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Youth Empowerment for Personal Development: The Role of the Social Studies Teacher among the Youth in Atwima Nwabiagya North District, Ghana

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Abstract:
The need for a subject that embodies the national philosophy and promotes people's values, norms and beliefs has attracted efforts, commitment and resources of nations the world over. This study was conducted to assess youth empowerment for personal development: the role of the social studies teacher in Atwima Nwabiagya North District. The researchers employed a mixed research design approach with purposive sampling technique used to sample 39 teacher respondents. From the results, 18% of the study participants rated their knowledge on social studies as excellent. It was showed that, 66% of the study participants said they have acquired the needed skills during their training to impart knowledge to the youth as a Social Studies teachers while 34% of the study participants said they have not acquired the needed skills during their training to impart knowledge to the youth as Social Studies teachers. All the respondents (100%) said the coverage of the syllabus was good. And 86% of the study participants said the current syllabi were good to empower the youth in Ghana. All 39 (100%) of the study participants identified classroom based learning and 46% of the study participants identified practical based learning as the kinds of training they received during their school days. The researchers concluded that, respondent's knowledge on social studies was found to be adequate. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended that, more teachers be empowered in Social Studies, to assist empower the youth to acquire the needed constructs of social studies.

Keywords: Youth empowerment, development

1. Introduction

Countless words are written daily about the importance of education. Indubitably, education is the only valuable asset humans can achieve. Human evolution over eons is a result of education both formal and informal. Further, education is the sole basis on which future of the human race depends. Our quest for knowledge is unending and will continue till planet earth does not exist. Everyone speaks about education and its importance. Hence, let us understand what education means.

Briefly, education means acquiring knowledge. In broader terms, education means acquiring various skills in diverse fields that are vital to our life and our very existence. These skills can be acquired by classroom training and during course of our life. Classroom education is generally deemed as formal education. Whatever we learn and imbibe during our lifespan is informal education. Furthermore, knowledge and the innate human capability to learn continually distinguish us from other living creatures that inhabit this planet. Now the question is why it is important for humans to acquire this knowledge. *Section 1.9 of the Report of the Education Review Committee (2002) identified the following as the benefits of education in Ghana;*

Education helps to satisfy human curiosity. Indisputably, curiosity is the sole precursor to education. As humans, we have inherent curiosity about everything. Primarily, we all wish to know about things that directly impact our otherwise mundane lives. Furthermore, we also love to pry into stuff that is largely irrelevant. Yet, curiosity prods us to learn more and imbibe knowledge. Thus, information forms basis of our education. Bereft of this curiosity, we are nothing more than vegetative beings. Other living creatures are curious too. However, their curiosity is limited to things that directly impact their life and wellbeing. On the other hand, human curiosity has no bounds. When channelized or given right direction, this infinite curiosity manifests as education.   Once again, curiosity helps all animals, including us humans, to learn new things. Yet, we differ in one primary function. Humans have natural capability to receiving, processing and storing data we gain from experiences or the five senses. Furthermore, we humans can utilize, adapt or exploit our data to suit our requirements. This inherent capacity to process raw data from our senses and experiences translates as education. Thus, we are able to adapt our needs according to prevailing conditions at any point of time.

Secondly, survival is a primary basic instinct of us humans. None of us would have survived thousands of years of evolution sans this instinct. Undoubtedly, our existence as a species was threatened over the centuries by natural and man-made elements. Yet, we survived because of education. Regardless, that primordial education was mere imbibing knowledge from experiences and our five senses. Palaeontology proves that hundreds of living creatures could not survive

on earth, despite being physically stronger than humans. Education helps us overcome this inborn physical frailty. It gives us an edge for survival, over other living creatures.

Also education enhances communication. The link between education and communication is unequivocal. In fact, the need to educate others is responsible for development of languages. Without languages in any form, education could never be achieved. Thus began the human journey towards developing communication tools and written languages.

As we began evolving, so did education. Here we look at some of the ancient forms of education. Notably, some of these continue today, though in a more developed manner.

The vital links between experience, work, and education have been weakened. As a result, public and private schools in many rural and urban communities have lost their power as a valuable community resource (Miller, 1995b; Putnam, 1993). And many economically distressed towns, communities, and neighbourhoods have begun to struggle toward economic revitalization without the valuable contributions of the local schools. Some of the main views of education are to bring changes not only in the amount of knowledge but also for achieving abilities to do something, to think and to acquire habits, skills which characterise an individual who is socially accepted and adjusted. Since interest in schooling as Hanushek (1996) held comes from a policy perspective which depends on several sources, schooling is perceived as an important determinant of individual productivity and learning. Thus schooling is considered as an instrument for affecting both the national economy and the individual income and earnings. The youth constitute the true wealth and future of our country. The national youth policy has its theme *'towards an empowered youth, impacting positively on national development'* (National Youth Policy, 2010, page 1)

The definition of youth varies from country to country. Generally, the period between childhood and adulthood is called 'Youth.' During this period a person prepares himself/herself to be an active and fully responsible member of the society. It is also a period of transformation from family dependant childhood to independent adulthood and integration in the society as a responsible citizen. The national youth policy also has an age bracket for the term youth. The policy defines 'youth' as 'persons who are within the age bracket of fifteen (15) and thirty-five (35)'. Ghana's definition has been informed by those used by the United Nations Organisation and the Commonwealth Secretariat. According to the 2000 Ghana Housing and Population Census, the population of Ghana was 18.9 million with an annual growth rate of 2.7 percent. The youth in Ghana constitute about 33% as a heterogeneous segment of Ghana's population. For the purposes of this policy, planning and programming, the following age categories of the youth as culled from the 2000 Census would be considered:

- 15-19 years – 10%
- 20-24 years – 8.5%
- 25-29 years – 7.9%
- 30-34 years – 6.4%

These figures are subject to change after the 2010 Population and Housing Census.

The above breakdown of the youth has varied characteristics, needs, and aspirations as well as diverse opportunities and constraints.

