

# Exploring Hurdles in Elevating Social Studies Education: Unravelling the Assessment Conundrum at St. Peters 'B' Junior High School

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## ABSTRACT

The study sought to examine the challenges facing assessment techniques in the teaching Social Studies in Nsoatere Community JHS in. The research design selected for the study was descriptive survey. The data collection was questionnaire. The population for the study consisted of Social Studies teachers. A population of 15 were all included in the study through census method. The key findings of the study according to the specific objectives were: Social Studies teachers practice formative assessment, insufficient time for assessment is the major challenge facing Social Studies teachers and students are unable to realise their mistakes due to absence of feedback. From the finding these conclusions were made according to the specific objectives: teachers focused on the type of assessment that leads to clarification and modification of teaching methods, insufficient time for assessment prevents Social Studies teachers from using appropriate assessment procedures and tools for conducting good assessment and teacher's assessment and evaluation procedures in Social Studies in the JHS are not valid and reliable. These recommendations were made: Social Studies teachers at the JHS should also consider the other types of assessment procedures, heads of schools are to make sure Social Studies lessons are given more ample time to aid assessment in the subject and Social Studies teachers should make sure any assessment and evaluation procedures and tools used in Social Studies in the Junior High School are valid and reliable as they promote feedback.

**Key Words:** Social Studies, Education, Assessment Techniques, Conundrum

## INTRODUCTION

The role of assessment has always been central in education. It is limpid that assessment informs the strategies employed by teachers in teaching and also shapes students learning (Dys the, 1996). If instruction does not include assessment, it often fails. This tells how significant assessment is to the process of instruction. Nonetheless, Chand (2017) argues that assessment in schools is often surrounded by a lot of complexities which serve as impediments to the teaching and learning process. This calls for urgent attention on the subject matter since assessment forms part of the instructional process. Drawing inspiration from this, this study focuses on examining the challenges facing assessment techniques in the teaching of Social Studies in Nsoatere Community Junior High School.

.In the instructional process in a Social Studies class, there are a lot of measures that are undertaken to make the teaching and learning process successful. Key amongst these measures are class management, the use of various forms of pedagogies for instruction and the use of instructional resources among others. One technique that is very instrumental in the teaching and learning process and cannot be left out is assessment. Sadler (2009) describes assessment as the making of evaluation on students' overall performance and the generation of assumptions regarding their learning. Based on this, McMillan, Myran and Workman (2002)

have reiterated that classroom assessment has become a vital component of effective teaching and learning. Affirming this, Cockcroft (as cited in Opolot-Okurut, 2010, p. 1), asserts that assessment is an integral part of teaching that enables teachers to judge students' progress, measure and diagnose the effectiveness of instruction, and report on students' progress to interested clients. These tell that assessment is used for varied purposes in the teaching and learning process.

However, Chand (2017) contends that the purpose of assessment in most Social Studies classrooms has not fully served the purpose for which it is intended. This then points to some limitations regarding the practice of assessment in schools. In Fiji, for example, Chand indicates that the Social Studies curriculum has become overloaded. This prevents teachers from undertaking varied forms of assessment as they devote much of their time to researching and teaching the concepts in the overloaded curriculum. Also, in the United States of America, Stiggins (2002) tells that a lot of teachers are still under the misconception that assessment is all about tests and nothing beyond that.

Coming down to Africa, Greaney and Kellagham (2004) report that in Kenya, Social Studies classroom assessment practices are predominantly constrained by large class sizes and shortage of teaching materials (including test books and store rooms to keep the books). Not far from this, Kurebwa and Nyaruwata (2013) indicate that in Zimbabwe, too many responsibilities on teachers and scarcity of facilities make it difficult for teachers to carry out assessment.

In Ghana, a similar situation exists. Kankam, Bordoh, Eshun, Bassaw and Korang (2014) point out some flaws surrounding the practice of assessment in Junior High School. They reveal that teachers' knowledge base, ability and practices of assessment in schools are limited. This subsequently does not improve instruction since the practice of assessment is not carried out efficiently and effectively in the classroom. It is therefore prudent Social Studies teachers are given the necessary education on assessment so as not to undermine its practice in the classroom and make it more relevant to the instructional process. This, in turn, would have a significant influence on the learning behaviours of students in the classroom (Cauley & McMillan, 2010).

