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The Role of Field Trips in Teacher Education for Teaching Social Studies in a Developing Country

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Abstract

This study investigated the role of field trips in teacher education for teaching Social Studies in a developing country, focusing on Ghana and specific Colleges of Education. A descriptive survey approach was used, with 35 Social Studies tutors and 316 students participating. The study examined tutor engagement in field trips and the challenges faced during these trips. Ethical procedures were followed, and data was collected through questionnaire. The findings revealed that field trips were used occasionally or infrequently by most teachers, with virtual realities and models being used more frequently. Field trips were considered significant for both teachers and students in enhancing comprehension. Challenges in organizing field trips included the stressful planning process and obtaining approval from stakeholders. Strict restrictions and lack of funding posed additional challenges. The study recommends improving pre- and post-field trip activities, creatively engaging students in relevant environments, and addressing the complexities of planning and obtaining permissions for field trips.

Keywords: Field trips; Teacher education; Social Studies; Developing country; Ghana; Descriptive survey, Africa, Sociology of Education

1. Introduction

Field trips play a crucial role in teacher education, particularly when it comes to teaching social studies. They provide opportunities for teachers to engage students in hands-on learning experiences,

allowing them to explore real-world contexts and develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter (Seifan, Dada & Berenjian, 2020; Boss & Krauss, 2022). From a global perspective, the significance of field trips in teacher education has been recognized as a means to enhance instructional practices, foster students' critical thinking skills, and promote cultural appreciation (Chen, 2021). However, the specific impact of field trips on teacher education for social studies instruction in developing countries, such as those in Africa, remains an area that requires further investigation (Diacopoulos & Crompton, 2020).

Within the African context, field trips offer unique opportunities to address the challenges faced in social studies education. Africa, with its rich history, diverse cultures, and complex socio-political landscapes, presents a context where field trips can significantly enhance teacher education. In many African countries, social studies curriculum often focuses on the exploration of local history, culture, and civic engagement, aiming to foster active citizenship and critical thinking among students (Goren & Yemini, 2017; King & Pringle, 2019). Field trips can provide teachers with the practical experiences and firsthand encounters necessary to effectively teach these topics, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application (Bassaw et al., 2022). Moreover, field trips can help educators in Africa promote cultural understanding and combat stereotypes by exposing students to different communities, traditions, and perspectives (Taylor et al., 2019; King, Stevenson & Casler-Failing, 2021).

The role of field trips in teacher education for teaching social studies in developing countries, particularly within Africa, lacks comprehensive research despite their recognized global value (Madondo, 2021). The specific impact of field trips on teacher education for social studies instruction in these contexts remains understudied (Ijebor, Cascalheira & Lucero, 2022). This knowledge gap presents challenges such as a lack of understanding regarding the benefits and drawbacks of integrating field trips into teacher education programs, which can hinder the enhancement of pedagogical approaches and meaningful student engagement (Heba et al., 2017; Onyema et al., 2019). Additionally, the limited knowledge of the impact of field trips on student learning outcomes restricts the development of evidence-based practices for curriculum development and instructional strategies in social studies education (Rowe et al., 2015; Barton & Avery, 2016; Greenhow & Galvin, 2020). Furthermore, in culturally diverse and historically rich countries like Ghana, it is essential to examine how field trips can combat stereotypes, promote cultural appreciation, and foster active citizenship among students (Gyamera & Debrah, 2021).

To address these challenges, conducting a comprehensive study on the role of field trips in teacher education for teaching social studies in developing countries, with a specific focus on Ghana, is significant. Such research would provide insights into the benefits and limitations of incorporating field trips into teacher education programs, offer a deeper understanding of their impact on student learning outcomes, and contribute to the development of effective pedagogical practices in social studies education. Moreover, the findings would inform policymakers, curriculum developers, and teacher educators in Ghana and other developing countries, enabling them to make informed decisions about integrating field trips as a valuable component of teacher education programs and social studies curricula. The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent to which tutors engage in field trips and to examine the challenges faced during field trips for teaching Social Studies in developing countries.

RQ1: What is the frequency of tutors' participation in field trips for teaching Social Studies in developing countries?

RQ2: What are the challenges encountered by tutors during field trips for Social Studies instruction in developing countries?

This study is significant as it sheds light on the role of field trips in teacher education for teaching social studies, particularly in developing countries within Africa. Investigating the frequency of tutors' engagement in field trips and exploring the challenges they face, the study aims to address the current research gap and provide valuable insights. The findings have the potential to enhance teacher education programs and improve pedagogical practices in social studies education.

