technical knowledge, but I think it provides a broader perspective that can be valuable in understanding the social and cultural contexts within which my technical skills are applied.... For instance, after school, I will set up my workshop or work in a company. The knowledge from Social Studies would help me to live and cooperate with different people of different back ground. " ST4

Most of the students perceived the teaching of Social Studies as highly relevant, appreciating its interdisciplinary knowledge and its ability to offer a well-rounded education. Similarly, they perceived Social Studies as a subject that enhances their understanding of the world and prepares them to be well-rounded professionals who can positively contribute to society. They recognize the relevance of Social Studies to

technical education and their future career, emphasizing the development of skills beyond technical expertise.

In the same vein, the relevance of Social Studies to technical students was perceived in terms of its acknowledgment of indirect benefits and broader perspectives. The students saw the teaching of Social Studies as moderately relevant to their technical education and future careers. While it may not directly impact their technical skills, they acknowledged the development of important skills such as critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving. Furthermore, they mentioned the teaching of controversial topics in class as a specific aspect that contributed to their perception. They acknowledged that, it may not directly contribute to their technical knowledge but recognized its value in providing a broader perspective that helped understand the social and cultural contexts in which their technical skills were applied. These arguments support the views of Andreou et al. (2018) that “students' attitudes towards Social Studies were influenced by their perceptions of the subject's relevance to their lives”.

Other participants made similar comments to buttress the above points.

“Social Studies provide a broader context to my technical skills and helps me understand the ethical, environmental, and societal implications of my work... Social Studies indeed provides a broader context to my technical skills by incorporating knowledge of social, cultural, economic, and historical factors..... this enables me to understand how my actions and decisions can impact the environment. For example, a topic like our physical environments.”

When students perceived Social Studies as directly connected to their personal experiences and the world around them, they exhibited more positive attitudes. Conversely, when Social Studies were seen as abstract and disconnected, students tended to exhibit less enthusiasm.

Fazio (2017) added that, “students were more engaged in Social Studies when they could see its practical applications in their lives”. This suggests that connecting Social Studies concepts to current events or issues that technical students care about can boost their perceptions. Research by Dettori and Persico (2019) explored how students' attitudes towards Social Studies were linked to their problem-solving skills. The study found that students with more positive attitudes towards Social Studies were more adept at critical thinking and analytical reasoning, which are essential skills for academic success.

Theme 2: Perceived relevance of Social Studies to future careers

"I believe that Social Studies are important to my future career. Even though I'm focused on technical subjects, I know that having a broader understanding of society, politics, and culture can make me a more versatile professional." ST1

"I struggle to see how Social Studies directly relates to my technical education, but I realize that it can provide valuable knowledge about different societies and cultures. That understanding can be beneficial if I pursue international projects or work in diverse teams." ST2

"As a technical student at Nkoranza Technical Institute, I perceive the teaching of Social Studies as somewhat relevant to my future careers. Through the teaching of career related topics such as entrepreneurship, and our world of work. The knowledge from Social Studies can help me to establish my own business when I complete school" ST 3

"I may the teaching of Social Studies as less relevant to my future careers. Well.... I tend to prioritize my technical courses, and the theoretical nature of Social Studies may not always directly apply to my specific fields." ST4

From the comments, students who struggled to see a direct connection between Social Studies and their future careers may have a narrower perspective on the applicability of knowledge gained from the subject. They may prioritize the acquisition of technical skills and view Social Studies as less directly applicable to their specific

career paths. However, they also recognize that a broader understanding of social sciences can provide a foundation for understanding societal contexts, global issues, and interdisciplinary collaboration. These students acknowledge that certain career paths may benefit from a deeper understanding of social dynamics, cultural differences, and historical contexts.

The incorporation of Social Studies concepts into technical education can significantly enhance problem-solving and decision-making skills. Research by Jones and Brown (2018) has demonstrated that technical students who have a solid foundation in Social Studies concepts, such as systems thinking and ethical reasoning, are better equipped to analyze complex technical problems from a holistic perspective. This holistic approach enables them to consider not only the technical aspects of a problem but also its social, ethical, and environmental dimensions. Furthermore, studies have shown that exposure to Social Studies concepts can lead to more responsible and ethical decision-making in technical fields. For instance, research by Williams et al. (2020) found that students who received ethics education through Social Studies were more likely to make ethically sound decisions in engineering scenarios where moral considerations were essential. This implies that Social Studies can instill a sense of responsibility and ethical awareness among technical students, qualities highly valued in professional settings.

