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## The Role of Elementary School Social Studies Curriculum in Fostering National Cohesion and Integration in Kenya

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**Keywords:**  
*Elementary,  
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Kenya.*

Social Studies Curriculum (SSC) foster national cohesion and integration in terms of knowledge, intellectual capabilities, and democratic disposition which are expected of pupils to actively participate and coexist in the society. SSC is based on societal needs, challenges, and aspirations, which enable pupils to acquire appropriate and acceptable values. Therefore, in the teaching of SSC in primary schools, teachers' perception is paramount. The study sought to ascertain the role of elementary school Social Studies Curriculum in fostering national cohesion and. The descriptive survey design was used to guide the research process. Primary data were sourced from a sample of 12 curriculum support officers and 188 Social Studies teachers from the primary schools in Uasin Gishu County who were selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Data analysis generated frequencies and percentages for interpretation and discussions. The findings reveal that teachers are knowledgeable on the role of Social Studies curriculum in fostering national cohesion and integration, and the instructional methods/ resources are effectively engaged. The study recommended that primary teachers should effectively implement values inherent in Social Studies Curriculum for learners to emerge as responsible, respectful, and cooperative citizens for societal harmony. In conclusion, shows that there were need for teacher training, workshops, and seminars with more emphasis on acquisition of new knowledge and current trends on citizenship and utilization of appropriate pedagogical practices in Social Studies curriculum.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is key to the attainment of a range of ends including development of knowledgeable individuals with ability to think rationally, the formation of a sustainable community, and the realization of economic goals for the benefit of individuals and the community at large (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The implications of education are thus to intentionally transmit something worthwhile including achievement of values (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Education has been identified to serve the moral, social, political, and economic ends and as noted by philosophers, education is the vital strategy for socio-economic development in the current competitive knowledge-based economy of the 21st century in the world (Aikman & Unterhalter, 2005). Education, according to Sharma (2012), helps the individuals to realize their full potential by preparing them for the future challenges in life. According to the World Bank report of 2011, education is important in the creation, application, and the spread of knowledge which enhances the development of dynamic and globally competitive economies (World Bank, 2011).

Research has shown that Social Science Education has a positive effect on a range of desirable student outcomes including cognitive knowledge and skills, participatory and affective outcomes. Social Science Education plays an important role in developing students' sense of identity and influencing the ways in which they participate in and contribute to local, national, and global communities (Aitken & Sinnema, 2008).

Social Studies being the engine of social cohesion to increase social capitalism have been marginalized in the trainings. Hence, for the economists to have value for good relations amongst states, there is need for emphasis of subjects such as Social Studies that could provide the necessary knowledge on the need for social harmony in the society. Social Studies subject is instrumental in enabling learners to achieve most of the cohesion and integration objectives (Oyibe, 2015). These have resulted to the lowering of the productivity and job satisfaction of teachers of the subjects and this has affected negatively on the aspects of social cohesiveness as witnessed in the society. There was therefore need for the current study to ascertain the teacher's perception on the relevance of the Social Studies subject and its role in fostering social cohesion and integration for good citizenship. There is enormous pressure on education systems to adopt corporatization and marketization approaches as observed by Rizvi and Lingard (2010).

In Kenya, this has led to a proliferation of foreign curricula. Such curricula do not promote national cohesion and integration. Learners study the history of foreign countries at the expense of learning the history of their own country. Such learners are unlikely to be patriotic to their own country. It has also been noted that in such cases, the instructional materials used in such schools may not expose the learners to experiences that foster national values. Eventually as observed, most of these children become alienated in their own country (Oyo, 2008). Therefore, it is against this background that the current study sought to examine the effectiveness of

Social Studies education in fostering national cohesion and integration as perceived by teachers of this subject in primary schools in Kenya.

### Statement of the Problem

There is emphasis on the needs for education to enhance the achievement of the aspirations of the society. Since the infamous 2007/2008 post-election violence, cohesion among communities in Uasin Gishu County has remained spurious. One such need in Kenya, which has remained largely elusive, is national cohesion and integration. Hence, it requires much to be done to bring sanity and harmony to the country. Lisa (2010) has emphasized that education contributes to the development of social capital by increasing individual propensity to trust and be tolerant. Thus, social cohesion must be factored in a diverse education system.