A National Youth Policy provides the opportunity for Government to engage the youth and other stakeholders in meaningful partnership to develop appropriate interventions and services for youth empowerment. The concept of empowerment involves the creation of a congenial environment for equipping the youth with knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and ethics. Provision of resources required to enable them contribute to the economic, social, and cultural advancement of themselves, their families, and the nation as a whole becomes a major responsibility of governments and other stakeholders. Consequently, youth empowerment shall involve the process of preparing young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through series of activities, and experiences, which help and motivate them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically, economically independent and cognitively competent as well. The National Youth Policy is intended to provide guidelines and direction for all stakeholders involved in the implementation of policies, programmes and projects for the development of the youth. It is also intended to help the country demonstrate its commitment to all international conventions and charters it has signed affecting the youth.

The major challenges facing young people that the National Youth Policy seeks to address are:

- Access to quality education for the youth in the educational sector with attendant inadequate or inappropriate training for the job market
- Unemployment and underemployment resulting from inadequate and inappropriate training for the job market.
- The negative effects of urbanization and modernization.

Growing incidence of youth involved in violent conflicts (political, social and ethnic) and increasing juvenile crime. The policy framework for youth activities is derived from the wider social, political and national aspirations of the country which are founded on access, equity and meaningful participation. The Policy emphasizes the following priority areas: Education and skills training are critical to the development of a young person's productive and responsible life. The main goal of the policy is therefore to ensure the development of a knowledgeable, self-reliant, skilled, disciplined, and a healthy population with the capacity to drive and sustain the socio-economic development of the nation.

The problem of youth unemployment and underemployment is a major developmental challenge. Employment creation remains a major priority in the country's development agenda and it is the goal of Government to provide the youth with opportunities for employment and labour market information.

Entrepreneurial development, among other factors, propels and accelerates socio-economic development. However, its development is limited to a small section of the youth. Government realizes the need to mainstream entrepreneurial development into school curricula to give it the necessary impetus.

Agriculture continues to be the highest contributor to Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It also provides employment for a majority of Ghana's population. Increased productivity in agriculture ensures food security and contributes immensely to the health and well-being of the people. There is therefore the need to develop more strategic interventions and approaches to attract the youth to this sector, particularly youth in the informal sector.

The continuing importance of learning social studies among students is increasing responsibility of citizenship, increasing industrialization of society, readjustment in family life, suburbanization, rapid growth in communication and transportation, increasing personal responsibility for democratic living.

Youth empowerment however, refers to an attitudinal, structural and cultural process whereby young people gain the ability, authority and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of other people, including youth and adults (Stands4 LLC, 2001). However of concern is the observation that very little has been done to staff-development on Social studies (Faulks, 2014), and that is, to a large extent, surprisingly is still not effective in the school curriculum. It has also been noted that very little research on perceptions of teachers towards Social studies is available in Ghana and in the study community. Improving teachers' knowledge and skills for teaching Social studies remains an issue in the world.

There is an intimate relationship between social studies lesson and communal living. It is aimed in this lesson to bring up good citizens by teaching them cultural heritage, historical development, constitution, human rights, democratic values, political processes and basic skills and knowledge a fully matured person needs. Social studies also train young people to be good citizens, aware of the cultural differences and able to make rational decisions in a democratic society in an independent world.

The social studies approach emphasized the holistic integration of nation building content around relevant issues and topics that included environmental concerns, population, attention to attitudes, values, beliefs and the skills of problem solving. The social studies closely models' traditional society approach to good citizenship by organizing history, culture, values and beliefs as a formal, integrated school subject which is honoured as a wealthy study (Salia-Bao, 1990). In this study, social studies is defined as the blending of ideas, theories, principles, generalization and knowledge from the social sciences and humanities for the purpose of helping learners to fit well into society (Kankam, 2016). Gauging from the multidisciplinary content and child-cantered pedagogical approaches, researchers conclude that social studies stands out as the most appropriate subject for citizenship education (Kankam, 2015; Mukhongo, 2010; Biesta,2006). Social studies, according to Carnoy, 1974, suggested the following importance of social studies to the world, Africa and Ghana. Among such importance are;

- To sensitize the students to his own culture, to social heritage and to the problems of developing states and societies.
- To induce a sharp awareness in the students of his own world and of involvement in the wider world of which he is invariably a part.
- To develop the ability to identify and evaluate critically the economic, social, political and moral problems and situations he will face as a citizen.
- To be able to accomplish the above listed importance of social studies, there should be an effective and efficient social studies teacher who possess the following qualities;
- Engages students.
- Uses multiple assessment methods
- Adjusts instruction
- Makes connections and,
- Has strong content knowledge, (Hanna, Hageman and Potter in Sembiyan (2015)

Despite all the above importance, the youth in the world, Africa and Ghana to be specific are still facing series of challenges of which Atwima Nwabiagya North District cannot be left out. It is upon this note that the researchers have taken it upon themselves to research into.

Due to the deficit thinking over the last century, young people are often perceived as problem or risk (Sharratt, McClain, and Zehm, 1993) and as trouble (Davids, Theron and Maphunye, 2009). This type of thinking curtails young people's potential for positive contribution in society. In South Africa, young people do not get enough opportunities to allow them to engage in activities that allow them to be agents of their own and their country's broader successes (Miller, 1995a). According to Cornwall (2010), the lack of participation for young people (about 70%) is typically a function of sheer lack of interest and/or lack of access to suitable facilities. The youth in Atwima Nwabiagya North District is not an exception to that.

Atwima Nwabiagya District was carved out of the former Atwima District in 2004 by the legislative instrument 1738. Atwima Nwabiagya North Assembly was also carved out of the Atwima Nwabiagya District Assembly as one of the 38 newly created and upgraded District Assemblies in 2018. The District Assembly has its capital as Barekese. It was inaugurated on March 15, 2018 alongside other 37 newly created districts.
It is situated in the western part of the region and shares common boundaries with Ahafo Ano South and Atwima Nwabiagya South Districts to the west, Offinso District to the North, Kumasi Metropolis and Kwabre Districts to the East, Amansie-West and Atwima Kwanwoma Districts to the South.

The main economic activity in the district is agriculture. About 67% of the working population is engaged in agriculture. The other major activities are manufacturing, 3.5%, services 17.5% and commerce 12%.

