

Utilization of Field Trips in the Teaching of Social Studies in Colleges of Education in the Volta Region, Ghana

Comfort Adjoa Addo

Department of Social Sciences, Accra College of Education, Ghana

Abstract: The aim of the study was to examine how field trips could be utilized in the teaching of Social Studies in Colleges of Education in the Volta Region of Ghana. In this regard, four research questions were formulated to guide the study. To answer these research questions, the researcher adopted the descriptive survey approach for the study. Thus, the researcher collected and analysed data quantitatively. The population of the study included Social Studies tutors and students of Social Studies department in the Colleges of Education in the Volta Region. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select 35 tutors while the simple random sampling method was used to select 316 students. Data were collected using two sets of questionnaires. The data were analysed using frequency counts and percentages and presented using tables and charts. The findings of the study revealed that the main methods of integrating field trips is to embark on field trips as stated by about 91.4% of the tutors and 91.2% of the students. The findings also revealed the use of virtual reality animations and models. In addition, the study revealed that majority of the students have positive perception about field trips since 73.7% of them prefer field trips that are more educational than fun. However, 65.7% of tutors stated otherwise. Further, 94.3% of the tutors and 79.5% of the students indicated that organising field trips is stressful. It has been recommended that appropriate procedures are adopted for students and tutors in order to facilitate the organisation of field trips.

Keywords: fieldtrip, Student teachers, perception, Social Studies

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Around the world, Social Studies could be noted as one of the courses or subjects that involves a combination of more than one subject put together; for instance, Social Studies is made of subjects such as geography, history, religious and moral education, political studies among others. It could be said that teaching and learning of Social Studies may be a complex one that involves both teachers and students. According to Quartey (1984), Social Studies is an integrated subject that is designed to equip individuals with basic knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed in guiding the individual in solving personal and societal problems. Likewise, Ayaaba and Odumah (2007) argued that Social Studies aims at producing responsible citizens who are well informed, concerned, participatory, reflective, productive and willing to contribute to national development.

This assertion is further corroborated by Martorella (1985) who argued that the essences of Social Studies is

strictly to develop reflective, competent and concerned citizens. By implication, Social Studies inculcates desirable attitudes and skills into the individuals which intends contributes to more measure in nation building. In this vein, Social Studies tutor ensures that students understand and make meaning out of whatever they learn in class. This is largely dependent on the Social Studies tutors' ability to effectively use appropriate teaching and learning strategies such as field trips. However, tutor's nuanced understanding regarding how to effectively utilize instructional strategies is critical in terms of effective teaching. More accurately, Social Studies curriculum models have been connected with four broadly used models in many countries including Ghana. This includes reflective inquiry, citizenship education, social science structure of education and amalgamated or unified integration as identified by DuBey and Barth (1980), Gross, Messick, Chapin and Sutherland (1981) and Okunloye (1988). Therefore, it could be said that tutors' knowledge of Social Studies model is also in the teaching concepts important in Social Studies teaching, since the intellectual image of teachers become the frame of reference as to why, how and when Social Studies is taught in the school system.

According to Quashigah, Kankam, Bekoe, Eshun and Bordoh (2015), Social Studies has become one of the necessary subjects in Colleges of Education in Ghana as it helps to solve contemporary problems. Therefore, as is generally known that Social Studies is one of the core subjects in Colleges of Education in Ghana, it should be expected that after trainees have studied this course, they will be able to teach Social Studies, making effective use of field trips at the Junior High School (JHS) level upon completion of their courses. It seems tutors of Social Studies have been observed to limiting the teaching and learning of the subject to the classroom settings. It is in view of this that the researcher of this study wants to investigate into the utilization of field trips for the teaching of Social Studies in all the seven Colleges of Education in the Volta Region of Ghana.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine how field trips could be utilized in the teaching of Social Studies across Colleges of Education in the Volta Region of Ghana. Precisely, the purpose is to:

1. Find out how tutors integrate field trips with classroom lessons in the Colleges of Education in the Volta Region.
2. Interrogate students' perception about suitable location for field trips in learning Social Studies in the Colleges of Education in the Volta Region.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study provide a good representation of tutors' practices with regards to the utilization of field trips. That is, the study serves as a reference material for the general public and researchers who want to add more to the research area. The findings of this study can be replicated and used in other study to add new knowledge.