Education as a social activity has a strong influence on the development of shared norms and the value placed on tolerance and understanding within a community (Oyibe, 2015). This study sought to ascertain the teacher's perception on the role of elementary Social Studies Curriculum in fostering national cohesion and integration. It explored the contemporary conceptualization and practice with respect to the place of national cohesion and integration in the school curriculum at the primary school level. Despite the provision being made to teach citizenship education through Social Studies at the primary school level, primary school teachers' perception on the use of Social Studies curriculum in education to promote national cohesion and integration has received minimal research and hence the need for this study. The study examined the teachers' perception of the role of Social Studies curriculum in fostering national cohesion and integration in Uasin Gishu, Kenya.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the role of elementary Social Studies curriculum in fostering national cohesion and integration and establish whether the Social Studies Curriculum subject matter is appropriate in equipping learners with the knowledge, skills, and values that foster national cohesion and integration

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Role of Social Studies Curriculum in National Cohesion and Integration

According to Ajimoko (1976) as cited by Osakwue and Itedjere (1993), the term Social Studies was accorded official recognition in the Report of the Committee on Social Studies of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary School Education. It was defined as the subject matter that relates directly to the organization and development of human society and to man as a member of a social group. In Kenya, Social Studies was introduced into school curricula following the 1968 Mombasa conference where African Social Studies Programme (ASSP) was launched as a continental strategy for citizenship training, the emergent quest for nation building, and national development (Ahmad, 2013).

Social Studies Education has been identified as an important area in education and it instils in students the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are considered important in the relationship and interaction of man and those around him on one hand, and the entire environment on the other hand (Ogunbameru, 2006; Ahmad, 2013). In a study on the impact of Social Studies education on national development, it was found that as an area of study it has a lot of contributions towards the attainment of the national objectives. Ahmad (2013) noted that Social Studies involves the adult and the young within the society to develop their competencies to enable them to solve and manage the socio-economic and physical forces arising in their midst. He asserted that it is not concerned with either the study of men per se, rather with the study of man within the context of his environment, his social, physical, political, economic, cultural, and technological environment (Ezegbe, 1994; Ahmad, 2013). The objectives of Social Studies curriculum have been identified as the need to create awareness of and sensitivity to man's environment; influence of man's attitudes positively to social, cultural political values, and total environment; enable men to acquire skills for solving societal and environmental problems; equip men with the basic understanding of the knowledge of the total environment, and to encourage voluntary

participation in social and civic duties while developing the sense of responsibility.

Mezieoble (1994) suggested the need for the government to organize public enlightenment campaigns through national agencies, seminars, and workshops on the ways of promoting National Development. There is need to enhance social interaction among the citizens through teaching of the basic levels of Social Studies such as citizenship education, national integration etc., and promoting value awareness and tackling dynamic problems in the society by identifying and solving social problems using problem solving techniques (Ahmad, 2013).

The role of Social Studies education in national development uplifts the ability for social life. Ahmad (2013) pointed out that Social Studies enables citizens to develop positive attitudes towards other people in the society. The teachers' role on national cohesion and integration using Social Studies as a subject taught in primary schools will enable it to uplift their ability in terms of living in harmony in the community.

According to Omirin and Funke (2015), who did a study that investigated the perception of teachers on the influence of peace education found out that peace education is the cardinal pillar to improving human relation in schools and family -setting and it is best taught through subjects like Social Studies, government, history, civics education and religious studies. The findings also revealed that teaching of peace education in classroom will help in shaping the attitude and behaviour of students. The findings point out that peace education goes in line with the assumption that Social Studies impacts in learners all norms, values and attitudes that bring about environment for human living. It is against this background that the current study sought to examine the teachers' knowledge on the role of Social Studies on national cohesion.