In Ghana, several studies have been conducted on the challenges associated with the practice of assessment. Oludare and Alade, 2018, for instance, report that particularly in basic schools at Ablekuma North of the Greater Accra Region, the challenges teachers encounter in their bid to conduct assessment include large class size, inadequate competent teachers and limited refresher courses for teachers. Also, in the Northern Region, Bordoh, Eshun, Quarshie, Bassaw and Kwarteng (2015) discovered that although the knowledge base of Junior High School teachers in assessment is paramount in the classroom, its use is limited due to policy systems, time, resources and assessment methods employed by various schools and the teachers themselves.

Specifically, the observation was that, with Social Studies in St.Peters 'B' Junior High School s, there seems to be lack of requisite skills, teacher assessment knowledge and other factors that go beyond the teacher's competence that affect the practice of assessment in Social Studies in St.Peters 'B' Junior High School from being carried out effectively in the classroom. This study sought to examine the challenges facing assessment techniques in the teaching of Social Studies in St.Peters 'B' Junior High School .

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The educational process comprises dual activities of teaching and learning. Facilitating learning is therefore the most important objective of teaching (Mangal, 2007). Edmund Amidon defined teaching as "an interactive process, primarily involving classroom talk which takes place between teacher and pupil and occurs during certain definable activities". Davis et al., Gagne et al. have contributed significantly in defining this concept and their views could be summarized as follows: Teaching is a scientific process, and

its major components are content, communication and feedback. The nature of teaching has been conceptualised and explained in numerous ways. According to Hubacher, Akora, Masaba, Chen, and Veena, (2014), defines teaching as the act of providing activities that facilitates learning. Alorvor et al., (2021) also alludes that teaching is a system of actions and interactions that are employed by an instructor to facilitate learning among students. Likewise, James and Pollard (2006) describe teaching as the main means of promoting learning and achievement in pupils. To Alton-Lee (2003), teaching is a pedagogical practice that facilitates access to information for heterogeneous groups of students towards developing their capacity to engage in learning from classroom activities and assignments that are related to defined curriculum goals.

These conceptions of teaching imply that teaching is said to have taken place when instructors guide students to create a means through which students' learning can be facilitated. As such, one could infer that teaching is basically a process of imparting knowledge and skills from a teacher to a learner based on instructions. This hence identifies teaching and learning as the factors that make a difference in the minds of learners and also what influence the knowledge and skills. Conversely, Vin-Mbah (2012) views teaching in a different perspective. To him, it is an activity that causes a change in students' behaviour. This conception presents teaching as a form of behavioural construct which is geared towards making a learner become better in terms of attitude and conduct. Here, teaching is therefore seen an act or experience that formatively affects the mind, character or physical ability of a learner.

### **The Concept of Assessment**

The term "assessment" has captured an array of meanings within the educational environment. Several scholars have given their notions about what the concept is. According to Brookhart (2001), assessment is the process of collecting information from learners about their experiences of learning. Also, Stassen (2001) posits that assessment is a systematic collection and analysis of information to improve student learning which can facilitate improvement through a multiplicity of avenues. Similarly, Ionone-Georgiou (2003) states that assessment involves processes which include all methods used to gather information about learners' knowledge, ability, understanding, attitudes and motivation. These conceptions suggest that assessment is more of an integrated process which helps in determining the nature and extent of student learning and development

### **Types of Assessment**

Generally, assessment is being described as either formative or summative (Box, 2003). Nonetheless, McAlpine (2002) and Anandan (2015) contend that there is more to assessment other than formative and summative assessments. They enumerate other types of assessment to include diagnostic assessment, formal assessment, informal assessment, continuous assessment, final assessment, process assessment, product assessment, divergent assessment, and convergent assessment.

### **Formative Assessment**

The term "formative assessment" was first used by Scriven (1973) to describe the evaluation of curriculum while it was still under development. Formative assessment has since been widely adopted as a term to describe a systematic evaluation in the process of curriculum construction, teaching, and learning (Bloom, Hastings & Madaus, 1971). According to Box (2003), formative assessment is used to determine whether a learner has achieved an adequate level of skill or mastery over a subject content before the learning period expires. This implies formative assessment provides feedback and information during the instructional process while learning is occurring.