From the above assertions, one could confidently say that a lot of effort has being made throughout the centuries past to ensure that the youth all over the world becomes a bit self-sufficient. The question now is 'are the people feeling

the impact'? Whilst some countries are progressing, some are still retrogressing which has arouse the interest of the researchers to delve deep into the 'why' question and the possible solution to that question. Human Development Indices for different Districts varies considerably and Atwima Nwabiagya North District was found to be among the worst. Human Development Indices is an indicator that is used to measure basic standards of living, life expectancy and literacy levels of population; if the educational levels are low then the unemployment levels will be high (Chapman, and Snyder, 1995).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

This problem was identified when the researchers went out for their off-campus teaching practicum at Barekese senior high school and Osei Tutu Senior High School. The researchers however, identified that the people were focussing on economic issues with the perception that it may have been all that is needed to keep rural communities viable.

The researchers observed that the youth in the community have not been empowered to be able to deliver on their own mandate to bring about development in the community. The problem will affects the youth empowerment that is why the researchers have taken it upon themselves to research into the causes, effects and find appropriate solution for a better youth empowerment to bring about development in the community.

However of concern is the observation that very little has been done to staff-development on social studies and that is, to a large extent, surprisingly is still not effective in the school curriculum. It has also been noted that very little research on perceptions of teachers towards Social studies is available in Ghana and in the study community. Improving teachers' knowledge and skills for teaching social studies remains an issue in the world.

It looks like majority of the Social Studies teachers at the community are not trained upon appointment most especially on how to handle students to empower them for nation building. This study was conducted to find out how social studies teachers could promote youth patriotism and nation building since literature is lacking in this regards.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to assess youth empowerment for personal development: the role of the social studies teacher in Atwima Nwabiagya North District.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

- To investigate into the role of the social studies teacher in the youth empowerment in Atwima Nwabiagya North District
- To examine the causes of youth empowerment challenges in the Atwima Nwabiagya North District.
- To investigate into the effects of the youth empowerment in Atwima Nwabiagya North District
- To propose the various mechanisms to help empower the youth in Atwima Nwabiagya North District

1.4. Research Questions

- What is the role of the social studies teacher in youth empowerment?
- What are the causes of youth empowerment challenges?
- What are the possible effects of youth empowerment?
- Outline the various mechanisms that can be used to help empower the youth?

2. Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is to outline the factors that contribute towards the development of a community through youth empowerment and the role of the social studies teacher as researched internationally and locally, focusing on home and school environments. Numerous studies link the poor youth empowerment to socio-economic problems, poverty, and politics (Engelbrecht, Kriegler and Booysen, 1996).

The reviewed literature was mainly from primary sources; journals, secondary sources; education policy documents, articles, and newspapers. The Ghanaian perspective is not different from the international perspective since an issue of youth empowerment affects everybody, whether from a poor socio-economic background or not. Therefore, youth empowerment should be looked at holistically due to factors such as poverty, which has spatial, tribal and gender dimensions, which in turn have determined settlement patterns of different tribal groups in all areas in the district.

The chapter gives the theoretical framework, empirical studies and conceptual framework
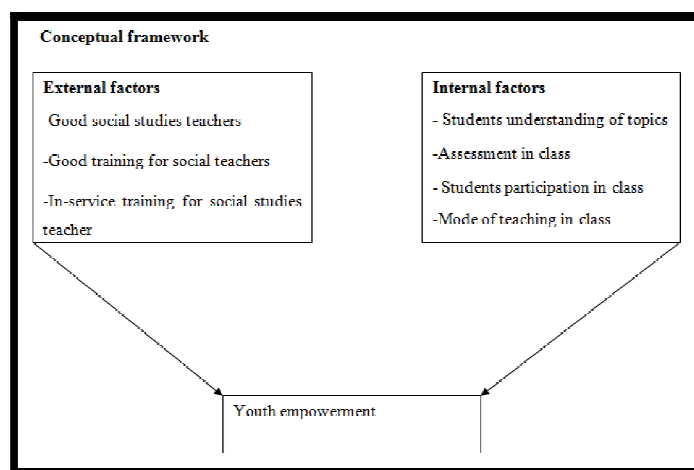
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Author's Own Construct, 2019

As shown in Figure 1.1, certain factors influence effective empowering of youth in national development. These factors have being categorised into two, which are internal factors and external factors. Some of the external factors include; good social studies teachers, good training for social studies teachers and students being able to understand the topic taught in the class who would later go out to the community. These external factors, however, according to the researchers, were factors which the researchers thought it wise, bringing into the horizon of empowering the youth, which may not necessarily be the target population for the research. Moreover, the youth under study also has certain roles to play which the researcher termed as internal factors. These include; students understanding of the topics being taught and about to be taught, assessment in class, students' participation in class and mode of teaching in class.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1. Empowerment theory

The study adopted the Empowerment theory to support the study variables. A review of definitions of empowerment reveals both diversity and commonality (Gibbon, Labonte and Laverack, 2002). Most definitions focus on issues of gaining power and control over decisions and resources that determine the quality of one's life, while some others also take into account; structural inequalities that affect entire social groups rather than focus only on individual characteristics (Zimmerman, 2000; Rappaport, 1987). The term empowerment has different meanings in different socio-cultural and political contexts, and does not translate easily into all languages (Seekins and Smith, 1994) The researchers' observation and exploration of local terms associated with empowerment around the world is that it has always led to lively discussions. These terms include self-strength, control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, life of dignity in accordance with one's values, capable of fighting for one's rights, independence, own decision making, being free, awakening, and capability (Gibbon Labonte and Laverack, 2002; Czuba, 1999).Consequently, in its broadest sense, empowerment is the expansion of freedom of choice and action; it involves increasing one's authority and control over the resources and decisions that affect one's life. As people exercise real choice, they gain increased control over their lives. It can also be defined as the act of enabling people to act on their own in order to reach their self-defined goals (Zimmerman, 2000; Czuba, 1999). Empowerment is a construct shared by many disciplines and arenas: community development, psychology, education, economics, studies of social movements and organizations. Empowerment motivates individuals and communities to take power and act effectively in gaining greater control, efficacy, and social justice in changing their lives and their environment (Fawcett et al. 1999). Central to empowerment process are actions which both build individual and collective assets, and improve the efficiency and fairness of the organizational and institutional context which govern the use of these assets (Czuba, 1999).

3.2. Empirical Studies

3.2.1. Knowledge and Attitude of Social Studies Teachers towards Youth Empowerment

Knowledge of Social Studies teachers is the logical first step necessary for them to attach much importance to the subject especially in using the teaching methodologies (Ndlovu, 2014). Since intensity of knowledge is related to the available information and experience, the extent of importance attach to Social studies is also dependent on the intensity of knowledge of social teachers since they are the teachers tasked with the syllabus to impact on the students (Nyakudya, 2011; Osler and Starkey, 2012). The educational process that leads to effective citizenship has therefore been concerned with learning about how the state functions, about citizens' rights and responsibilities within the state, and about attitudes and values that help develop positive relationships between individual citizens and the state (Nyakudya, 2014).