Nwalado and Obro (2010) in their paper of the role of Social Studies in national development, found out that Social Studies as a discipline strive to fill national objectives leading to national development. Social Studies therefore, is a discipline in education system which gives emphasis to the process of identifying and solving problems for the survival of man which also include the ability to maintain

peace, orderly, decently, and progressive life. According to Muhammad (2012) in his research on the perception of teachers and students on the role of Social Studies in enhancing self-reliance, it was found out that all topics in Social Studies are determined to enhance self-reliance. There is therefore need for teachers to be encouraged to attend regular workshops and seminars to update their knowledge for enhancement of national cohesion and integration, according to Muhammad (2012). On the other hand, education curriculum should be regularly reviewed to cover all emerging aspects on national cohesion and integration among the students.

The essence of Social Studies therefore is to inspire a spirit in the learner for technological, economic, social, physical, and cultural transformation of the society. However, Social Studies is about the society where by the concerned nation use it to achieve specific national goals. Social Studies aim at helping people develop the ability to make decisions so that they can shape public policy by participating in intelligent social actions, they continued to affirm that the role of Social Studies is to have good citizenship, development of national consciousness, creation of awareness, fostering of national unity, and moral development (Nwalado & Obro, 2010). These are believed to help students to acquire relevant and desirable attitude, skills, and knowledge to become functional and contribute positively to national development and hence the need for Social Studies subject to be made a compulsory in curriculum.

According to Mosomtai (2017), the education sector provides an avenue through which life skills, principles, and values for personal, social, and economic development are propagated. The sector provides skills and builds knowledge that enable people to contribute to development, safety, security, and economic growth of their country. Research reveals that the problems affecting national development in Kenya have been identified as among other problems of leadership and politics, ethnicity, regionalism and tribalism, problems of crime and insecurity, poverty and unemployment, negative values and attitudes, political instability, corruption, and dependent economy coupled with over-borrowing from other countries (Sessional paper no. 9, 2013). In lieu of the above mentioned,



the most recent and disturbing challenge to national development in Kenya today is the problems of corruption and ethnicity and the need for national cohesion and integration. Several efforts have been done as noted in some studies but still the need for further research on how the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum in elementary schools can foster national cohesion and integration as these forms the basis for national development and hence the need for this study.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Study Design

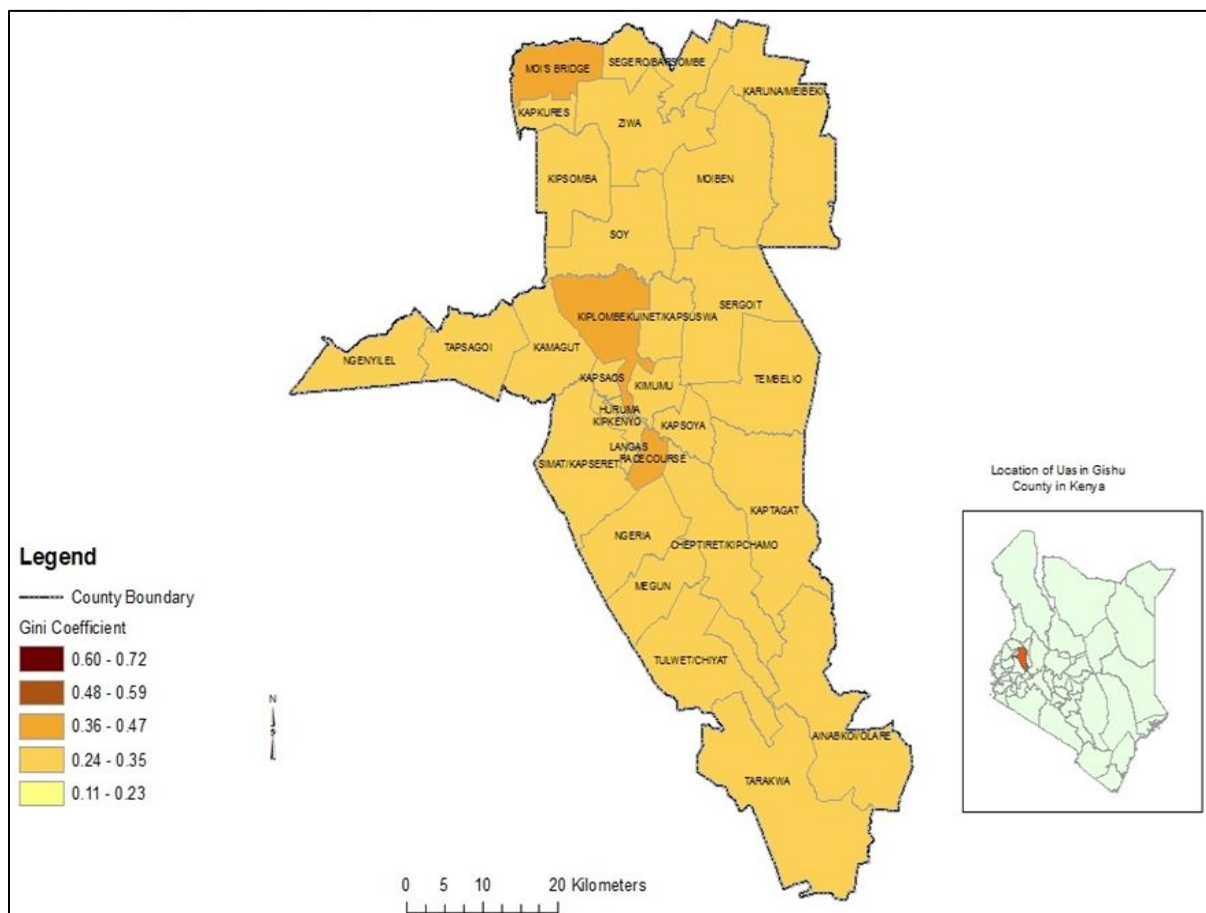
This study adopted the descriptive survey design with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Descriptive survey design according to Cohen et al. (2011), involves identifying characters of an