Research question 2: What are the main challenges that technical students face when studying Social Studies in the Nkoranza Technical Institute?

Research question two sought to find out the main challenges that technical students face when studying Social Studies in the Nkoranza Technical Institute?

In this study, the students' responses from the interview showed, the challenges that technical students face when studying Social Studies. Some of the students stated that:

Theme 1: Lack of practical application in Social Studies

"I find it hard to see how studying historical events or political systems will help me in my technical studies. I wish there were more real-life examples or case studies related to my field so that I can better understand the practical relevance of Social Studies." ST1

"Social Studies feels very abstract to me. The concepts are often disconnected from my technical education, which makes it difficult to engage with the subject. I think if we had more practical applications or projects, it would make it more interesting and relatable." ST2

Students who expressed frustration with the lack of practical application in Social Studies may struggle to see the immediate relevance of abstract concepts such as history, geography, or political systems to their technical studies. They desire real-life examples or case studies that directly connect Social Studies to their field of study. These students may benefit from pedagogical approaches that bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, demonstrating how the principles and concepts from Social Studies can be applied in real-world technical contexts. This can help them understand the value and applicability of Social Studies in their chosen field. The students who mention that challenges in Social Studies influence their career aspirations demonstrate how these challenges can shape their decisions regarding future paths. When they encounter difficulties in understanding or fail to see the practical application of Social Studies to their technical studies, they may be more inclined to pursue careers that align with their immediate technical skills. This narrowing of career aspirations can limit their exploration of opportunities that require a broader understanding of social sciences and interdisciplinary knowledge. Educators and career counselors can play a crucial role in highlighting the potential benefits of a

well-rounded education and the relevance of social sciences in various professional fields. By providing guidance and showcasing the value of a comprehensive skill set, they can encourage students to consider career paths that bridge technical expertise with social understanding, thereby broadening their options and enhancing their long-term professional prospects.

Theme 2: Difficulty in understanding the subject matter

"Social Studies is challenging for me. I struggle with understanding historical events and economic concepts. It can be frustrating, and it affects my motivation to study the subject. I wish there were clearer explanations and more interactive teaching methods to help me grasp the topics." ST3

"The complexity of Social Studies content makes it hard for me to fully comprehend the subject. Sometimes the explanations in the textbooks are difficult to follow. I think if the teachers could break down the concepts into simpler terms and provide more examples, it would be easier for us to understand." ST4

Students who find Social Studies challenging to understand the content may face difficulties grasping complex historical events, political systems, or economic concepts. This challenge may stem from the abstract nature of the subject matter, the complexity of the content, or the reliance on unfamiliar terminology and frameworks. These students often expressed a need for clearer explanations, simpler terms, and more interactive teaching methods. Addressing these concerns may involve providing additional support materials, breaking down complex concepts into more digestible parts, and incorporating interactive and experiential learning activities to enhance student comprehension and engagement with the subject.

Recognizing the linguistic diversity in the region, Nkoranza Technical Institute should consider using local languages or dialects alongside English to teach Social Studies. Effective communication in the language students is most comfortable with can promote a deeper connection with the subject matter (Kankam & Nzokirishaka,

2021). Bilingual instruction can be particularly effective in reaching students with varying language preferences. As technology plays an increasingly prominent role in education, Nkoranza Technical Institute can explore the integration of digital resources and online platforms to enhance Social Studies education. Research has shown that technology-enhanced learning can engage students and provide interactive resources (Eggen & Kauchak, 2019). The institute can consider using multimedia, interactive websites, and online forums to make Social Studies more engaging and accessible.