The need for an educational brand that embodies the national philosophy and promotes a people's values, norms and beliefs has attracted efforts, commitment and resources of nations the world over (Nussbaum, 2012). An educational programme that is devoid of these fundamental underpinnings is considered irrelevant and a waste of important

resources (Nussbaum, 2012). The goal of Social studies includes, among others, preparing children to become members of a democratic society (Adeyemi, Boikhutso, and Moffat 2013). The dimension of Social studies that Africa adopted was emancipatory in nature. In other words, countries introduced. Social studies as a move towards affirming their positions as independent countries (Agyemang-Fokuo, 1994). In a Botswana context for example, most social studies teachers lacked knowledge of Social Studies and so an opportunity was provided to them to re-assess and re-assert knowledge to the subject (Adeyemi, Boikhutso and Moffat, 2013). The principal aim by the Botswana government in asserting the national identity became evident and pronounced with the contents of the RNCE (Report on National Commission on Education) (1977) entitled *Education for Kagisano* (social harmony) (Agyemang-Fokuo, 1994). The report posited that the principal aim of education was to develop the individual. In other words, imparting knowledge and skills, values and beliefs necessary to promote active participation in societal activities including dealing with everyday challenges. RNCE also noted that the education system should orient young people towards social, cultural, political and economic life of the unique society (Adeyemi, Boikhutso and Moffat, 2013).

3.3. Kinds of Trainings Given to Social Studies Teachers to Promote Patriotism among the Youth

Globally, education must afford every child the opportunity for self-actualization and for the realization of their dreams. In Ghana, it is among the four core subjects and facilitates the realization of particular dreams (Akyeampong, Pryor and Ampiah, 2012). The purpose of this quality, student-centred Social Studies subject is to provide all students with experiences and learning opportunities that will assist in the development of significant knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and values relevant to success in the 21st century (Nyakudya, 2014).   According to Akyeampong, Pryor and Ampiah, (2012) most social studies teachers in Ghana received only classroom theoretical based learning. As part of the core Curriculum, Social Studies, along with every other subject, has the responsibility to provide positive learning opportunities through which all students can experience success and develop the necessary knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and values that have been identified as essential characteristics of individuals who will become caring citizens, and efficient economic members of a technologically literate, socially and politically sophisticated, and moral community. Social Studies is an ideal subject for achieving many of these intended Learning Outcomes (Nussbaum, 2012). In Zimbabwe, the revised Curriculum has been designed with these essential outcomes in mind;

- To help students to function as effective, caring, and responsible citizens of the local, national, and global communities, by imparting moral values and life skills.
- To facilitate the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making skills, utilizing specially designed teaching and learning activities that require students to locate accurate, relevant information and to apply appropriate analytical tools.
- To facilitate the introduction and development of appropriate technological competencies necessary for success in the information age, through the use of technological devices in the delivery of instruction (Osler and Starkey, 2013)

3.4. Extent to Which Social Studies Teachers Have Applied Their Trainings to the Benefit of the Youth

Social Studies is viewed as the preparation of young people for their roles and responsibilities and for the challenges and uncertainty of life through provision of relevant education (Nussbaum, 2012). The teaching of Social Studies enables students to think beyond their individual and ethnic interests; thereby making them to tolerate and respect the views of others (Faulks, 2014).

According to Hébert (2011), Social Studies which have important components of value education could serve as an instrument for bringing about desirable positive change in the community. Social studies determine action and shapes the direction in which an individual operates in a given situation (Freire, 2010).

Nussbaum (2012) states that the people's value orientation and their social attitude expressed through services rendered to one another constitute the bedrock upon which members of the society depend for their survival. The social economic and political problems that such African countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Nigeria and non-African countries like Mexico, Haiti and the Soviet Union have can be attributed to the human factor decay which social studies teachers have not been very active and effective (Hébert, 2011).

In contrast, the social economic and political progress experienced by Singapore for example is a result of that country's national focus on issues of Social studies (Ndlovu, 2014). For instance most social studies indicated that they had knowledge on social studies according to a study done by Ndlovu (2014). In the past, the foundation was laid in the home with parents acting as role models of decency, but today, children spend most of their time at school interacting with teachers and other children.

The teacher's role in instilling Social studies is important (Ndlovu, 2014). Others also considered the benefits of Social studies to be the focus on developing better understanding between cultural groups, identity formation and social participation; and planetary awareness (Nyakudya, 2011).

In across sectional study conducted by Agyemang-Fokuo (1994) using social studies teacher trainees in Zimbabwe in a focus group discussion, the participating students were majoring in different subjects offered in the different teacher colleges - a total of 23 specialist areas. The teachers had a good knowledge of the coverage of social studies syllabus.

Hence all areas of specialization offered in teachers training colleges were represented among the student respondents thus making the sample as truly representative as could be hoped. All the respondents cited the main goals of

Social Studies as being: to instil patriotism in students, to raise national consciousness and to develop a sense of belonging and identity through a study of the country's history.

This also included the values based on the national ethos and beliefs as well as ownership of national character centred on ubuntu/unhu. Other benefits of the subject cited were that it would enable students to appreciate and appropriately contextualize the economic, social and political challenges experienced by the country. It was argued that patriotism would make the students be responsible and loyal citizens, and eager to participate in national development and defense of the nation. Several students were of the view that Social studies equips one with professional ethics and entrepreneurial skills thus preparing them for self-reliance and even self-employment. One respondent indicated that it groomed knowledgeable citizens (Asimeng-Boahene, 2013). Additional comments made by respondents about the value of Social studies included that it provided an understanding/insight into of issues that been misrepresented in the media. It would also enable students to contribute meaningfully to discussions on national issues, something they could not do before. On the issues of patriotism students indicated that they would be in a position to know and exercise their rights in a democratic Zimbabwe. They would be able to appreciate their deployment wherever, within the country, to serve their nation (Asimeng-Boahene, 2013).