Policymakers, curriculum developers, and teacher educators in Ghana and other developing countries can use the study's outcomes to make informed decisions about incorporating field trips into teacher education and social studies curricula. Furthermore, the study's focus on combating stereotypes, promoting cultural appreciation, and fostering active citizenship aligns with the objective of creating inclusive and culturally sensitive educational environments.

The study is structured into several sections. In Section 2, the study presents the study's framework and provides an extensive review of the existing literature. Section 3 focuses on the methodology employed in the study, encompassing the research strategy, sample design, data collection approach, and analytical methods utilized. The findings and conclusions derived from the analysis are extensively discussed in Section 4. Lastly, Section 5 encapsulates the conclusion of the study, including its limitations, implications, and recommendations for future study.

2. Literature Review

Field trips in teacher education, particularly in the context of social studies, offer invaluable experiential learning opportunities despite the challenges of implementation, especially in developing countries, and are supported by a theoretical framework that emphasizes practical application and a conceptual framework that contextualizes their role in teacher education.

Field trips in teacher education are planned and structured educational excursions organized for pre-service or in-service teachers to enhance their understanding, knowledge, and skills (Amhag, Hellström & Stigmar, 2019). These excursions provide firsthand experiences outside the classroom, allowing teachers to observe and engage with real-world settings relevant to their subject area or pedagogical practices (Alizadeh, 2019; Karnezou et al., 2021). Field trips foster experiential and active learning, immersing teachers in authentic environments and enabling the practical application of theoretical concepts (Cheng, Hwang & Chen, 2019). Visiting museums, historical sites, educational institutions, community organizations, and other locations offer valuable opportunities for teachers to broaden their perspectives, develop cultural competence, and establish connections between theory and practice (Zhou, 2019).

2.1 Field trips in teacher education

Research consistently emphasizes the benefits of field trips in general teacher education programs, underscoring their valuable contribution to complementing classroom learning and facilitating hands-on experiences (Chou & Block, 2019; MacDonald, 2020). Field trips enable students to directly observe and engage with real-world contexts, augmenting their understanding and application of theoretical concepts taught in class (Detjen, Pfleging & Schneegass, 2020). Immersing themselves in authentic settings allow students to encounter the practical aspects of teaching and learning. Moreover, field trips promote active learning by encouraging students to actively participate, inquire, and explore, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and social interaction (Okolie et al., 2022). Additionally, field trips facilitate interdisciplinary learning, enabling teachers to establish connections between different subjects and reinforce the significance and interconnectedness of knowledge (Markauskaite et al., 2020).

2.1.1 Field trips for social studies teacher education

Field trips in Social Studies teacher education are of immense value to pre-service teachers as they offer genuine experiences in social, cultural, and historical contexts. These excursions go beyond traditional classroom instruction, enabling pre-service teachers to directly interact with artifacts, documents, and narratives (Boeve-de et al., 2019). Through experiential learning, they acquire a comprehensive understanding of diverse perspectives, historical events, and societal issues. Field trips also provide practical insights into effective teaching strategies such as utilizing primary sources

and promoting critical thinking. Active participation in these trips equips pre-service teachers with pedagogical experiences that enhance their ability to create engaging lessons and foster inclusive learning environments (MacCallum & Parsons, 2022).

2.1.2 Challenges of implementing field trips

Effective implementation of field trips in teacher education programs often encounters common obstacles that impede their success. A primary challenge is insufficient resources, including financial limitations, which hinder the organization and funding of field trip activities (Mead et al., 2019). Logistical complexities such as arranging transportation, managing scheduling conflicts, and coordinating with external organizations or sites also pose difficulties. Moreover, inadequate institutional support, including a lack of recognition of the value of field trips and inadequate curriculum time allocation, hampers their implementation (Cheng & Tsai, 2019). Additionally, ensuring safety, supervision, accessibility, and obtaining necessary permissions adds further complexity. Addressing these challenges requires collaborative endeavors, including obtaining adequate funding, creating efficient logistical arrangements, advocating for institutional support, and establishing precise guidelines and protocols to ensure smooth and successful field trip experiences in teacher education programs (Mead et al., 2019).