In addition, the study significant to all readers, especially tutors at the Colleges of Education in the Volta Region and/or other Colleges of Education in the country, as it provides the different methods employed by tutors of Social Studies in conducting field trips and its importance to teaching and learning.

Conceptual Framework

The framework is presented in Figure 1 followed by its explanation.

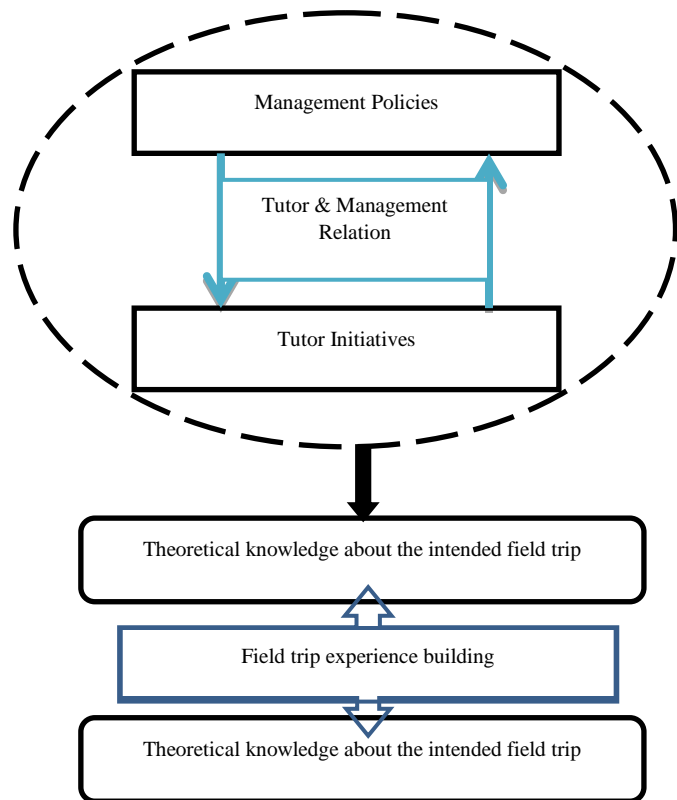


Figure 1: Active Field Trip Framework (2020)

Source: Researcher's own construct

From the researcher's perspective, and from observations from other studies, it is evident that, field trips need to be planned among the management bodies of educational institutions and the tutors involved. It is more likely that educational trips will be more successful if there is a cordial, professional relationships, and effective communication between heads of institutions and those who want to embark on field trips. In relation to Colleges of Education and Social Studies tutors, it is important that advance preparation be made between the parties involved for proper budget and preliminary works to be done to ensure practicality of theories learnt. For instance, Beaudoin and Taylor (2004) posited that a positive relationship between principals and tutors, and attending to their needs add value to tutor's job satisfaction. Meanwhile, according to Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015), tutors' job satisfaction has the potential of significantly augmenting students' achievement indirectly. That is, it suffices to note that a positive relationship between principals and tutors greatly contribute to field trips organised by Social Studies tutors as well as other subject domains.

With the establishment of this relationship, tutors together with students can embark on field trips that will enable them to translate the theoretical lessons learnt in the classroom to reality. That is, students may be able to have real experience with whatever they have learnt in the classroom. Students and tutors may be alternating between the theoretical knowledge and the new knowledge they are acquiring through experience. This supports the aims of field trips as suggested by Michie (1998) that field trips help to provide firsthand experience through which students' interest and motivation in social sciences are stimulated using relevant learning methods and interrelationships. Michie also noted that field trips strengthen observation and perception skills, and also promote personal (social) development.

Fortunately, field trips take students to locations that are unique and cannot be duplicated in the classroom. Each student observes natural settings and creates personally relevant meaning to the experience. Interactive exhibits help students play with concepts; activities often not possible in the classroom. Earlier course content suddenly becomes relevant as students assimilate and accommodate new understanding and cognition (Lei, 2010a). The connection between the field trip venue and the classroom links the field trip's experiential learning with prior experiences and learning from the classroom (Lei, 2010b).