observed phenomenon without changing or modifying the situation under investigation. This research aimed at gathering accurate information that is observable in the teachers' perception of the role of elementary Social Studies curriculum in fostering national cohesion and integration.

### Location of the Study

This study was carried out in Uasin Gishu County, which is one of the 47 counties of Kenya, located in the former Rift Valley Province. Eldoret town is the county's largest population centre as well as administrative, commercial, and educational centre. Uasin Gishu is located on a plateau and borders Kericho to the south, Nandi to the southwest, Kakamega to the west, and Trans Nzoia to the north, Elgeiyo Marakwet to the east and Baringo to the southeast.

**Figure 1: Map of the Study Area**



The formal education system begins from primary at the age of 3-13, secondary at the age of 14 -18, and tertiary above 18 years. The population in primary school is high where there are 467 schools, 158 secondary schools, and the tertiary institutions are 15 in total.

The selection of this area was occasioned by the need to improve the teaching and learning of Social Studies education as an avenue for developing of good citizens among learners in the County particularly because the County experienced the infamous post-election violence of 2007/08 with disastrous consequences. The cosmopolitan nature of this County informed the decision for selection in

this study. It was majorly affected due to civic distortion as realized in the previous years hence, citizenship needs to be addressed. Similarly, very little is known on the use of Social Studies education as an avenue for good citizens particularly in the area of achievement of national cohesion and integration. The study examined the connection between Social Studies education and the goal of national cohesion and integration.

### Study Population

The study focused on primary schools to target all Social Studies teachers and zonal Curriculum Support Officers from Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

**Table 1: Study Population**

Sub Counties	CSOs	Schools	Teachers
Soy	6	68	656
Turbo	8	81	732
Moiben	5	61	645
Kapseret	6	76	820
Kesses	7	88	1,022
Ainabkoi	8	93	957
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>4,832</b>

Source UG County 2019

Information in *Table 1*, gives the distribution of CSOs, schools, head teachers, teachers, and pupils in the study region. The county has six sub-counties namely Soy, Turbo, Moiben, Kapseret, Kesses and Ainabkoi, having in total 467 schools the breakdown is as follows: Soy 68, Turbo 81, Moiben 61, Kapseret 76, Kesses 88 and Ainabkoi 93.