2.1.3 Field trips in developing countries

Conducting field trips in teacher education programs within developing countries faces multiple impediments. Infrastructure limitations such as inadequate transportation systems and poor road conditions can hinder accessibility to field trip locations (Mead et al., 2019; Petersen et al., 2020). Safety concerns like lack of proper supervision, unreliable emergency services, and unfamiliar environments may discourage the organization of field trips. Additionally, the costs affiliated with transportation, entrance fees, and materials can be prohibitive, especially in resource-constrained settings. Limited access to relevant organizations and sites such as museums, historic landmarks, and community resources due to their scarcity or distance further obstructs the implementation of field trips (Mead et al., 2019). Overcoming these barriers requires addressing infrastructure gaps, enhancing safety measures, seeking funding opportunities, and establishing partnerships with local organizations to broaden access to pertinent sites and resources (Cheng, 2022).

2.1.4 Potential value of field trips despite challenges

Despite the difficulties noted, field trips that are properly structured and supported have the potential to offer significant advantages for preservice teachers in developing nations. Experiential learning opportunities through field trips enhance subject knowledge, teaching abilities, and cultural understanding (Gittings, Taplin & Kerr, 2020). They provide opportunities for preservice teachers to connect theory with real-world applications, observe authentic contexts, and interact with diverse communities (Radović, Hummel & Vermeulen, 2021). However, field trips in developing countries tend to occur infrequently and irregularly due to constraints like limited resources, logistical complications, and insufficient institutional support. To maximize the benefits of field trips, it is essential to address these constraints by securing funding, enhancing infrastructure, establishing partnerships with local organizations, and advocating for their incorporation into teacher preparation programs as regular, well-organized experiences (Patiar et al., 2021).

2.2 Theoretical framework

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), developed by Kolb (1984), is rooted in the belief that learning is a process that involves experiencing, reflecting, conceptualizing, and experimenting. According to ELT,

learning occurs when individuals engage in hands-on experiences that allow them to directly interact with the subject matter, followed by a period of reflection and abstraction that leads to the development of new concepts and ideas (Marpa, 2020). These newly formed concepts and ideas are then tested through active experimentation, resulting in new experiences and further learning. The continuous cycle of learning in ELT is represented through four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Dholakiya et al., 2019).

The ELT was used in this study as a framework to emphasize the importance of direct experiences in the learning process. Field trips provide tutors with the opportunity to engage in concrete experiences that expand their understanding of social, cultural, and historical contexts (Dabamona & Cater, 2019), while also allowing them to reflect on their observations and integrate new perspectives into their teaching methodologies. The research questions, which focus on the frequency of tutors' participation in field trips and the challenges they encounter, align well with the ELT framework, as they seek to explore the practical application of experiential learning in the context of Social Studies education in developing countries. Examining the relationship between field trips and teaching practices, the study aims to contribute to our understanding of how experiential learning can be effectively integrated into teacher education to enhance the overall learning experience (Leal-Rodriguez & Albort-Morant, 2019).

2.3 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study is built upon the ELT and focuses on three key aspects: the frequency of tutors' involvement in field trips, the difficulties they encounter during these trips, and the influence of these experiences on their teaching approaches.
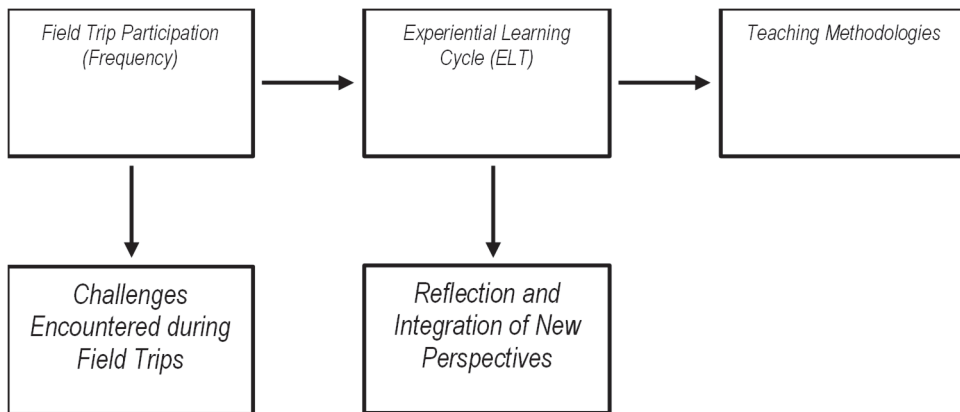
Figure 1: Conceptual framework
Source: Authors' construction (2023)