On the other hand, it is observed that there are minimal opportunities for students to personally interact and connect to the experience (Rennie, 2007). Thus, even though there is acquisition of experience, it is limited to some levels. Students may have to picture the rest for themselves and develop their own cognitive thought.

Simply put, the Active Field Trip Framework developed by the researcher argues that, for a successful field trip to take place, there need to be a cordial relationship

between teachers (tutors) and the management body. Once this is achieved, tutors can then go ahead and plan all the procedures that will facilitate optimum teaching and learning. However, during the field trip, acquisition of new knowledge is facilitated by constant referral to theoretical knowledge and the real experience on the ground. It is in this regard that the Active Field Trip Framework is seen with a dotted oval shape around the relationship between principals and tutors with an arrow showing a link to the actual field trip section; this is so because, failure to establish a good relationship will cause failure in the field trip.

Integration of Field trips to Classroom Lessons

The integration of field trips into the Colleges of Education is something to be desired by tutors. Thus, if the integration of field trips is not incorporated into the teaching and learning of Social Studies in the Colleges of Education, it may be left to the students to devise means of achieving it. According to Orion (1993), there are three-part models that can integrate field trips into curriculum. The three parts of the models indicated by Orion include the preparatory unit which prepares students for the field trip with well stated learning outcomes usually incorporated in hands-on-tasks. It could be said that learners work with materials and equipment that will be used in the field to gain basic concepts and skills required.

The second part of the integral model according to Orion (1993) is that, field trips serve as a concrete bridge towards more abstract learning levels which makes field trips the central part of the teaching programme rather than using it as a summary of enrichment activity. This means that field trips have the potential of concretization learners' need to move on to higher levels of cognitive learning when they return from the field.

Further, the third part of Orion (1993) model suggested that there is need to base on the summary of the complex and abstract concepts that have been made easier through field trips to new situations or levels. Per this model, one may say that, if field trips are well integrated with systematic plans into the school curriculum of Colleges of Education, it will help tutors prepare well to give concrete examples to students in order to boost the learning of complex and abstract concepts. One may also question how students may learn from visiting familiar places.;

The integration of field trips into teaching and learning may be demanding as the relative novelty or familiarity of the field trip setting may affect learning. Students may feel reluctant to embark on field trips they have undertaken before getting admission to the Colleges of Education since it may be boring and resource demanding on their part. For instance, according to Falk and Balling (1980), settings that are too novel, cause fear and nervousness; in the same way, settings that are too familiar, cause boredom, fatigue, and diversionary activities. Educators can also provide students with an itinerary of activities and details with regard to the type of work they are expected to do at each

learning station, possible weather conditions, safety hazards and precautions, location of restrooms among others.

Students' Perceptions about Suitable Locations for Field Trips

Logically, the location of the field trip should match the lesson the Social Studies teacher intends to teach or has taught already. By so doing, students can relate their experience from the field trips to the lesson in question. Accordingly, documentation has been done by scholars to put up cognitive and affective benefits of field trips, in addition to motivation for learning (Kern & Carpenter, 1984). In this regard, Bitgood (1989) and Mackenzie and White (1981) showed that there exist more positive attitudes to science and environmental concepts as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills. This indicates that the perspective of students might be subject bias. That is, some field trips may end-up gaining more cognitive outcomes than others.

This situation may continue to happen if the location selected for the field trips do not match the intended outcome. Students might end-up gaining different experiences and skills if careful selection of the field trip location is not done; resulting in the field trips being isolated from the school's curriculum. Ferry (1995) indicated from research that the rate of transfer is less in terms of learning when it is not related to the classroom lessons. Therefore, field trips should be integrated into the broader teaching schedule and implemented until it becomes effective and efficient procedure to fulfill learning objectives. When working within the formal education setting, field trips are relevant to schools' curriculum and they support state education policies and reforms.

Consequently, careful consideration needs to be made if learning activities are to be maximized. However, the amount of knowledge acquired could be questionable considering the duration of field trips which are normally limited to one day. In this same line of thought, Storksdieck, Robbins and Kreisman (2007) argued that cognitive learning outcomes are valued by many tutors, parents and management bodies, and that it is imperative to consider field trip designs that will take into account the best and unique learning avenues presented by the field trip destinations. In effect, field trips contribute to the cognitive development of students.