4. Methods

There are two paradigms that determine the direction of a research project from its commencement to the last step of writing the research report. These paradigms are qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The researchers will use both the qualitative and quantitative mathematical models, theories and hypotheses pertaining to natural phenomena approach due to its suitability in social research, which can be done in the subjects' natural setting (De Vos, 2001). In this study, numerical data will be collected on teachers from the institutions under study. Therefore, for a study of this nature, mixed instrument will be appropriate. This will help to ascertain the current factors responsible for the challenges of youth empowerment among the youth in Ghana. The methodological approach adopted by the researchers is based on the premise that empowerment cannot be measured in a way that does justice to its inherent complexity and that satisfactorily meets the three criteria of meaning, causality and comparability. What can be done is to identify important dimensions of change in power relations that can be measured, albeit imperfectly, and then complemented by more interpretive and explanatory forms of qualitative research.

The challenges identified above point to the need for a mixed-method approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data. Data collection methods useful for empowering social policy thus:

- Include numbers, so that the scope and direction of change can be assessed at a glance;
- Are accompanied by some kind of interpretation or explanation;
- Are easy to implement and analyse quickly; and
- Produce compelling results that are easily accessible to policy makers.
- The aim of this study is to investigate youth empowerment for personal development, the role of social studies teachers among the youth in atwima nwabiagya north district.

This chapter presents the research design, description of research population and sample size, method of data collection, sampling technique and method of data analysis process.

4.1. Research Design

The study employed a mixed study design approach. A mixed study provides the researchers with an opportunity to gain a deeper sense of the problem under study in order to facilitate an in-depth description, understanding and explanation of the phenomenon under study.

According to Krueger & Sokpe (2006), the plan and structure of a research constitute the design. This guides data collection and analysis. Gay (1992) suggests that a research design indicates the basic structure of a study, the nature of the hypothesis and the variables involve in the study. They explain that strategic choice of research design should come up with an approach that allows for answering the research problem or question in the best way possible.

From what has been discussed so far, it is clear that data collected in this study was of a quantitative and qualitative in nature. The challenges in youth empowerment is a challenge that already existed prior to the conduct of this research and which developed as a result of activity undertaken in this study. Research designs that enable researchers to investigate the cause or consequences of empowerment that already exist between or among groups of individuals have been classified as causal comparative or ex-post-facto designs (Vander Stoep & Johnston, 2009; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). As a result, the design of this study was ex-post-facto design.

`Ex-post-facto design has the advantage of improvement in statistical technique and general methodology, it is appropriate when simple cause and effect relationship are being explored, it also has the advantage of meeting an important need of the researchers where a more rigorous experimental approach is not possible. Ex-post-facto design has the disadvantage of the cause not being a single factor and also a particular outcome may result from different causes on different occasions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This study aimed at unearthing detailed information that could be some of the factors that continued to prevent the youth in Atwima Nwabiagya North District from achieving their personal goals to ensure development.

4.2. Research Population

The research population comprised only trained social studies teachers and students of Atwima Nwabiagya North District Senior High Schools who consented to take part in the study at the study community. It also took into consideration the students and some other youth within the study community.

4.3. Sample and Sampling Technique

The researchers sampled 39 social studies teachers and 25 students at the study community. The teachers and students were sampled from the total population of 227 teachers and 6198 students using purposive sampling technique. The researchers employed a non-probability sampling technique, particularly the purposive sampling method, which assisted them to choose in an appropriate manner, the restricted set of participants (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:83). The sample social studies teachers and the students in the schools under study were purposively selected from other social studies teachers and students in different schools in the district because the study focuses on the youth empowerment for personal development, the role of social studies teachers among the youth in Atwima Nwabiagya North District.
The study used data from the social studies teachers in the district, and also some students and youth in the community. Hence the need to adopt another research instrument, interview to be precise.

4.4. Data Collection

Data collection for this study was collected from social studies teachers and students from the study community. Since access to the research schools could be an issue, the researchers negotiated permission from the headmasters so that rules and regulations in public schools concerning access are complied with. A visit was paid to the selected schools to meet with the headmasters. During these visits the purpose of the study was explained to them. In addition, appointments for the last set of visits was made to the schools to collect the data. Sufficient time was given to complete the questions that was given to the teachers for collection on the last day of visit and an on the spot interview was conducted to the students.

4.4.1. Instrument of Data Collection

The researchers developed the questionnaire and the Community Score Card in consultation with the study supervisor. The questionnaire and the CSC were structured according to the study objectives. Questionnaires were administered to the teachers sampled at the various schools within the community. Also interview was also done at the study community to both the youth and the students sampled within the study community. The questions and the interviews were only close-ended and put according to the study objectives for easy selection by the participants. This is a secondary data and has the advantage of having a pre-established degree of validity and reliability which need not be re-examined by the researchers who are re-using such data. It already exists, so it saves time. It was cheaper than doing primary research. It also allowed the researchers access to data that could not otherwise be gotten. However, it is limited to the effect that; its answers had the potential of not being exact fits to the researchers' questions. In addition to this, the data presented in it had the possibility of containing obsolete data (Polit, & Hungler 2001).

4.4.2. Procedure for Data Collection

The researchers approached the social studies teachers and the students at the various schools selected to take part in the study with the questionnaires and the score cards. Since the participants, especially the social studies teachers are literate; they requested to fill the questionnaire by themselves. The questionnaires were collected back after they were filled and cross checked before leaving whiles the students were granted interview for the data to be collected on the spot. Permission was sought from the various schools prior to the data collection with the intent of the research known to the school authorities.

4.5. Method of Data Analysis

The data was entered and analysed using simple frequency tables and computers Microsoft word and excel 2010. The results of the data were presented using simple pie charts and tables to show the study measurements. The presentation was structured based on the objective of the study for easy reading. The first null hypothesis to be tested was to the effect that, there existed no significant relationship between the social studies teachers and the youth. To test this hypothesis the percentage of the teachers that took part in each school were calculated for each of the 39 teachers. This pass rate was then taken as the contribution of the teachers for each of those 39 teachers in each schools selected. Each of these percentages will then be recorded against the total number of teachers presented. Regression analysis will then be done. Regression analysis was chosen because regression attempts to describe the dependence of a particular variable, in this case the home and school factors on one (or more) explanatory variables, the pass rate. It therefore implicitly assumes that there is a one-way causal effect from the explanatory variable(s) to the response variable, regardless of whether the path of effect is direct or indirect. To ascertain whether this regression coefficient is significant, or whether the effect of home and school environment on youth empowerment is significant, a one-way ANOVA test was done to compute for a p-value with a 95% confidence level. The Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) was used for this analysis. From the SPSS output file an interpretation of the obtained regression coefficient and the p-value was then relied upon to make a conclusion as to whether or not social studies teachers significantly affected youth empowerment in the study community. Finally, tables will be used to summarize the results. The second null hypothesis was to the effect that,

there existed no significant difference between the youth and the social studies teachers based on the data collected among the 39 teachers.