Formative assessment measures student progress and also helps instructors to assess their own progress (Anandan, 2015). A primary focus of formative assessment is to identify areas that may need improvement.

This assessment type is not graded, acts as a gauge to students' learning progress and also determines teaching effectiveness. On this basis, one could infer that formative assessment is most appropriate when results are to be used internally by those involved in the learning process.

### **Summative Assessment**

Summative assessment is used primarily to make decisions for grading or determines readiness for progression (Box, 2003). Typically, summative assessment occurs at the end of an educational activity and is designed to judge a learner's overall performance. In addition, it communicates students' abilities to external stakeholders such as administrators and employers; and also judges the effectiveness of a whole programme, course or instruction (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

### **Diagnostic Assessment**

Diagnostic assessment is an assessment that is often undertaken at the beginning of a unit of study (Anandan, 2015). This assessment helps instructors to identify students' current knowledge of a subject, skill set and capabilities; and to clarify misconceptions before teaching takes place. Knowing students' strengths and weaknesses enables teachers to better plan what to teach and how to teach it. Diagnostic assessment usually comes in the form of pre-tests, self-assessments, discussion board responses and interviews.

### **Formal Assessment**

In the classroom, formal assessment occurs when students are aware that the task that they are doing is for assessment purposes (Anandan, 2015). Conventionally, this type of assessment comes in the form of a written examination. This brings to light that most formal assessments are summative in nature and thus, tend to have greater motivation impact. Given their role in decision-making, formal assessments should be held to higher standards of reliability and validity (McAlpine 2002).

### **Informal Assessment**

According to McAlpine (2002), with informal assessment, judgments are integrated with other tasks. During the instructional period, informal assessment comes to play when there is a systematic observation and monitoring of students during class learning and teaching experiences. This form of assessment is also realised when there is an interaction with students to gain a deeper knowledge of what they know, what they understand, and what they can do. This suggests that informal assessment is used to provide formative feedback. As such, it tends to be less threatening and less stressful to the student. It must however be noted that informal assessment is prone to the element of subjectivity.

### **Continuous Assessment**

Continuous assessment, in simple terms, is a type of assessment that occurs throughout a learning experience. McAlpine (2002) explains that continuous assessment is applicable when student knowledge of progress or achievement is needed to determine the subsequent progression or sequence of activities. Continuous assessment provides both students and teachers with the information needed to improve teaching and learning. This indicates that continuous assessment obviously involves increased effort for both teacher and student in the instructional process.

### **Final/Terminal Assessment**

Final or terminal assessment is an assessment which takes place only at the conclusion of a learning activity (McAlpine, 2002). It is most appropriate when learning can only be assessed as a complete whole rather

than as a constituent part. Typically, final assessment is used for summative decision-making. Obviously, due to its timing, final assessment cannot be used for formative purposes.

### **Process Assessment**

Process assessment focuses on the steps or procedures underlying a particular ability or task (McAlpine, 2002). Since this type of assessment provides more detailed information, it is prudent to use it when a student is learning a new skill. Providing formative feedback will help in improving performance.

### **Product Assessment**

Product assessment focuses on evaluating the result or outcome of a process. McAlpine (2002) expounds that product assessment is most appropriate for documenting proficiency or competency in a given skill, hence, used for summative purposes. He further posits that generally, product assessments are easier to create than process assessments, requiring only a specification of the attributes of the final product.

### **Divergent Assessment**

Divergent assessment refers to assessment for which a range of answers or solutions might be considered correct (McAlpine, 2002). A classic example of this assessment includes the use of essay tests in assessing learners. McAlpine asserts that divergent assessments tend to be more authentic and most appropriate in evaluating higher cognitive skills. However, he assumes this type of assessment is often time consuming to evaluate and that the resulting judgments often exhibit poor reliability.

### **Convergent Assessment**

Unlike divergent assessment, convergent assessment has only one correct response per item (McAlpine, 2002). Convergent assessment appears in the form of objective test items. Obviously, convergent assessments are easier to evaluate or score than divergent assessments. Unfortunately, it is generally observed that since convergent assessment is easy to use, it often leads to a widespread application of this approach even when contrary to good assessment practices. Specifically, McAlpine reports that the familiarity and ease with which convergent assessment tools can be applied leads to two common evaluation fallacies: The Fallacy of False Quantification (the tendency to focus on what is easiest to measure) and the Law of the Instrument Fallacy (moulding the evaluation problem to fit the tool).