Further, field trips be attributed to the affective development of students based on the destination or location selected. Visit to more art destination could help the students to learn more in relation to how they feel about a given situation or event. Many researches have suggested that, even though cognitive gains are important in field trips, there is need to promote social and affective gains also by engaging in field trips to museums and places of art as shown in the studies of Wellington (1990), Csikszentmihalyi and Hermanson (1995), Meredith, Fortner and Mullins (1997), Rix and McSorley (1999) among others. However, in Ghana, it appears much work has not been done in the use of field trips

to measure the cognitive and affective domains of learning among students which this study seeks to address.

In addition, the rate at which students embark on field trips may also determine their choice of program or course of study. Some students may be of the view that they will embark on more field trips if they enroll in science related programmes as compared to Social Studies or humanities. According to Salmi (2003), a survey of university students in a study as to the reason why they decided to study their programme of study showed that visits to science centers were the main catalysts in their decision to choose science careers. This indicates that the location of the field trips also counts from the students' perspectives. This is indicated by Falk and Dierking (1997), and Gilbert and Priest (1997) in their studies that, although students are more likely to recollect social issues and personally relevant parts of field trips, they turn to dislike field trips that are more complex and procedural that leave little room for personal agenda. That is, students' views about field trips may be both educational and personal. Therefore, the location of the field trips needs to be taken into consideration during the planning stage if all these demands of field trips are to be met.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive survey approach. Descriptive research approach involves systematic gathering of data about individuals and collective activities in order to answer research questions in a study (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorensen, 2006). In this study, descriptive survey was used in an attempt to describe some aspects of a population or an existing phenomenon by selecting unbiased sample of individuals to complete questionnaire and take part in the interview. According to Boyle, Schmierbach, Armstrong, McLeod, Shah and Pan (2004), surveys are good for asking people about their opinions and ideas though they are less reliable for finding out how people actually behave.

Sampling Procedure

A combination of the purposive and the simple random techniques were used to select the respondents. The purposive sampling was used to select 35 Social Studies tutors from all the seven colleges in the Volta Region namely St. Francis, St. Teresa, Peki, Amedzofe, Jasikan, Dambai, and Akatsi Colleges of Education.. Moreover, considering the number of students who study Social Studies at the Colleges of Education, the researcher used the simple random sampling method to select 316 student respondents at a response rate of 90% as the researcher initially selected 350 students.

Data Collection Instruments

The instruments used for the research was structured questionnaires. Two sets of structured questionnaires were used to obtain information from Social Studies tutors and students.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board to ensure that ethical issues that have to do with the safety of participants were adhered to. Confidentiality of information provided by participants was assured and informed consent of respondents was obtained. Participation was strictly voluntary and the identity of the participants were protected as participants were not required to write their names on the questionnaires.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: How do tutors integrate the use of field trips to classroom lessons?

This section of the study sought to find out the strategies used by College of Education Social Studies tutors in integrating field trips into the teaching and learning process. To answer this question, the researcher used all the two instruments; tutors' questionnaire and students' questionnaire. The information collected from the tutors is presented in Table 3.

Table 1: Methods of Integrating Field Trips in Learning by Tutors Responses by Percentages

Items	SD(%)	D(%)	A(%)	SA(%)
I embark on field trips with my students	2(5.7)	1(2.9)	20(57.1)	12(34.3)
I use virtual reality animations with the help of projectors and laptops	0(0.0)	9(25.7)	16(45.7)	10(28.6)
I use models in place of the actual field trips	0(0.0)	4(11.4)	18(51.4)	13(37.1)
I ask students to identify what is learnt in class in the community when they go home	0(0.0)	3(8.6)	22(62.9)	10(28.6)
Pictures from textbooks can be used when embarking on field trips is not possible	4(11.4)	4(11.4)	13(37.1)	14(40.0)

Source: Field survey, Addo (2019)

From Table 3, it can be observed that most of the tutor respondents agreed to using different methods or techniques in integrating field trips into the teaching of Social