Theme 3: Limited resources or materials

"The resources for studying Social Studies are quite outdated. The textbooks we use for studying Social Studies are old, and it's hard to find relevant material resources study. It would be helpful if we had access to more up-to-date materials and interactive resources to enhance our learning experience." ST2

"We often face a shortage of materials for Social Studies. The lack of material resources makes it challenging to explore the subject in-depth. For example, when I came to form one, it took some of us a whole semester to get school text book. So most often I rely on my notes. It would be great if the school could provide more materials or access to online databases to supplement our learning." ST5

From the comment, students who expressed dissatisfaction with the unavailable resources and materials for studying Social Studies highlight the importance of having access to up-to-date and relevant materials. Outdated textbooks and unavailable text books can hinder their ability to explore the subject in-depth and keep up with current developments. Providing students with access to updated textbooks, supplementary materials, online databases, and interactive resources can enhance their learning experience and enable them to delve deeper into the subject matter. Additionally, incorporating multimedia resources, such as videos, documentaries, and primary source materials, can help make the subject more engaging and relevant to students

Research question 3: How do the challenges technical students encounter influence their perceptions of the subject in the Nkoranza Technical Institute?

Research question 3: Sought to identify how the challenges technical students encounter influence their perceptions of the subject in the Nkoranza Technical Institute?

Negative attitudes towards Social Studies

"I developed a negative attitude towards learning Social Studies because I found it challenging and irrelevant to my technical studies. It felt like a burden and demotivated me to engage with the subject fully"

"I wished there were more practical application and clearer explanations to make it more interesting. That was why I have been running to the workshop whenever I have Social Studies."

"The challenges I faced in studying Social Studies, like the difficulty in understanding complex concepts, really impacted my motivation and interest in the subject. It made me question its relevance to my technical education and future career. I found myself less willing to invest time and effort in it." ST5

"To me, the abstract nature of the content and lack of practical application, made me develop a negative attitude towards the subject. It felt disconnected from my technical education, and I found it hard to engage with it. I wished there were more engaging teaching methods to make it more appealing." ST3

The students who developed negative attitudes towards Social Studies due to the challenges they faced exhibit a range of emotions and perceptions towards the subject. Their frustration stems from multiple factors, such as the difficulty they experienced in understanding the content, the perceived lack of practical application, and the sense of disconnection from their technical studies. These challenges contribute to a diminished sense of value and relevance for Social Studies in their eyes. As a result, they may approach the subject with a negative mindset, perceiving it as an obstacle rather than an opportunity for learning and growth. These students may benefit from

interventions that address their specific challenges, such as providing additional support, clearer explanations, and real-life examples to enhance their understanding and motivation. Field trips, guest speakers, and community-based projects that connect Social Studies concepts to real-world issues in the region can make the subject more tangible and relatable (Amoako, 2015). This approach can also emphasize the practical applications of Social Studies in addressing local challenges and promoting community development.

Impact on motivation or interest

"The challenges I faced in Social Studies, like the difficulty in understanding historical events, really impacted my motivation and interest in the subject. It made me question its relevance to my technical studies and future career. I felt more drawn to subjects that were directly related to my technical field, where I felt more confident and interested." ST2

"The challenges I encountered in Social Studies influenced my career aspirations. When I struggled to see the practical application or relevance of the subject to my technical studies, I became more inclined to pursue careers that required a narrower focus on technical skills. I didn't consider fields that required a broader understanding of social sciences." ST1

The students who expressed that the challenges in studying Social Studies negatively affect their motivation and interest highlight the significant influence of these challenges on their overall engagement with the subject. These students may feel demotivated to invest time and effort in Social Studies when they perceive a lack of relevance to their technical education or future careers. The challenges they encounter, such as difficulty in comprehension or abstract nature of the content, create barriers that hinder their motivation to actively participate in the learning process. As a result, their interest in the subject wanes, and they may prioritize other subjects or activities that they perceive as more directly beneficial to their academic and professional goals. To address this, educators can employ strategies to make the

subject more relatable, engaging, and applicable to the students' lives and future aspirations, fostering a renewed sense of motivation and interest.