### **Principles of Assessment**

Fundamentally, principles of assessment are the tenets on which assessment practices are based. Anandan (2015) and Sethusha(2012)highlight that the principles of assessment are centred on reliability, validity and fairness.

#### **Reliability**

Reliability, in simple terms, describes the repeatability and consistency of a test. Anandan (2015) argues that a test can be reliable but not valid. Therefore, Brindley (2003) emphasises that for assessment to be reliable, there has to be limited contrast in learners' scores or in judges' ratings across different occasions with different judges. This way, reliability will be based on performance instead of distinctive scores that have no pre-set criteria (Lambert & Lines, 2000).

#### **Validity**

Validity defines the strength of the final results and whether it can be regarded as accurately describing the



real world (Anandan, 2015). Relating this to the classroom, assessment refers to the extent to which an assessment measures what it purports to measure (Maree, 2010). This means that classroom assessment is valid when the evidence gathered genuinely reflects the characteristics a teacher needs to know about (Tierney, 2006).

### **Fairness**

The issue of fairness remains the most important challenge in assessment (Kunnan, 2005). According to Lynch (2001), fairness refers to treating all individuals the same way and providing an equal opportunity to contribute to the research process, or in the case of assessment research, to demonstrate their ability. This implies that all learners taking performance assessment needs to have reasonable opportunities to manifest their know-how without difficulty or demonstrate what they can do while being assessed through multiple methods. This is what Cameron (2001) refers to as equity in the design and use of assessment, stressing on fairness in assessments, Brown (2005) advises that teachers should ensure that their personal feelings do not interfere with the assessment of the learners or even bias the assignment of scores.

### **Empirical Review**

This review focused on the types of assessment practiced by teachers, the assessment challenges faced by teachers and the impacts of assessment challenges on teaching.

### **Types of Assessment Practiced by Teachers**

In China, Zhao, Van den Heuvel-Panhuizen and Veldhuis (2016) also conducted a study to ascertain teachers' use of classroom assessment techniques in primary Mathematics education. The case study research design was used and through convenience sampling, a sample size of 6 female third-grade Mathematics teachers was selected. Data were collected through interviews, feedback forms, final reports, lesson observations, and student work. The collected data were mainly analysed based on themes. The study found that the teachers used the formative type of assessment, hence were able to get new information about their students' learning, provide immediate response and engage their students during the lesson.

In the United States of America, Ruiz-Primo and Furtak (2006), conducted a study to address the issues in informal formative assessment by exploring how 4 middle school science teachers used questions as a method of informal formative assessment, and compared those practices to measures of student learning. They based the approach to exploring each teacher's questioning practices on viewing whole-class discussions as assessment conversations in which the teacher has the opportunity to draw out and act on students' evolving understanding. In the study, assessment conversations were described as consisting of four-step cycles, where the teacher elicits a question, the student responds, the teacher recognizes the student's response, and then uses the information collected to student learning. The results of the study indicated that the teachers whose enactment of informal formative assessment was more consistent with this model had students with higher performance on embedded assessments. This trend was also reflected in the post-test scores. In addition, they found that teachers focused more on epistemic, rather than conceptual, features of scientific inquiry in their discussions. The study underlines the importance of informal formative assessment during scientific inquiry discussions for teacher training and professional development as a way to increase student learning.

Amua-Sekyi (2016) conducted a study on a review of assessment, student learning and classroom practice. The study employed the case study research design and through a focus group discussion, collected data from a sample of 12 tutors and 18 student-teachers in 3 Colleges of Education in Ghana. The collected data were analysed thematically. It was found that the tutors resorted to using different types of assessment such as formative assessment, continuous assessment and summative assessment.

## Assessment Challenges Faced by Teachers

Metin (2013) conducted a study to find out the difficulties teachers go through in their bid to prepare and implement of performance task and assessment. The study employed the case study research design and was carried out amongst 25 teachers who were randomly selected from elementary schools. Data were gathered through interviews, observation and documentary data collection tools, and were subsequently analysed through the content analyses method. The aftermath of the analysis disclosed that teachers encountered some difficulties such as crowded classrooms, insufficient time for assessment, the inability to carry out objective assessment, and an unsupportive learning environment and technological opportunities.