The target of 40 Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) and 4,832 Social Studies teachers

### Sampling Procedures and Size

Sampling is the process of selecting a group of subjects for a study in a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they are selected (Kothari, 2008). The sample size of 10% is deemed appropriate as it ensures an appropriate size is dealt with. Sampling is a research technique used to sample a specific number of objects from a respective group and reduces the larger population into a manageable size. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select

schools from the six sub counties of Uasin Gishu County based on the number of each group. Purposive sampling was used to select head teachers and simple random sampling technique used to select four teachers from the Social Studies teachers of classes five, six, seven, and eight from each of the selected schools. The procedures helped to achieve the desired representation as it ensured inclusion of sub-groups in the sample. This ensured that all primary schools in Uasin Gishu County had an equal chance of being selected for the study.

The sample size of the 47 schools, 188 Social Studies teachers, and 12 curriculum support officers from the six sub-counties in Uasin Gishu County. The sample sizes are indicated in *Table 2*.

**Table 2: Sample Size of the Target population**

	CSOs			Teachers		
	N	n	%	N	n	%
Soy	6	2	33%	656	28	4%
Turbo	8	2	25%	732	32	4%
Moiben	5	2	40%	645	24	4%
Kapseret	6	2	33%	820	32	4%
Kesess	7	2	28%	1,022	36	4%
Ainabkoi	8	2	25%	957	36	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>4,832</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>4%</b>

**Source:** UG County 2019

The curriculum support officers were included in the study because they participate in the support and inspection in schools thus has knowledge on how the curriculum is being implemented in various schools. Therefore, 2 curriculum support officers were selected randomly from each of the six Sub-Counties making a total of 12.

Head teachers and Schools were selected by proportionate stratified random sampling technique, which used to select 47 schools from the six sub-counties. The study involved 7 schools from Soy, 8 from Turbo, 6 from Moiben, 8 from Kapseret, 9 from Kesses, and 9 from Ainabkoi, chosen in proportion of their numbers from each Sub County.

All head teachers of the 47 sampled schools participated in the study because they are the custodians of all documents in the school. They are also the managers of the schools and in charge of the teachers' and learner's activities in school. They are directly involved in monitoring the curriculum implementation and how learners are embracing Social Studies in fostering national cohesion and integration. They are to give the necessary information on the school policies and the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum.

Teachers were included as the key implementers of Social Studies curriculum in the school. The teachers of Social Studies who handle classes five, six, seven, and eight were selected purposively making 188 teachers. The teachers at this level were in a position to provide information on the role of Social Studies curriculum in fostering national cohesion and integration. Furthermore, they can give facts in the content and the coverage of Social Studies syllabus that was useful for the study.

### Data Collection

Researchers preferred using methods that provide high explanatory power, accuracy, and generalizability with low cost, rapid speed, and administrative convenience. The study involved the use of questionnaires and interview schedules for complementary purposes to elicit data sufficient to make valid and reliable conclusions. The triangulation method was used which allowed the researcher to capture a more complete, holistic, and contextual portrayal and revealed the varied dimensions to the phenomena under investigation. In using triangulation, bias was minimized, and validity enhanced. The selection of these tools had been guided by the nature of data to be collected, time available for the study as well as objectives of this study. The instruments were used to collect the relevant data for the study.

### Teacher and CSOs Questionnaire

Questionnaire is one of the tools that were used because of the several advantages the researcher had perceived in them. Questionnaires facilitate easy and quick collection of information within a short time. The questionnaire made it possible to obtain a wide variety of responses and to draw conclusions that are more reliable from the responses of teachers and the curriculum support officers. Questionnaires facilitated easy and quick collection of information (Borg & Gall, 1983). The questionnaire contained both open and closed ended type of questions used to measure perception and feelings of the subjects.

Questionnaires were administered to the Social Studies' teachers seeking to answer the following research questions: -

- To ascertain their perception of role of Social Studies on national cohesion and integration;
- What extent to which the Social Studies curriculum subject matter equip learners with knowledge, skills, and values that foster national cohesion and integration;

**Data Analysis**

The collected data was analysed using descriptive statistics that involved computation of frequencies and percentages. During the data entry process, the data was checked for accuracy and consistency of entry and to ensure the integrity of the data. In addition, the quantitative analysis was supplemented by qualitative descriptions to provide a fuller picture of the findings particularly in those areas that were not easily amenable to quantification.