5. Results and Discussion of Findings

5.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented on the age in years, sex, marital status, and educational status of respondents. It is shown in Table 1 with each variable heading.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
20-30	18	46.0
31-40	9	23.0
41+	12	31.0
Sex		
Male	27	69.0
Female	12	31.0
Marital		
Single	15	38.0
Married	24	62.0
Educational qualification		
Diploma	9	23.0
Degree	30	77.0

Table 1: Demographic Data of Respondents
Source: Field Data, 2019

From Table 1, the modal age group for the study was 20-30 years representing 46% of all the respondents. From the results (Table 1), majority (69%) of the study participants were males whilst the rest were females. From the results also, majority of the study participants representing 62% were married whilst the rest were single or in a consensual relationship. From Table 1, 77% of the study participants had degree whilst the rest had diploma. The results are showed in Table

5.2. Knowledge and Attitude of Social Teachers towards Youth Empowerment

In this section, the engagement with teachers was to assess their knowledge and attitudes offered during training and the relevance to the teaching of Social Studies.
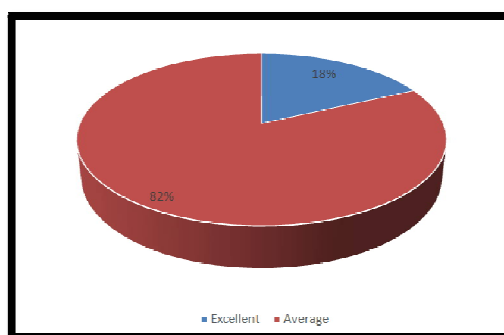

Figure 2: Knowledge Acquired in Terms of Social Studies

From Figure 2, study participants were asked to rate their knowledge acquired in terms of Social Studies in teaching the youth. From the results (Figure 2), 18% of the study participants rated their knowledge as excellent. This finding from the study agrees with the study done by Ndlovu (2014) where Social Studies teachers had high knowledge concerning Social Studies. While from the results, 82% of the respondents rated their knowledge as good. This finding from the study is at variance with the study done by Adeyemi, Boikhutso and Moffat (2013) were Social Studies teachers in Botswana lack knowledge of Social Studies. It is important to emphasise that, a peace-oriented Social Studies education can foster the development of values, attitudes and skills to nurture peace within ourselves and in our personal relationships, and to create the conditions for peace in our own communities and in the global community.
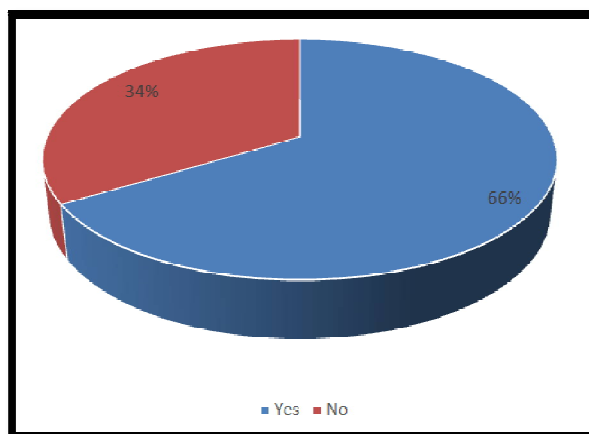
Figure 3: Teachers Acquired Needed Knowledge to Teach Social Studies

Based on the results in Figure 3, it was showed that, 66% of the study participants said they have acquired the needed skills during their training to impart knowledge to the youth as a Social Studies teachers while 34% of the study participants said they have not acquired the needed skills during their training to impart knowledge to the youth as a Social Studies teachers.
Among the former,

- Teachers understand the syllabus very well and can teach the students
- Students understand what the teacher teaches
- Among the latter however,
- New contents contained in the Social Studies syllabus are not well understood even by the masters how much more the students.

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Social Studies syllabus		
Good	39	100.0
Attitude as a Social Studies teacher		
Positive	39	100.0

Table 2: Coverage of Social Studies Syllabus
Source: Field Data, 2019

From the results in Table 2, respondents were asked to assess the coverage of Social Studies syllabus. From the results (Table 2), 100% of the study participants said the coverage of the syllabus was good. This finding from the study agrees with the study done by Agyemang-Fokuo (1994) were social studies teacher trainees in Zimbabwe had a good knowledge of the coverage of social studies syllabus. From the results, 100% of the study participants rated their attitude as positive towards Social Studies. This fining from the study is similar with the study done by Agyemang-Fokuo (1994) were in Zimbabwe, Social Studies teachers had positive attitude toward social studies.
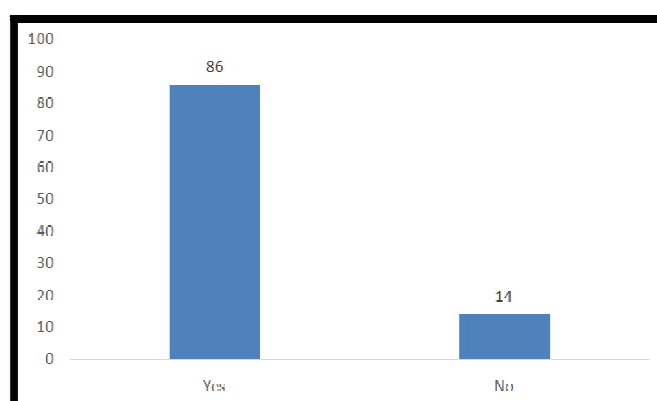

Figure 4: Coverage of Social Studies to Empower the Youth

From Figure 4, 86% of the study participants said the current syllabi were good to empower the youth in Ghana. Among those who said yes, they identified the following as reasons;
1. Content of patriotism is captured and taught
2. National holidays are still being taught
3. National emblems are still being taught
Among study participants who said no, the following were identified among them

- The content keeps changing with no clear focus

5.3. Kinds of Trainings Given to Social Studies Teachers to Promote Patriotism among the Youth

In this section, the study assessed the kinds of training Social Studies teachers are using to promote patriotism among the youth.