In a study to examine the knowledge base of teachers in authentic assessment in Senior High Schools in Ghana, Bordoh et al., (2015) employed the descriptive case study and used a sample size of 20 teachers whose data were collected through a semi-structured interview. The collected data were analysed by categorising the responses based on themes. The study found that the practice of authentic assessment was limited by policies, time, resources and assessment methods employed by schools and teachers. It was therefore recommended that regular in-service training and capacity building workshops on classroom assessment should be organised for the teachers to improve their use of assessment tool to enhance teaching and learning

## Conceptual Framework



Source: Authors (2023)

In sum, the researcher examining challenges facing assessment techniques in the teaching of Social Studies in St. Peter's 'B' Junior High School demonstrated that there are so many causes of assessment problems. Besides, per the literature discovered, no detailed research has been conducted in Ghana specifically St. community with regards to Social Studies. Informed by this, the researcher sought to conduct this study. The related literature has enable me to reach the current state of our study and also enables us to know more about this current study.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research design adopted for the study was the descriptive survey. Creswell (2012) posits that the descriptive survey research design focuses on procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours or characteristics of the population. Surveys use a standard set of questions to get a broad

overview of a group's opinions, attitudes, self-reported behaviours, demographic and background information (Barnes, 2008).

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design since the aim of the researchers was to describe the nature of respondents, results and findings in a manner that answers the research questions of the study. Robinson (2006) maintains that descriptive research portrays accurate profile events or situation. However, the descriptive survey research design has some drawbacks. It could delve into some concealed professional matters, making some respondents unwilling to disclose the right information.

The target population for the study comprised all Social Studies teachers in the Junior High Schools in the St. community. However, the accessible population was all Social Studies teachers in the selected schools. In all, the total population for the study was fifteen (15) teachers. This population was considered because the study demanded experts in the field of the study (Social Studies) and the teachers are the implementers of the Social Studies Junior High School curriculum therefore stood the chance of providing answers to the questionnaires.

A sample size of fifteen (15) respondents was used for the study. The census method was used to select the respondents from all the Junior High Schools. This method saw to it that all Social Studies teachers in all the schools were selected for the study. According to Kapahi (2014), the census method deals with the collection of information about the populace from the entire population. Here, there is a procedure of systematically acquiring and recording information about each and every member of the given population. The census method was deemed appropriate for the study because under this method, each and every unit of the population is studied. Also, results obtained by census are quite reliable. It is more suitable to use the census method if population is heterogeneous in nature. Again, data collected through census is more accurate because it takes the entire population into account.

To facilitate the collection of data for the study, the close-ended questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument. Questions on the questionnaire were grouped under themes based on the research questions. The questionnaire was also organised into 4 sections. Section A, comprised of 3 items, sought to find out the biographic data of teachers while Section B captured 4 items that sought to identify the types of assessments practiced by the teachers. On the other hand, Section C, with 4 items, sought to identify the assessment challenges faced by the teachers. The last section, D, composed of 4 items, also examined the effects of assessment challenges on the teaching of Social Studies in Junior High School in the St. community.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Types of Assessment Practiced by Social Studies Teachers

Research question one: What are the types of assessment that are practiced by Social Studies in St.Peters 'B' Junior High School ? This research sought to inform in the table 1 below the types of assessment that are practiced Social Studies in St. Peters 'B' Junior High School .

From Table 1, it was revealed that, majority of the respondents (n=7, %= 47.0) said yes to formative assessment. Formative assessment is used to determine whether a learner has achieved an adequate level of skill or mastery over a subject content before the learning period expires. This implies formative assessment provides feedback and information during the instructional process while learning is occurring. A primary focus of formative assessment is to identify areas that may need improvement. In support of this finding, Anandan (2015) opined that, formative assessment measures student progress and also helps instructors to assess their own progress.