Studies at the Colleges of Education in the Volta Region. Again, only 2 (5.7%) and 1 (2.9%) of the tutor respondents indicated that they strongly disagree and disagree to

embarking on field trips with their students respectively. On the other hand, 20 (57.1%) and 12 (34.3%) indicated that they agreed and strongly agreed with embarking on field trips. Likewise, none of the tutors strongly disagreed to using virtual reality animations with the help of projectors and laptops in teaching Social Studies. However, few of the tutors 9 (25.7%) disagreed to using virtual reality animations. Again, 74.3 % of the respondents showed that they make use of virtual reality animations with the help of projectors and laptops to explain Social Studies concepts to students. That is, 16 (45.7%) agreed and 10 (28.6%) strongly agreed to using virtual reality animations.

There are other techniques that help tutors in the integration of new technologies in teaching and learning Social Studies. From this study, it was realised that only 4 (11.4) of the tutor respondents disagreed that they use models

in place of the actual field trips. The rest of the respondents which comprised 18(51.4%) agreed and 13 (37.1%) strongly agreed, revealed that tutors use models to teach Social Studies in place of the actual field trips. Another finding showed that only 3 (8.6%) of the tutor respondents disagreed that they asked students to identify what they have learnt in class in the community when they go home. The rest 32 (91.4%) of the tutor respondents, comprising of 22 (62.9%) agreed and 10 (28.6%) strongly agreed, ask students to identify what they have learnt in class in their communities when they go home. Finally, majority of the tutor respondents indicated that they make use of pictures from textbooks when embarking on field trips is not possible. This was indicated by 13 (37.1%) of the respondents who agreed and 14 (40.0%) strongly agreed. It is also imperative to check if students experience the practices indicated by the tutor respondents. Table 2 revealed how students benefit from the various methods used by tutors.

Table 2: Students' Views on Methods of Integrating Field Trips in Learning

Items	SD(%)	D(%)	A(%)	SA(%)
I enjoy embarking on field trips	13(4.1)	15(4.7)	77(24.4)	211(66.8)
I enjoy virtual reality animations when tutors project them to explain concepts in Social Studies	23(7.3)	17(5.4)	139(44.0)	137(43.4)
I like it when tutors use models in place of the field trips	76(24.1)	154(48.7)	72(22.8)	14(4.4)
I am able to identify what is learnt in class in the community when I go home	19(6.0)	14(4.4)	103(32.6)	180(57.0)
Pictures from textbooks can be used when embarking on field trips is not possible	80(25.3)	100(31.6)	101(32.0)	35(11.1)

Source: Field survey, Addo (2019)

Just as indicated by tutors, the student respondents confirmed that tutors make use of field trips in teaching Social Studies. For instance, majority of the student respondents agreed 77 (24.4%) and strongly agreed 211 (66.8%) that they enjoy embarking on field trips. Likewise, 139 (44.0) of the student respondents agreed and 137 (43.4%) strongly disagreed that they enjoy virtual reality animations when tutors project them to explain concepts in Social Studies. Thus, about 87.4% of the student respondents indicated that tutors make use of virtual reality animations and they enjoy it. Therefore, majority of them (students) strongly disagreed (76, 24.1%) and disagreed (154, 48.7%) that they like it when tutors use models in place of field trips.

Once more, the student respondents confirmed that they are able to identify what they learnt in classroom in their communities. According to information from Table 4, 103 (32.6%) of the student respondents agreed to this item while 180 (57.0) strongly agreed to the same item. In addition, more than half of the student respondents disagreed that pictures in textbooks could be used when embarking on field trips is not possible

Indications from Table 3 and Table 4, no one can doubt the fact that tutors make use of field trips in teaching Social Studies at the various Colleges of Education in the Volta Region. Both the tutors (about 91.4%) and students (91.2%) clearly indicated that the use of field trips is ongoing

in the college. It may be imperative to refer to the use of field trips in teaching and learning as one of, the vital components that may help tutors to explain Social Studies concepts to students. That is, students may learn better if they come into contact with the abstract theories that have been learnt in class. Accordingly, Dewey (1938) posited that student learning occurs as a result of direct, sensory interaction with real objects, people and the environments. Concurrently, according to Piaget (1937) experience, teaching and learning is an active process in which the learners get involved in, thereby applying the previous knowledge, connect it with the new knowledge based on the experiences they are engaged in. Therefore, taking students to experience what has been learnt in class has the potential of increasing the knowledge base and understanding of the students and/or tutors.