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Classroom based learning	39	100.0
Practical based learning	18	46.0
Demonstration based learning	24	62.0

Table 3: Training Provided to Social Studies Teachers at School Level

5.4. Multiple Responses

From Table 3, all 39 (100%) of the study participants identified classroom based learning and 46% of the study participants identified practical based learning as the kinds of training they received during their school days. This finding from the study disagrees with Akyeampong, Pryor and Ampiah, (2012) were it was revealed that most social studies in Ghana received only classroom theoretical based learning.

Variable	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
Better training of Social Studies teachers improve teachers knowledge on the subject	39 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Better training of Social Studies teachers make them committed to youth and their learning	39 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Better training of Social Studies teachers assist them to know how youth conceptualize Social Studies	39 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)

Table 4: Kinds of Trainings Given to Social Studies Teachers & Empowerment
Source: Field Data, 2019

From Table 4, study participants were asked to indicate by their responses that giving the needed training, Social Studies teachers could promote empowerment among the youth. From the results (Table 4), all the study participants (n=39, 100%) agreed with the statement that, better training of Social Studies teachers improve teacher's knowledge on the subject, better training of Social Studies teachers make them committed to youth and their learning and better training of Social Studies teachers assist them to know how youth conceptualize Social Studies. This finding from the study is similar to the study done by Nussbaum (2012) where similar results were found.

5.5. How Social Studies Teachers Applied Their Trainings to the Benefit of the Youth

In this section, results are presented on ways teachers training on Social Studies could benefit students by way of their application. Table 5 captures the results.

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
Social and political cohesion among youth	39 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Tolerance of diverse views among the youth	39 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Improved capacity to participate in national development issues	39 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Students behaves as good citizens	39 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Students report crimes to authorities	39 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)

Table 5: How Teachers' Applied Their Trainings to Empower the Youth
Source: Field Data, 2019

From Table 5, study participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they have applied their training as Social Studies teachers to the benefits of the youth. From the results in Table 5, (n=39, 100%) of the study participants agreed with the statement that they have used their training to teach the youth to have social and political cohesion among themselves, used their training to teach the youth to have tolerance of diverse views among themselves. This finding from the study is similar to the study done by Faulks, (2014) were Social Studies teachers cited similar results.
Findings from the study also showed that, (n=39, 100%) of the study participants agree with the statement that they have applied their training to teach the youth to have improved capacity to participate in national development issues. This finding from the study is at variance with the study done by Hébert, (2011) were in Nigeria Social Studies could not promote patriotism among the youth. The detailed results are shown in Table 5.

The CSC discussions were held in the study communities or other spaces in each community. Groups were made up of 6–12 young people aged between 14 and 19 years. Discussions were facilitated by the researchers. Sessions began with the group split into two smaller groups, each of which performed a short discussion exercise, one that depicted good youth-community relations from the perspective of young people and the other, from the perspective of the institutions in the community.

Following the discussion exercise the groups were asked to discuss their general understanding of each indicator on the Community Score Card until they could define and come to a common understanding of each one. Participants were then asked to score the current youth-community situation using the score card. A facilitated discussion followed during which participants were asked to justify their scores and address the causes and effects of the problems they had identified, as well as possible solutions to these problems

Community Score				
	Indicator	OSEI TUTU SHS	BAREKESE SHS	
Standard Service Indicators				
A	Level of trust that students have in the teachers	1	4	
B	Level of respect and courtesy displayed by the teachers	2	5	
C	Level of fairness displayed by the teachers	1	4	
D	Level of responsiveness of the teachers	3	3	
E	Level of effort made by the teachers to interact with the students	2	5	
	Empowerment indicators	AKROPONG	BAREKESE	
F	Level of youth access to information about community activities and services	3	5	
G	Level of youth willingness to use community services (e.g., reporting incidents)	4	5	
H	Ability of youth to officially complain about inappropriate youth behaviour and/or actions	5	5	
I	Level of youth willingness to officially complain about inappropriate youth behaviour and/or actions	1	4	
J	Level of youth hope that youth-community relations can improve	2	5	

Table 6: Score Card Results in Two Research Communities 2019
Note: A Scale: 1= Very Poor; 2= Poor; 3= Fair; 4= Good; 5= Excellent

5.6. Analysis of Youth Perceptions of Community

The analysis presented here is based the discussions that accompanied the scoring process and PEER interviews. Data from the CSC reveal some differences between numeric scores and accompanying explanations, with the latter qualifying or even casting doubt on the former. In such cases, PEER findings were particularly useful for understanding how to weigh the differences and evaluate discrepancies. PEER research also helped contextualize youth evaluations of the community within broader themes of gender, age, and socioeconomic hierarchies.

Trust in the community. The scorecards indicated that students have very poor levels of trust in the teachers in Osei Tutu Senior High School and good levels in Barekese Senior High School. The narrative explanations of these scores revealed that in Osei Tutu Senior High School, students did not trust the teachers because of the things they had heard about them.

Respect and courtesy displayed by the teachers. Scores for respect and courtesy displayed by the teachers followed the same pattern as those for trust, with Osei Tutu Senior High School having the lowest scores and Barekese Senior High School much higher scores. In all two schools, scores were slightly higher than those for trust in the teachers.

Fairness displayed by the teachers. To students, teacher's fairness meant carrying out their duties according to the law, being impartial, non-judgmental, unprejudiced, and unbiased. Again, there was a stark difference between scores for Osei Tutu Senior High School (very poor) and Barekese Senior High School (good).

Responsiveness of the teachers. The scores for teacher's responsiveness were much more equal among the two schools than other scores, with the two schools rating this indicator a 3 (fair). During discussions associated with the score cards, it became clear that young students 'expectations of teacher's responsiveness were that the teachers should take the law seriously, be alert, practice what they had been trained to teach, be more assertive when complaints were made, and respond in a timely manner. In both schools with fair scores, discussion of the CSC revealed a desire for more

interaction and socialization with teachers as a way to increase trust. Low levels of teacher's effort to interact with young people in Osei Tutu Senior High School was also ascribed to lack of communication and teachers fear of students.