Last, from Table 1, it was indicated that, majority of the respondents (n=8, %=53) said yes to summative



assessment. Summative assessment is used primarily to make decisions for grading or determines readiness for progression. Typically, summative assessment occurs at the end of an educational activity and is designed to judge a learner’s overall performance. According to Darling-Hammond (2006) summative assessment communicates students’ abilities to external stakeholders such as administrators and employers; and also judges the effectiveness of a whole programme, course or instruction

Table 1: Types of Assessment Practiced by Social Studies Teachers

Statement	Yes (N)	%	No (N)	%
Formative Assessment	7	47.0	0	47
Summative Assessment	8	53.0	0	53
Continuous Assessment	0	00.0	0	00.0
Diagnostic Assessment	0	00.0	0	00.0
Source: Field Survey, 2023				

**Assessment Challenges Faced by Social Studies Teachers**

Research question two: What are the assessment challenges faced by Social Studies teachers in Junior High Schools in the St.Peters ‘B’ Junior High School ? This research sought to inform in the table 2 below the assessment challenges faced by Social Studies in St.Peters ‘B’ Junior High School .

Table 2: Assessment Challenges Faced by Social Studies Teachers

Statement	SD (N)	%	D (N)	%	A (N)	%	SA (N)	%
Overcrowded classrooms	0	00.0	2	13.0	3	20.0	10	67.0
Overloaded syllabus	1	7.0	3	20.0	6	40.0	5	33.0
Insufficient time for assessment	2	13.0	2	13.0	2	13.0	9	60.0
Lack of resources to carryout assessment	0	00.0	5	33.0	6	40.0	4	27.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From Table 2, it was revealed that, majority of the respondents (n=10, %= 67.0) strongly agreed that one major challenge on assessment faced by Social Studies teachers are overcrowded classroom. Overcrowded classroom affects the teaching and learning negatively. Teachers due to many students in the classroom end up not using the right and appropriate assessment tools for assessing students. According to, Metin (2013) teachers encounter some difficulties such as crowded classrooms in terms of conducting assessment for students.

Last, from Table 2, it was indicated that, majority of the respondents (n=9, %=60.0) strongly agreed that another major challenge on assessment faced by Social Studies teachers is insufficient time for assessment. Assessment helps in different ways at different times in the student’s life. Each time assessment provides important information that can strengthen or improve an instruction and it should take place at every stage of the learning process and it should be fairly frequent. Due to insufficient time allocated for instructions teachers cannot conduct assessment every day at the end of an instructional period which is bad. Also, teachers cannot choose proper and right assessment instruments. Hussain, Shaheen, Ahmad and Islam (2019) conducted a study to investigate teachers’ classroom assessment practices and the associated challenges and opportunities they have at the secondary school level. The study found that challenge

overcrowded classrooms.

### Effects of Assessment Challenges on the Teaching of Social Studies

Research question three: What are the effects of assessment challenges on the teaching of Social Studies in St.Peters ‘B’ Junior High School ? This research sought to inform in the table 3 below the effects of assessment challenges on the teaching of Social Studies.

From Table 3, it was revealed that, majority of the respondents (n= 9, %= 60.0,) agreed that one major effect of assessment challenges on the teaching of Social Studies is that, there is the inability to realise a true reflection of students’ learning outcomes, Sewagegn (2019) conducted a study to investigate teachers’ assessment methods and its associated challenges and effects in assessing learning in a university. The study found that teachers are not able to realise a true reflection of students’ learning outcomes.

Table 3: Effects of Assessment Challenges on the Teaching of Social Studies

Statement	SD (N)	%	D (N)	%	A (N)	%	SA (N)	%
There is the inability to ascertain the amount of learning in the classroom	1	7.0	3	20.0	6	40.0	5	33.0
There is the inability to realise a true reflection of students’ learning outcomes	2	13.0	2	13.0	9	60.0	2	13.0
There is no evaluation for students working effectively with one another	0	00.0	2	13.0	10	67.0	3	13.0
Students are unable to realise their mistakes due to absence of feedback	0	00.0	5	33.0	6	40.0	4	27.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Last, from Table 4, it was indicated that, majority of the respondents (n=10, %= 67.0) agreed that one major effect of assessment challenges on the teaching of Social Studies is that there is no evaluation for students working effectively with one another. In South Africa, Oyinloye and Imenda (2019) conducted a study to investigate the impact of assessment for learning on learner performance in Life Science. The study uncovered that throughout their whole learning period, students working effectively with one another were not evaluated.

### SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Previous studies in the field of Social Studies assessment have acknowledged the importance of assessment techniques in enhancing teaching and learning (Black, & Wiliam,1998). There is a consensus that formative assessment is a valuable practice among Social Studies teachers, as it enables clarification and modification of teaching methods to improve student understanding (Pellegrino, 2000). Additionally, existing literature recognizes challenges in the allocation of sufficient time for assessment, which is consistent with the findings of the current study. This shared concern emphasizes the need for adequate time to conduct effective assessments in Social Studies (Shepard, 2000).

The disagreement in the literature might revolve around the specific challenges faced by Social Studies teachers. While some studies might highlight time constraints as a primary issue, others might prioritize different challenges. The current study distinguishes itself by pinpointing insufficient time for assessment as the major challenge, impacting the use of appropriate assessment procedures and tools (Brookhart, 2013).

Moreover, the identified issue of students being unable to realize their mistakes due to the absence of feedback aligns with a broader literature recognizing the significance of feedback in the assessment process. However, the specific focus on the absence of feedback in Social Studies assessments at the Junior High School level provides a unique contribution to the existing body of knowledge (Shepard, 2000).

In conclusion, while there is a general consensus on the importance of formative assessment and time constraints in Social Studies education, the present study contributes by specifically highlighting the critical role of feedback in the assessment process and emphasizing the need for valid and reliable assessment procedures and tools. Researchers and educators can build upon these findings to enhance the effectiveness of Social Studies assessments in Junior High Schools.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In sum, the researcher examining challenges facing assessment techniques in the teaching of Social Studies in St.Peters 'B' Junior High School demonstrated that there are so many causes of assessment problems. Besides, per the literature discovered, no detailed research has been conducted in Ghana specifically St. community with regards to Social Studies. Informed by this, the researcher sought to conduct this study. The related literature has enabled me to reach the current state of our study and also enables us to know more about this current study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study were made up of fifteen (15) teachers with the same total as the sample size obtained through the census method. The instrument used for the study was questionnaire. A letter of introduction was sent to the institutions considered as the study areas to sought for permission. Data collected were coded and entered into SPSS (version 22.0) and analysed using frequencies, and percentages and presented through tables.

From the study, the following findings were revealed:

1. From research question one; it was found that, most Social Studies teachers practice summative assessment in the teaching and learning of Social Studies in Junior High Schools.
2. From research question two, it was found that; overcrowded classroom is the major challenge facing Social Studies in Junior High Schools.
3. With research question three, it was found out that, one effect of assessment challenges on the teaching of Social Studies in Junior High Schools is that, there are no proper evaluation procedures.

### Conclusions

The following conclusions were made based on the findings of the research:

The study concluded that, when it comes to the types of assessment practiced by Social Studies in Junior High Schools, teachers focused on the type of assessment that leads to promotion, certification selection and placement of students.

Conclusion was made that, overcrowded classroom prevents Social Studies teachers from using appropriate assessment procedures and tools for conducting good assessment in Social Studies in Junior High Schools.

The study concluded that, teacher's assessment and evaluation procedures in Social Studies in Junior High Schools are not valid and reliable.

### Recommendations

Based on the key findings and conclusions, these recommendations were made:

1. The study recommends that, Social Studies teachers in Junior High Schools should also consider the other types of assessment procedures alongside the summative as this will bring the comprehensive nature of student's performance in Social Studies in Junior High Schools..
2. The researcher recommends that; heads of schools are to make sure each class takes the number of students required by the ethics, laws and regulations of the Ghana Education Service to enable Social Studies teachers in Junior High Schools use appropriate assessment procedures and tools for conducting good assessment in Social Studies class.
3. The study recommends that, Social Studies teachers should make sure any assessment and evaluation procedures and tools used in Social Studies in the in Junior High Schools are valid and reliable as they depict the through performance of student

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I certify that I have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

## Data Availability

The datasets generated during the study are available upon request from the corresponding author.

## Competing Interests

The author declares no competing interests.

## Ethical Approval

Approval was obtained from the corresponding author institution's Ethical Review Board (ERB) that the procedures used in this study adhere to the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki.

## Informed consent

All participants and their legal guardians had written informed permission before the interviews.

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