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework that summarizes the relationship related to field trips in teacher education for Social Studies in a developing country. The Field Trip Participation (Frequency) construct measures how often tutors engage in field trips during their teacher education, which is crucial in understanding the role of field trips in teaching Social Studies. The Experiential Learning Cycle (ELT) serves as the foundation of the study, emphasizing direct experiences, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation in the learning process. Field trips provide tutors with concrete experiences, enhancing their understanding of social, cultural, and historical contexts. The Teaching Methodologies construct explores how field trips impact tutors' teaching strategies and approaches, assuming that experiential learning during field trips leads to the integration of new

perspectives and improves the overall learning experience. The Challenges Encountered during Field Trips construct identifies obstacles faced by tutors during field trips, such as logistics and cultural barriers, which may hinder effective experiential learning and the integration of new perspectives in teaching methodologies. The Reflection and Integration of New Perspectives construct highlights the importance of tutors' reflective observation and abstract conceptualization following field trips, leading to the development of new concepts tested through active experimentation in their teaching practices. The arrows in the framework depict the relationships among these components, indicating how the frequency of field trip participation influences the experiential learning cycle, which, in turn, impacts teaching methodologies, while challenges during field trips also affect experiential learning and the integration of new perspectives.

3. Research Methodology

The research employed a descriptive survey approach to investigate the role of field trips in teacher education for teaching Social Studies in Ghana with a focus on St. Francis, St. Teresa, Peki, Amedzofe, Jasikan, Dambai, and Akatsi Colleges of Education. The target population included 35 Social Studies tutors and 316 students from these institutions. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the participating colleges, followed by a simple random sampling technique to select the participants within each institution.

The researchers in this study followed ethical principles by obtaining informed consent from all participants and ensuring their privacy and confidentiality. Participants were informed about the voluntary nature of their participation and their right to withdraw without facing any negative consequences. The researchers also took steps to prioritize the well-being of the participants throughout the study. Data were collected using questionnaire to gather information on tutor engagement in field trips and the challenges faced during these trips. Ethical procedures were followed, and data was collected between November 2022 and February 2023. The collected data were processed and analyzed using SPSS, with statistical techniques applied. Validity and reliability were ensured through the piloting of instruments, and the findings were presented, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the results.

4. Results and Discussion of Findings

This section presents the results obtained from the field of investigation. The discussions and data analysis conducted in this study were shaped by the primary concerns that aligned with the study's objectives.

4.1 Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

The study participants consisted of social studies tutors and social studies students. The sample of tutors included 35 individuals, with the majority falling within the age range of 30-49 years (74.3%). A smaller proportion of tutors were aged 50 years and above (25.7%). There was nearly an equal representation of male and female tutors. The majority of tutors (88.6%) held a Master's degree as their highest educational qualification.

The sample of social studies students comprised 316 individuals, with the majority within the age range of 20-24 years (68.0%). The gender distribution among the students was fairly balanced, with slightly more female students (67.4%) than male students (32.6%). All students were specializing in social studies, and the majority were at the 200 level of their academic program.

4.1.1 Participation of tutors in field trips for teaching Social Studies

This section sought to find answers to the first research question, thus, *the frequency of tutors' participation in field trips for teaching Social Studies in developing countries*. This research question

aims to determine the frequency of tutors and students' participation in field trips for teaching Social Studies in developing countries, providing insights into the utilization of this pedagogical approach in these educational settings.

Table 1: Frequency at which tutors participated in field trips for teaching Social Studies

Items	Not at all	Sometimes	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
How frequently do you use field trips in your Social Studies lessons?	0(0.0)	7(20.0)	24(68.6)	3(8.6)	1(2.9)
How frequently do you evaluate pupils following field trips?	0(0.0)	11(31.4)	15(42.9)	7(20.0)	2(5.7)
How frequently do you believe field trips should be used in Social Studies instruction?	0(0.0)	1(2.9)	5(14.3)	20(57.1)	9(25.7)
How frequently do you incorporate virtual worlds into your Social Studies lessons?	0(0.0)	8(22.9)	14(40.0)	8(22.9)	5(14.3)
How frequently do you substitute models for field trips?	0(0.0)	4(11.4)	6(17.1)	19(54.3)	6(17.1)

Source: Authors' construction (2023)