Finally, peer research showed that students perceived that they were treated less fairly by the teachers. A common complaint was that the teachers never gave students a fair chance in the case of a conflict with a colleague or teacher. Their perception was that their voices were not heard in such cases, even to defend themselves in the face of accusations.

5.7. Analysis of Youth Empowerment

As noted earlier, the second group of indicators was designed to measure and track young people's agency: their capacity to demand better services. This capacity is in part reflected in their knowledge of relevant laws and redress mechanisms, as well as their willingness to make complaints and their perception of actual possibilities to exercise this agency.

Youth access to information about community activities and services. Young people rated their access to information about community services very differently across the two communities. In Akropong, which has a community youth club, the score was slightly better (3, fair), as a community representative is always present at the center to provide information on community services and activities. However, most young people in the community did not attend the youth club because they did not trust the community, so their access to information through this channel was limited.

Youth willingness to use community services. Given the scores and PEER research on most of the previous indicators, the level of youth willingness to use community services (e.g., report incidents) was unexpected. Scores in all two communities were either 4 (good) or 5 (very good), despite the mistrust and perceptions of poor community responsiveness described above.

Narratives of the CSC discussions suggested, however, that the scores do not reflect the full situation. In Akropong, for example, despite a —good score of 4, young people said they were not willing to report incidents because th ey feared the community would tell people they had informed.

5.7.1. Ability of Youth to Officially Complain About Inappropriate Youth Behaviour

According to the score cards, the perceived ability of young people to officially complain about youth behaviour and/or actions appears to be very good in the two communities (both scores of 5). However, discussions of these scores indicated a more nuanced reality, with explanations sometimes appearing to contradict the scores. In Akropong, for instance, young people gave this indicator a score of 5 and felt that complaining about police behaviour was possible in principle, there was no one in the community with whom a complaint could be lodged.

5.7.2. Youth Willingness to Officially Complain About Inappropriate Youth Behaviour

The scores regarding young people's *willingness* to complain are interesting in light of the scores for *ability* to complain. In Barekese, willingness and ability were both scored highly. However, in the other community, the two indicators were ranked very differently.

5.7.3. Level of Youth Hope That Youth-Community Relations Can Improve

In general, young people expected the community to perform better and more professionally. However, their personal experience generally caused them to expect little change. Some youth expected nothing but brutality from the community. The findings of the peer research did not, however, suggest a complete lack of hope—especially among female youth—that youth-relations could improve. In Barekese, young people gave high scores (5) to the indicator on hope that youth-community relations could improve.

5.8. Major Findings

5.8.1. Findings Based on the Questionnaires Completed by Teachers (Quantitative Data)

During the pre-intervention stage, questionnaire was administered by the researchers to the social studies teachers in the various study communities to ascertain their level of understanding of the subject and their role to empower the youth as social studies teachers. Generally the attitude of the teachers towards the administration of the questionnaire was the best and the answers produced also assisted the researchers.

Firstly, it was noticed that, some of the social studies teachers did not understand their role as youth developers in the communities in which they live and work. This is because, there were out of field teachers who were teaching the subject and as such perceived the subject as theory oriented subject which is supposed to end in the classroom
Secondly, it was revealed that, some of the teachers in the study community together with the students' body within the study community could not examine the causes of youth empowerment challenges in the study community due to students misunderstanding of topics as a result of mode of teaching the subject. This made the students unable to extend the knowledge that they were supposed to acquire to impact on their fellow youth in the study community.

Finally, not only does the students together with the teachers not being able to examine the cause of youth empowerment challenges, they were also not being able to suggest various mechanisms to curb the challenges confronting youth empowerment among the youth in the study community. This is as a result of the fact that; due to inadequate competent teachers to handle the subject and poor assessment of students at the end of lesson delivery, the students were

not being able to acquire the necessary intelligence to help them come out with possible remedy of curbing the notion of perceiving the youth as social misfit in the study community.

5.8.2. Findings Based on Interviews with Students and Youth in the Community (Qualitative Data)

Even taking into account the fact that much of the information obtained from students and youth could be considered biased in one way or another, it is interesting that some of their comments confirmed the results obtained from the teacher questionnaires, without the students being aware of those results. Students, who required frequent in-service training, did so on the grounds of teacher discipline, suggesting that these frequent trainings only occur when a school already has problems. A school with frequent in service trainings would in all likelihood improve in equipping the teachers with the required instructional strategy to help empower the students from school which further could be extended to the community at large.

Also reports from the youth in the community also revealed that, the youth were being considered as social misfits which were as a result of the mischievous acts being conducted by some of the youth. This made the communities to side-line them when discussing matters relating to the development of the society in which they live.

Lastly, the youth within the study community when confronted with the interview question voiced it out that, the social services which were supposed to be used to curtail certain unpardonable behaviours of the youth were not effective. They had little or no confidence in the youth services in the community that they refused to report deviants to the appropriate quarters to seek redress to those behaviours to make them economic assets instead of economic liabilities. The youth were also being denied access to information that may be beneficial to their well-being.

6. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Concerning the demographic data of the respondents, the modal age group for the study was 20-30 years representing 46% of all the respondents. The results showed that majority (69%) of the study participants were males whilst the rest were females. The results showed that 18% of the study participants rated their knowledge as excellent.

It was showed that 66% of the study participants said they have acquired the needed skills during their training to impart knowledge to the youth as Social Studies teachers while 34% of the study participants said they have not acquired the needed skills during their training to impart knowledge to the youth as Social Studies teachers. All (100%) of the study participants identified classroom based learning and 46% of the study participants identified practical based learning as the kinds of training they received during their school days.

7. Conclusion

The study concludes that knowledge of respondents on the benefits of social studies to empower the youth was found to be adequate. This could be used as an opportune moment to promote the course of the study. Respondents identified ways by which social studies were beneficial to the youth. Therefore, youth can be empowered if social studies teachers are well trained.

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are suggested

- School authorities should allocate more time for the teaching of Social Studies so that the subject is taken more seriously by students as qualified teachers are also employed to teach the subject.
- Ghana Education Service should recruit more teachers to assist in teaching Social Studies. In-service training should also be organised periodically to enhance the competent teaching of the subject to positively impact on the youth and students.
- Also, there is the need for the involvement of all the stakeholders-the curriculum planners, teachers, and the community in coming up with a model for social studies that all conceive to be the best for the country.

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