Additionally, when field trips become impossible due to the resources available to the institution, or due to the fact that there are no concrete sites for showing abstract or complex theories to learners, other means may be developed and used. For instance, taking students to experience a torrential or cyclonic rainfall may be impossible, but with the help of virtual reality animations or models, these concepts may be comprehended by the students. From this study, about 74.3% (that is 45.7% agreed and 28.6% strongly agreed) of the tutors indicated that they use virtual reality animations while about 88.5% (that is 51.4% agreed and 37.1% strongly

agreed) indicated that they make use of models in teaching Social Studies to students. Likewise, 87.4% of the students showed that they enjoy lessons when tutors use virtual reality animations to explain concepts in Social Studies. On the contrary, 72.8% of them do not enjoy it when tutors continuously replace field trips with the use of models.

On a whole, there is no doubt that the use of animations and models are strategic resources that help to enhance the understanding of students. According to Orion (1993) model, there is the need to base on the summary of the complex and abstract concepts that have been made easier through field trips to new situations or levels. If models are developed, it may prevent some of the students who have fear for embarking on field trips as according to Falk and Balling (1980), settings that are too novel cause fear and nervousness. In this regard, experiencing the concepts via virtual reality animations could help reduce the fear and at the same time increase the comprehension levels of students.

Concurrently, both tutors and the students agreed that another way of integrating field trips into learning is to practice from the environment where the students live. For this reason, 91.5% of the tutors said that they ask the students

to identify what has been learnt in class in the community where they find themselves. Likewise, 89.6% of the students confirmed that they were able to identify the features they were asked to identify in the community even though 56.9% of them were not in agreement with the use of pictures in place of embarking on field trips. The practice of identifying features in the environment and the use of pictures may be referred to as an alternate way of integrating field trips into the teaching and learning process. According to Tal and Steiner (2006), it is possible to view field trips from different angles; some of which may be beneficial as others remain unbeneficial to both teachers and students. Identifying features from one’s environment may be one of the best ways of embarking on personal field trips.

Research Question 2: What are students’ perceptions about locations for field trips in learning Social Studies?

This research question sought to gather relevant information on how students perceive field trip locations in relation to what is taught in the classroom. Information was obtained from the students and tutors alike in answering this research question. Table 5 presents the students viewpoint of the suitability of field trips’ locations.

Table 3: Students' Perception on Suitability of Field Trip Locations

Items	SD(%)	D(%)	A(%)	SA(%)
I think all field trips should be more interesting and fun than learning	99(31.3)	134(42.4)	53(16.8)	30(9.5)
I think field trips are meant for relaxation from learning	119(37.7)	135(42.7)	32(10.1)	30(9.5)
I perceive field trips as a means of learning something new	17(5.4)	5(1.6)	92(29.1)	202(63.9)
I am of the view that field trips can help us understand difficult and abstract concepts	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	52(16.5)	264(83.5)
I see field trips as a waste of time	224(70.9)	67(21.2)	20(6.3)	5(1.6)
I go on field trips to enhance my understanding of Social Studies lessons	10(3.2)	17(5.4)	89(28.2)	200(63.3)

Source: Field survey, Addo (2019)

Students that have lukewarm attitude towards learning may display some negative traits towards field trips. Table 5 exposed that majority of the students perceived that field trips should be more educational than fun. Thus, 99 (31.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 134 (42.4%) disagreed with the statement which states that students think of field trips as an interesting and fun activity than learning. Similarly, 119 (37.7%) of the student respondents indicated that they strongly disagreed and 135 (42.7%) disagreed to thinking of the field trips as a means of relaxation from learning. This means that most of the students perceive as a means of learning something new as 92 (29.1%)

and 202 (63.9%) of them agreed and strongly agreed that field trips are avenues of learning something new respectively. In the same way, all (100%) of them revealed that field trips can help them understand difficult and abstract concepts. However, majority of the students, with 224 (70.9%) strongly disagreed and 67 (6.3) disagreed, were not in agreement with the perception of seeing field trips as time wasting. In addition, the student respondents reechoed that they go on field trips to enhance their understanding of Social Studies lessons. To this item, 89 (28.2%) agreed and 200 (63.3%) strongly agreed. Tutors also presented how students perceive field trips and this is represented in Table 4.