Table 1 presents the frequency at which tutors engaged in different activities related to field trips for teaching Social Studies. The majority of tutors (68.6%) reported using field trips occasionally in their lessons, while 20.0% used them sometimes, and only a small percentage (8.6%) used them frequently or very frequently. Assessing students using field trips were reported as occasional by 42.9% of tutors and sometimes by 31.4% of tutors. In terms of beliefs, a majority of tutors (57.1%) believed that field trips should be used frequently in Social Studies instruction, while 25.7% believed they should be used very frequently. When it came to incorporating virtual worlds into lessons, 40.0% of tutors reported doing so occasionally and 22.9% did it sometimes. Substituting models for field trips was frequent for the majority of tutors (54.3%), with 17.1% substituting models very frequently.

Table 2: Students' Report on How Often Tutors Embark on Field Trips in Teaching Social Studies

Items	Not at all	Sometimes	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
How frequently do tutors take students on excursions when teaching social studies?	98(31.0)	148(46.8)	63(19.9)	7(2.2)	0(0.0)
How frequently do teachers evaluate pupils after field trips?	94(29.7)	90(28.5)	64(20.3)	63(19.9)	5(1.6)
How frequently do tutors take students on field trips for learning Social Science?	77(24.4)	142(44.9)	71(22.5)	19(6.0)	7(2.2)
How frequently do tutors employ simulations and animations from virtual worlds to teach social studies?	22(7.0)	96(30.4)	83(26.3)	71(22.5)	44(13.9)
How often do tutors use models (globes, maps, shapes etc.) in place of field trips?	13(4.1)	89(28.2)	48(15.2)	110(34.8)	56(17.7)

Source: Authors' construction (2023)

According to the student reports presented in Table 2, the majority of students (46.8%) indicated that their tutors sometimes take them on field trips when teaching social studies. Additionally, 19.9% mentioned occasional field trips, while only 2.2% reported frequent field trips, and none reported very frequent field trips. Evaluating students after field trips varied, with 29.7% stating that tutors do not evaluate them, 28.5% sometimes being evaluated, 20.3% experiencing occasional evaluation, and 19.9% undergoing frequent evaluation. For learning social science specifically, 44.9% of students

reported sometimes going on field trips, 22.5% mentioned occasional trips, 6.0% stated frequent trips, and none reported very frequent trips. In terms of using simulations and animations from virtual worlds, 30.4% of students encountered them sometimes, 26.3% mentioned occasional use, 22.5% reported frequent use, and 13.9% experienced very frequent use. Finally, using models as substitutes for field trips showed that 34.8% reported frequent use, 28.2% mentioned sometimes using models, 15.2% reported occasional use, and 17.7% mentioned very frequent use.

4.1.2   Challenges encountered during field trips for the instruction of Social Studies

This section sought to find answers to the second research question, thus, *the challenges encountered by tutors during field trips for Social Studies instruction*. The research question is to identify the challenges faced by tutors during field trips for Social Studies instruction in developing countries like Ghana.

Table 3: Tutors' Report on the Challenges Faced in Embarking on Field Trips

Items	SD(%)	D(%)	A(%)	SA(%)
Field trip planning procedures are difficult.	1(2.9)	1(2.9)	19(54.3)	14(40.0)
It's challenging to request approval from administrators and stakeholders.	1(2.9)	2(5.7)	23(65.7)	9(25.7)
If pupils don't recognize my effort but have a bad attitude, it demoralizes me.	2(5.7)	9(25.7)	18(51.4)	6(17.1)
The interest in field trips has been destroyed by technology.	3(8.6)	24(68.6)	3(8.6)	5(14.3)
Lack of knowledgeable and experienced guides at study locations	3(8.6)	8(22.9)	22(62.9)	2(5.7)
Going on field excursions is tough without financial help	1(2.9)	1(2.9)	17(48.6)	16(45.7)
I hesitate to go on field trips because of their length (time factor)	3(8.6)	9(25.7)	16(45.7)	7(20.0)

Source: Authors construction (2023)