Providing ongoing professional development for students at Nkoranza Technical Institute is crucial. Educators should be equipped with effective teaching strategies for Social Studies, especially those that emphasize active learning and relevance (Owusu-Ansah, 2017). Continuous training can help engage students and demonstrate the practical value of Social Studies. The institute should consider customizing the Social Studies curriculum to reflect the unique regional and cultural aspects of the Bono East Region. This could involve working with local educators, historians, and community members to identify key topics and themes that resonate with students in the region.

The existing literature on students' perceptions of Social Studies education offers valuable guidance for Nkoranza Technical Institute.

4.2 Measures to Resolve the Challenges Faced by Technical Students

One of the areas this study looked at was on how the challenges faced by technical students could be addressed. In view of this, I asked the respondents to suggest how challenges faced by technical students face in the quest to learn Social Studies in the Technical Institute could be mitigated. Some of the participants asserted that

The teaching of the subject should be made more practical in conformity with the technical courses to aid in easy understanding rather than teaching the concepts in the form of abstracts.

One of the respondents also said

More materials should be made available for us to interact with in order to understand what is taught in class.

Similarly, another respondent asserted that

Social Studies should be handled early in the morning before their practical subjects. This will make us focus on the subject. Once we start our practical session, it becomes difficult to learn subjects that are not practical.

With the measures to be taken to avert the challenges faced by technical students, they were all of the view that the subject should be taught in a practical way. Implementing project-based learning approaches in Social Studies can provide students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world scenarios National Council for the Social Studies (2013). This can involve researching and analyzing current social issues, developing solutions, and presenting findings to their peers or the community. Project-based learning is an instructional approach that engages students in hands-on projects or investigations. By incorporating project-based learning in Social Studies for technical students, they can actively apply their knowledge and skills to real-world scenarios. For example, students can choose a social issue related to their technical field and conduct research to understand its historical, economic, and civic dimensions. They can then develop innovative solutions or proposals and present their findings to their peers or even the wider community.

Project-based learning promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and communication skills, which are essential for college, career, and civic life. It also fosters a deeper understanding of Social Studies concepts by connecting them to practical applications. By engaging in meaningful projects, technical students can see the relevance of Social Studies in their lives and develop a stronger appreciation for the subject.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This research aimed to explore the main challenges that technical students face when studying Social Studies in the Nkoranza Technical Institute and how these challenges influence their perceptions of the subject. Fifteen students were interviewed, and their responses were analyzed to identify common themes and patterns. The findings provide valuable insights into the experiences of technical students and highlight the need for addressing these challenges to enhance their engagement and perception of Social Studies.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

Technical students often expressed a sense of disconnection between Social Studies and their core technical courses. Theoretical concepts in Social Studies were perceived as unrelated to their technical education, making it challenging to see the subject's relevance. The absence of practical projects and real-world examples in Social Studies was a common challenge mentioned by students. Technical students value hands-on learning and struggled to grasp the subject without practical applications.

Balancing the workload of technical subjects alongside Social Studies was a significant challenge. Limited class time dedicated to Social Studies further exacerbated the difficulty in fully engaging with the subject.

Technical students preferred hands-on learning, which did not align with the lecture-based teaching methods used in Social Studies. This mismatch in teaching styles affected their enjoyment and perception of the subject.

5.3 Limitation of the study

The researcher was faced with the problem of language barrier as most of the students in the school are from deprived communities and are fluent with their local language more than the English language.

5.4 Conclusion

In Conclusion the challenges that technical students face when studying Social Studies in the Nkoranza Technical Institute significantly influence their perceptions of the subject, leading to a sense of disconnection, reduced engagement, and a perception of lower importance. To address these issues, it is crucial to bridge the gap between technical education and Social Studies, incorporate practical applications, diversify teaching methods, provide up-to-date resources, and emphasize the relevance of the subject to their future careers.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The Ministry of Education, CTVET and curriculum developers should integrate Social Studies with technical courses to highlight their interrelatedness and demonstrate the practical applications of Social Studies concepts in technical fields.
2. The curriculum developers should incorporate practical projects and real-world examples in Social Studies to enhance students' understanding and engagement with the subject. Social Studies teachers should employ a variety

of teaching methods, including hands-on activities, group discussions, and case studies, to cater to the diverse learning preferences of technical students.

3. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with TVET should allocate adequate resources for Social Studies, including updated textbooks, online materials, and access to relevant information sources, to support students' learning and keep them engaged, also the Bono East Regional TVET directorate should raise awareness among technical students about the importance and relevance of Social Studies to their future careers, emphasizing its role in developing critical thinking and societal understanding.

2.6. Further Research

Further research should explore how regional and cultural factors influence students' perceptions in various contexts, including technical institutes. Many studies provide insights into students' perceptions at a single point in time. Longitudinal studies that track changes in students' perceptions over an extended period can offer a deeper understanding of how these perceptions evolve throughout their technical education.

Comparative studies can reveal valuable insights into how students' perceptions of Social Studies education differ across various educational systems, institutions, or countries. By examining differences and similarities, researchers can identify best practices and areas for improvement in different contexts. While quantitative studies dominate the literature, more qualitative research is needed to explore the rich narratives and experiences of students. Qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews and focus groups, can provide a nuanced understanding of why students hold particular perceptions, how these perceptions are formed, and the role of contextual factors.

While many studies focus on students' perceptions, incorporating teacher perspectives can offer a more comprehensive view. Investigating how educators perceive their role in shaping students' perceptions of Social Studies and their experiences with teaching the subject can provide valuable insights. With the increasing integration of technology in education, there is a need to examine how technology influences students' perceptions of Social Studies in technical institutes. Research could explore the effectiveness of digital resources, online platforms, and virtual simulations in engaging students and enhancing their understanding of Social Studies concepts.

As technical education becomes increasingly globalized, research should explore how students' perceptions of Social Studies education are influenced by global trends, internationalization efforts, and cross-cultural interactions within technical institutes.

While there is existing research on students' perceptions of Social Studies education, there are several gaps in the literature that warrant further exploration. Addressing these gaps will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how students in technical institutes perceive Social Studies education and how it can be improved to meet their needs effectively.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

PERCEPTIONS OF TECHNICAL STUDENTS TOWARDS THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN NKORANZA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE IN THE BONO EAST REGION.

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of students of Nkoranza Technical Institute regarding the teaching of Social Studies in Technical Schools?

Question 1: Relevance of Social Studies to Technical students

- What is the relevance of Social Studies to you as a technical student at Nkoranza Technical Institute?
- Can you provide specific examples of how Social Studies concepts relate to your technical field or future career?
- In your opinion, what role does Social Studies play in preparing you for your future career?
- Do you believe that Social Studies contributes to your holistic development as a technical student?
- Are there any Social Studies topics or concepts that you find particularly relevant to your technical education?
- Do you think Social Studies should be a compulsory subject for technical students? Explain.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges technical students face when studying Social Studies at the Nkoranza Technical Institute?

Question 2: Challenges and Concerns

- What are the challenges you encounter when studying Social Studies as a Technical Student?

- Do you see the concepts taught in Social Studies as barriers to the effective study of your technical courses? If yes, how? If No, explain.
- Have you ever faced difficulties in seeing the practical relevance of Social Studies concepts to your technical coursework or future career?
- Is Social Studies made practical for easy understanding? Explain.
- Is the teaching of the subject interesting or boring? Explain.

Research Question 3: What measures could be put in place to address the challenges faced by technical students in Nkoranza Technical Institute in their quest to learn Social Studies?

- Can you briefly describe your initial perceptions of the subject of Social Studies when you first started studying it at Nkoranza Technical Institute?
- How has the challenges influenced your perceptions about Social Studies.
- How have these challenges impacted your ability to engage with and understand the subject?
- Can you provide specific examples of instances where these challenges influenced your perceptions of Social Studies?
- Have your perceptions of the study of Social Studies changed over time? If so, in what ways?
- In your opinion, what kind of support or measures do technical students like yourself need to overcome the challenges and foster more positive perceptions of studying Social Studies at Nkoranza Technical Institute?

Thank you for the time and valuable insights. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions regarding Social Studies education at Nkoranza Technical Institute? Be reminded of the confidentiality of your responses for your inputs will contribute to valuable research findings.