Table 4: Tutors' Report on How Students Perceive Suitability of Field Trip Location

Items	SD(%)	D(%)	A(%)	SA(%)
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Students think all field trips should be more interesting and fun than learning	2(5.7)	10(28.6)	17(48.6)	6(17.1)
Students think field trips are meant for relaxation from learning	5(14.3)	12(34.3)	13(37.1)	5(14.3)
Students perceive field trips as a means of learning something new	0(0.0)	3(8.6)	19(54.3)	13(37.1)
Students are of the view that field trips can help them understand difficult and abstract concepts	1(2.9)	6(17.1)	15(42.9)	13(37.1)
Students view field trips as a waste of time	12(34.3)	20(57.1)	2(5.7)	1(2.9)
Students go on field trips to enhance their understanding of Social Studies lessons	2(5.7)	0(0.0)	18(51.4)	15(42.9)

Source: Field survey, Addo (2019)

On the part of tutors, 17 (48.6%) agreed and 6 (17.1%) strongly agreed that students think of field trips as an event that is supposed to be interesting and fun than learning. However, almost half of the tutors, 48.6% (14.3% strongly disagreed and 34.3% disagreed), disagreed that students perceive field trips as meant for relaxation from learning while the other half, 51.4% (37.1% agreed and 14.3% strongly agreed), agreed to the same item. In agreement with the findings from the students' results, 91.4% (54.3% agreed and 37.1% strongly agreed) of the tutor respondents showed that students perceive field trips as a means of learning something new. In the same way, 80.0% (42.9% agreed and 37.1% strongly agreed) of the tutors showed the students also perceive field trips as events that can help them understand difficult and abstract concepts. Once more, the tutor respondents agreed with the students on the fact that they do not see field trips as a waste of time since 91.4% (34.3% strongly disagreed and 57.1% disagreed) of the tutors do agree that students consider field trips as a waste of time. Again, 94.3% (51.4% agreed and 42.9% strongly agreed) attested to the fact that students' aim on embarking on field trips is to enhance their understanding of Social Studies lessons.

From the results from the students and tutors, it is observed that most of them are similar. The main revelation in the results showed that students perceive field trips as one of the strategies tutors use for them (students) to understand complex or abstract lessons that were taught in the classroom. These findings are in line with those found in earlier studies and shown in the work of Wellington (1990), Csikszentmihalyi and Hermanson (1995), Meredith, Fortner and Mullins (1997), and Rix and McSorley (1999) who have shown that field trips do not only improve the cognitive gains of the learning but also the social, psychomotor and affective gains. The implication of these results could be attentiveness on the part of students during field trips, note taking or recording of speech, critical observation among others. If students are able to put serious attention to field trips, it will help achieve the reason for embarking on the field trip. Again, this is in line with the position of Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) that teachers' job satisfaction has the potential of significantly augmenting students' achievement indirectly. Therefore, obtaining 100% of tutor respondents and about 90% of the student respondents agreeing that the use of field trips could be used to enhance the understanding of difficult and abstract concepts in Social Studies is a confirmation that

field trips help students to better comprehend what is being taught in the classroom.

On the other hand, students may pretend to be learning something meaningful while they are doing just the contrary. While about 73.7% (comprising 31.3% strongly disagreed and 42.4% disagreed) of the students indicated that they disagree to having a field trip that is more interesting and fun than learning, which means the opposite might be true that they will prefer an educative field trips than an interesting and fun one, tutors are of the opposite view. Majority of the tutors, 65.7% (comprising 48.6% agreed and 17.1% strongly agreed), posited that students think all field trips should be more interesting and fun than learning. In one way or another, it could be true that half of the students may prefer interesting and fun field trips while others may prefer educative ones. According to Bitgood (1989) and Mackenzie and white (1981), there exist more positive attitude to science and environmental concepts as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Therefore, students may prefer educational field trips when it comes of science of environmental concepts. That is, environmental concepts which are embedded in Social Studies may be considered relevant by students. It could be likely that some students may prefer educational field trips in other subject areas. One may posit that field trips could be a blend of fun and educative to keep students motivated and ready to learn something new.