Table 3 presents the tutors' report on the challenges they face when embarking on field trips. The data is categorized into four levels of agreement: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA), represented as percentages. The data highlights several key challenges. Firstly, field trip planning procedures are deemed difficult by a majority of tutors, with 54.3% agreeing and 40.0% strongly agreeing. Similarly, obtaining approval from administrators and stakeholders is seen as challenging, with 65.7% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Tutors also express concerns about students' attitudes, as demoralization caused by students not recognizing their efforts and exhibiting a bad attitude is reported by 51.4% who agree and 17.1% who strongly agree. Additionally, technology's impact on students' interest in field trips is raised, with 68.6% in agreement that technology has diminished interest. The lack of knowledgeable and experienced guides at study locations is another challenge, as indicated by 62.9% agreeing and 5.7% strongly agreeing. Financial assistance is seen as necessary for successful field trips, with 48.6% agreeing and 45.7% strongly agreeing. Further, the length of field trips poses a hesitation factor, with 45.7% agreeing and 20.0% strongly agreeing that it is a challenging aspect. Overall, the table reveals a range of difficulties faced by tutors, from logistical issues to student-related concerns, underscoring the need for solutions to improve the field trip experience.

Table 4: Students report on challenges in organizing field trips

Items	SD(%)	D(%)	A(%)	SA(%)
Field trip planning procedures are difficult	35(11.1)	30(9.5)	156(49.4)	95(30.1)
It's challenging to request approval from administrators and stakeholders	40(12.7)	55(17.4)	156(49.4)	65(20.6)
If I don't respect tutors' efforts but have a bad attitude, I get disheartened	33(10.4)	19(6.0)	145(45.9)	119(37.7)

Items	SD(%)	D(%)	A(%)	SA(%)
The interest in field trips has been eliminated by technology	52(16.5)	35(11.1)	115(36.4)	114(36.1)
Lack of knowledgeable and competent tour guides in locations	47(14.9)	84(26.6)	151(47.8)	34(10.8)
It's challenging to go on additional field trips because there isn't enough funding for them	37(11.7)	25(7.9)	115(36.4)	139(44.0)
My reluctance to participate in field trips is due to their length (time factor)	61(19.3)	86(27.2)	120(38.0)	49(15.5)

Source: Authors construction (2023)

Table 4 presents the students' reports on the challenges they face when organizing field trips. Similar to Table 3, the data is categorized into four levels of agreement: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA), represented as percentages. The table highlights several key challenges reported by students. Firstly, a significant number of students find field trip planning procedures difficult, with 49.4% agreeing and 30.1% strongly agreeing. Requesting approval from administrators and stakeholders is also seen as challenging, with 49.4% in agreement and 20.6% strongly agreeing. Students express the importance of recognizing tutors' efforts, as disheartenment caused by not respecting tutors' efforts and exhibiting a bad attitude is reported by 45.9% who agree and 37.7% who strongly agree. Additionally, technology's impact on students' interest in field trips is mentioned, with 36.4% agreeing that technology has eliminated interest. The lack of knowledgeable and competent tour guides at locations is another challenge, as indicated by 47.8% agreeing and 10.8% strongly agreeing. Insufficient funding for additional field trips is seen as a barrier by 36.4% who agree and 44.0% who strongly agree. Finally, the length of field trips contributes to students' reluctance to participate, with 38.0% agreeing and 15.5% strongly agreeing that it is a challenging factor. Overall, the table highlights the students' perspective on the difficulties faced in organizing field trips, emphasizing the need for addressing issues such as planning procedures, approval processes, student attitudes, and resource constraints to enhance the overall experience.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

4.2.1 Participation of tutors in field trips for teaching Social Studies

It is important to acknowledge that field trips are utilized by educators to teach Social Studies in colleges, as supported by feedback from both teachers and students. However, a minority of students (around 30%) hold the belief that teachers genuinely incorporate field trips into their teaching. Both teachers and students have reported that most instructors only use field trips on an occasional or infrequent basis. The students who claim their teachers do not take them on field trips can be described as those who are unprepared and may not derive significant benefits from such experiences. Detjen, Pfleging and Schneegass, (2020) revealed that none of the participants in their research were adequately prepared for real-life encounters during field trips. To enhance students' preparedness for field trips, teachers need to engage students effectively in pre- and post-field trip learning activities (Boeve-de et al., 2019; MacCallum & Parsons, 2022).

The results from both tutors and students reveal that virtual realities (simulations/animations) and models are commonly used by teachers to teach Social Studies concepts. While a fraction of students (25%) state that these tools are used rarely, occasionally, or regularly, the majority of tutors (40%) and students (54%) report frequent utilization. Consequently, teachers rely on virtual realities and models to simulate real-life events and experiences instead of organizing field trips. This approach leads to a passive classroom environment for students. According to Harron, Petrosino and Jenevein (2019), field trips, though beneficial for a few hours of learning, could replace long periods of inactive classroom instruction. The study indicates that teachers use virtual worlds and models, particularly in the form of images, more often than they conduct field trips. This constant passive

learning may be addressed by creatively engaging students in relevant environments related to the subject being taught, even if regular field trips are financially impractical (Rice et al., 2019).

Field trips are considered significant for both teachers and students, as they provide an opportunity for students to form their interpretations of real-life experiences. This aligns with previous research conducted by Petersen et al. (2020), who emphasize that integrating new understanding and cognition through field trips makes classroom lessons more relevant. They highlight the importance of connecting experiential learning from field trips with prior knowledge and classroom lessons. Therefore, the planning and implementation of field trips should be regarded as a crucial activity to enhance students' comprehension and should be approached with care (Cheng, 2022).

4.2.2 *Challenges encountered during field trips for the instruction of Social Studies*

Organizing field trips for Social Studies instruction outside the classroom is a demanding task that requires careful attention. Teachers and students in the study have expressed difficulties associated with planning field trips. A significant percentage of teachers (94.3%) and students (79.5%) find the process of organizing field trips to be stressful. Moreover, obtaining approval from stakeholders and administrators is challenging for the majority of teachers (91.4%) and students (70.0%). These findings align with previous studies by Cheng and Tsai (2019), and Petersen et al. (2020), which highlight the complexities involved in planning field trips due to specific procedures that must be followed to ensure successful learning experiences. Adherence to these processes or procedures can become a barrier for both teachers and students if they are not granted a certain degree of flexibility (Cheng & Tsai, 2019).

Strict restrictions and intricate procedures make it challenging for tutors to adhere to the necessary protocols for obtaining permission for field trips. According to Mead et al. (2019), teachers find it difficult to follow the recommended processes to achieve the best outcomes from field trips. Consequently, it can be argued that only determined tutors who can maintain control over students and fulfill the required responsibilities can plan and execute successful field trips. This suggests that the implementation environment surrounding field trips may hinder many instructors in colleges of education from conducting such trips regularly.

Moseley et al. (2020), argue that many educators, particularly those teaching Social Studies, perceive field trips as mere recreational activities, which may result in a lack of effort toward enhancing learning. Teachers should prioritize fostering student engagement with the exhibits and materials in the environment rather than solely focusing on completing assignments and managing student behavior. Insufficient funding for field trips poses a significant obstacle, as reported by approximately 94% of teachers and 80% of students. The challenges involved in organizing and executing field trips, coupled with teachers' lack of enthusiasm, may impede students from achieving optimal learning outcomes. In other words, even when students visit highly educational locations during field trips, they may only absorb a fraction of the knowledge they should typically acquire (Patiar et al., 2021).

5. Conclusion

The study aims to explore tutors' involvement in field trips and analyze the challenges encountered while conducting Social Studies field trips in developing countries. The researchers concluded that field trips hold significant value in teaching Social Studies, allowing students to form their interpretations and making classroom lessons more relevant. However, there are various challenges encountered by tutors during the planning and execution of field trips. These challenges include infrequent utilization of field trips by teachers, difficulties in obtaining approval and adhering to strict procedures, and limited funding. Additionally, the perception of field trips as recreational activities and the lack of enthusiasm from teachers can hinder the learning outcomes for students. To

address these challenges, it is important for tutors to effectively engage students in pre- and post-field trip activities, consider alternative methods such as virtual realities and models, and ensure that field trips are seen as crucial activities for students' comprehension and treated with care.

5.1   Implications for research, practice, and policy

The study enhances the current body of knowledge by identifying the factors affecting teachers' use of field trips and the challenges they confront in obtaining approval and adhering to procedures. In terms of practice, educators should focus on pre-and post-field trip activities to enhance student preparedness and engagement. They should also promote meaningful learning experiences during field trips and seek alternative ways to provide relevant environments when physical trips are not feasible. From a policy perspective, flexible and supportive measures should be implemented to facilitate the planning and implementation of field trips, including streamlining approval processes and addressing funding challenges. Changing the perception of field trips as recreational activities and emphasizing their educational value should also be a policy priority.

5.2   Future research direction

Further research is needed to investigate the reasons behind the limited use of field trips by teachers and the challenges they face in obtaining approval and adhering to procedures. Additionally, exploring the impact of virtual realities and models on student learning outcomes and their potential as alternatives to traditional field trips is crucial.

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