Studies by Salmi (2003) specified a sign of subject bias on the part of university students when choosing their programme of study due to the visits they will be making to science centers. This shows that from the perspectives of students, educational field trips are important as compared to those that are just for fun. On the contrary, some students also prefer interesting and fun driven field trips. For instance, results from Falk and Dierking (1997), and Gilbert and Priest (1997) found out in their studies that, although students are more likely to recollect social issues and personally relevant parts of field trips, they turn to dislike field trips that are more complex and procedural that leaves little room for personal agenda. Simply put, the decision to be fully included in a field trip experience is dependent on the students' behaviour and how tutors present or inform students about the field trip. Therefore, field trips could be either interesting and fun or boring. The extent of use of field trips may also be based on how both tutors and students perceive it.

Further, one may posit that the importance accorded to field trips by the management body of Colleges of Education may inform how important it is in the life of the students. From the response from some of the heads of departments who are also Social Studies tutors, it was realised that, most of them do not have concrete evidence to show that their department takes field trips seriously. Even though Social Studies is very broad and can allow tutors to organise more field trips, this is not the case in this assign research.

IV. KEY FINDINGS

From the analysis, the following key findings were obtained:

1. The main teaching technique of integrating field trips into the teaching and learning process is to actually embark on field trips as stated by 91.4% of the tutors and 91.2% of the students. Also, it was shown that when field trips become impossible to embark on, tutors make use of virtual reality animations (as indicated by 74% of the tutors and 87% of the students), models and pictures (as indicated by 88% of the tutors) to enhance the understanding of students. On the contrary, 72% of the students revealed that they do not enjoy it when tutors continuously replace field trips with the use of models.
2. Research question two revealed that majority of the students have positive perception about field trips since 73% of them prefer field trips that are more educational than fun. Meanwhile, tutors (65%) are of the view that students prefer fun field trips to educational ones. In addition, it was found that 90% of the students and 100% of the tutors agreed that field trips could be used to improve the understanding of difficult and abstract concepts in Social Studies.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the researcher posited that the use of field trips in the teaching and learning of Social Studies has the potential of influencing the understanding levels of students and tutors. That is, during the actual field trips or in the use of virtual reality animations or models, students may construct new ideas from what they would have imagined from the theories taught in the classroom. The findings of this study were in line with those conducted earlier as Orion (1993) showed that field trips serve as a concrete bridge towards more abstract learning levels which makes field trips the central part of the teaching programme rather than using it as a summary of enrichment activity. Therefore, field trips have the potential of helping students and tutors to gain new knowledge that may not have been obtained through theoretical learning in the classroom.

Also, it is imperative to note that even though some students may display lackadaisical attitude towards field trips

as stated by tutors, majority of the students will be motivated to learn something new as their motivation and anticipation levels will be directed towards it. The intrinsic motivation of the students is expected to prepare them to discovering new knowledge from the field trip. If students are motivated enough, they may enjoy field trips and learn at the same time as indicated by Bitgood (1989) and Mackenzie and White (1981) in their studies. Students have been motivated to appreciate science and environmental concepts and enjoy embarking on these types of field trips. It is imperative to state that field trips to other aspects such as geographical sites can yield similar results if the work put in the preparation phase of the field trips motivates students explore new ideas and experience.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study and the conclusions that were drawn, the following recommendations were made:

1. Procedures for seeking permission should be outlined by the management of Colleges of Education for students and tutors in order to facilitate the permission process and reduce the stress level in seeking permission and organising educational field trips.
2. Students should be educated more and more by Social Studies tutors on the importance of embarking on educational field trips to eliminate lukewarm attitude of some of the students.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Even though this study covered a large geographical area, it is important to conduct another study to find out the best educational field trip locations in the entire country. This will help to obtain a concrete document that will show which field trip location best suits a given topic area.

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