**Ethical Consideration**

Before embarking on field study, the researcher sought a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI), through the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology in the School of Education at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. After receiving the permit, the researcher visited the offices of both the County Director of Education and the County Commissioner for clearance. The researcher presented a research permit issued by the National

Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) to the County Director of Education of Uasin Gishu who in turn authorized the respective curriculum support officers in the Sub-Counties and head teachers to allow the researcher to conduct the study in their schools. The head teachers of the schools sampled for the study were given a copy of the research permit on the day of the visit. Upon visiting the schools, the researcher, before carrying out the study, asked for permission from the heads of the schools to meet the respondents.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Response Rate**

The response rate of the subjects that participated in the study where out of the respective target sample sizes, 152 (80.85%) teachers and 10 (83.33%) CSOs participated in the study. This showed a positive participation which can be used to represent the entire population.

**Demographic Information**

The study involved curriculum support officers and teachers from the selected primary schools in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. This section gives information about characteristics of the participants in this study. The researcher sought to find out the gender, age, length of service of the respondents and zones supervised by the curriculum support officers. The findings are as presented in *Table 3*.

**Table 3: Demographic Information of the Respondents**

CSOs			Teachers		
	F	%		F	%
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Level of qualification</b>		
Male	6	60	Certificate	6	15
Female	4	40	Diploma	12	30
<b>Age (yrs)</b>			Bachelor’s Degree	17	43
20-30	1	10	Masters	5	12
31-40	2	20	<b>Experience as a head teacher</b>		
41-50	3	30	1 - 5 Years	7	18
51 and above	4	40	5-10 Years	12	30
<b>Length of Service</b>			Over 10 Years	21	52
<5	2	20			
5 – 10	5	50			



CSOs	Teachers	
	F	%
10+	3	30
<b>Number of Sub counties supervised</b>		
1	4	40
2	3	30
3	0	0
4	2	20
5	1	10

**Source:** Field Data (2019)

The researcher sought to establish the gender, age, working experience of the respondents, and the specific classes they teach the Social Studies subject. The findings are as presented in *Table 3*. The study involved 152 teachers from the primary schools in the study area. The information on the working experience in the service and academic qualifications of the head teachers from sampled schools was sought and the results are as indicated in *Table 3*. The head teachers were more experienced in leadership of their schools and were perceived to be up to date with the information on the role of the Social Studies Curriculum on promotion of national cohesion and integration.

**Role of Elementary Social Studies Curriculum in Promoting National Cohesion and Integration**

The objective was to find out the role of Social Studies curriculum in equipping learners with

knowledge, skills, and attitudes that facilitate national cohesion and integration as perceived by the teachers and CSOs who participated in the study. Opinions were sought from the curriculum support officers, head teachers, and teachers who participated in the study. The CSOs and teachers gave opinions on how the Social Studies curriculum components including gender responsiveness, child and human rights, social responsibility, integrity, moral values, rights, and responsibilities are instrumental in fostering national cohesion and integration. The findings are as presented in the following sections.

**Curriculum Support Officers’ Perceptions**

The curriculum support officers’ perception of the role of the Social Studies curriculum in fostering national cohesion and integration were sought and the results are as presented in the following sections *Table 4*.

**Table 4: CSOs Perception of the Role of Social Studies in Promoting National Cohesion and Integration**

	SD	D	U	A	SA
SSE equips citizens to understand social and physical environment.	0	0	0	6 (60%)	4 (40%)
SSE enhances good relationship among students of various ethnic groups.	0	0	0	6 (60%)	4 (40%)
SSE enhances the spirit of togetherness	0	0	0	4 (40%)	6 (60%)
SSE helps to fight bad social behaviour like cheating.	0	3 (30%)	0	7 (70%)	0
SSE promotes unity of the various ethnic groups in our society	0	0	0	3 (30%)	7 (70%)
SSE can increase interdependence and tolerance among student	0	2 (20%)	0	5 (50%)	3 (30%)
SSE advocates for amicable approaches to settlement of disputes	0	0	0	8 (80%)	2 (20%)

	SD	D	U	A	SA
SSE yields patriotic, loyal, and committed citizens of our country	0	2 (20%)	2 (20%)	2 (20%)	4 (40%)
Understanding the various cultural groups can be achieved through SSE.	0	2 (20%)	1 (10%)	4 (40%)	3 (30%)

*SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; U = Undecided; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree*

To establish the perception of the Curriculum Support Officers on the role of the Social Studies curriculum on promotion of national cohesion and integration, answers were sought on how the Social Studies curriculum equips citizens to understand social and physical environment; enhances good relationship among students of various ethnic groups and spirit of togetherness; helps fight bad social behaviour like cheating; promotes unity of the various ethnic groups in our society; increase interdependence and tolerance among student; advocates for amicable approaches to settlement of disputes; and yields patriotic, loyal and committed citizens of our country and promote understanding of the various cultural groups.

On whether the SSE equips citizens with knowledge to understand the social and physical environment, results show that all the curriculum support officers agreed as 6 (60%) indicated that they agree and 4 (40%) strongly agree. On whether SSE enhances good relationship among students of various ethnic groups all the curriculum support officers were in agreement as indicated by 6 (60%) and 4 (40%) who said they agree and strongly agree respectively (See *Table 4*). The Social Studies curriculum was noted to enhance the spirit of togetherness among pupils as indicated by all the curriculum support officers as 6 (60%) noted strongly agree and 4 (40%) of the CSO's noted agree. On whether the Social Studies curriculum helps to fight bad social behaviour like cheating among pupils, 7 (70%) of the curriculum support officers noted that they agree as compared to only 3 (30%) of the curriculum support officers who indicated that they disagree (See *Table 4*).

The Social Studies curriculum promotes unity of the various racial, religious, and ethnic groups in our society as indicated by all the curriculum support officers as 7 (70%) said they strongly agree, 3 (30%) said they agree. On whether SSE can increase interdependence and tolerance among students, 5 (50%) and 3 (30%) of the curriculum support

officers who agree and strongly agree while 2 (20%) of the curriculum support officers disagreed (See *Table 4*). Asked whether SSE advocates for amicable approaches to settlement of disputes among members of the society, all the curriculum support officers agreed as indicated by 8 (80%) and 2 (20%) of the curriculum support officers who agreed and strongly agreed on this. On whether SSE yields patriotic, loyal, and committed citizens of our country, 4 (40%) of the curriculum support officers acknowledged that they strongly agree, two (20%) agree, two (20%) disagree as two (20%) of the curriculum support officers were undecided. The results show that on whether understanding the various cultural groups can be achieved through SSE, agreement was by 4(40%) and 3(30%) that they strongly agree, 1(10%) was undecided as 2(20%) disagreed disagree (See *Table 4*).

As indicated in the findings, agreement was by all the curriculum support officers who participated in the study that the Social Studies subject curriculum has a role to play equipping citizens with an understanding of the social and physical environment. It also enhances good relationship among students of various ethnic groups and spirit of togetherness and helps fight against bad social behaviour like cheating. Most of the curriculum support officers acknowledged that the Social Studies subject curriculum promotes unity of the various ethnic groups in our society and that it increases interdependence and tolerance among students. They also conceded that the Social Studies subject curriculum advocates for amicable approaches to settlement of disputes, yields patriotic, loyal, and committed citizens of our country and enhances understanding of the various cultural groups.

**Teacher' Perceptions**

The objective was to find out the primary school teachers' perception of the role of Social Studies curriculum in fostering national cohesion and

integration as perceived by the teachers who participated in the study. Opinions were sought from the curriculum support officers, head teachers and teachers who participated in the study and the findings are as presented in the following sections.

The teachers implement the Social Studies subject curriculum and there was need to establish the perception of the teachers on the role of the subject in fostering national cohesion and integration. Answers were sought from the teachers on whether the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum

equips citizens to understand social and physical environment; enhances good relationship among students of various ethnic groups and spirit of togetherness; helps fight bad social behaviour like cheating; promotes unity of the various ethnic groups in our society; increases interdependence and tolerance among student; advocates for amicable approaches to settlement of disputes; yields patriotic, loyal and committed citizens of our country and enhances understanding of the various cultural groups. The findings are as presented in *Table 5*.

**Table 5: Teacher’ Perception of the Role of Elementary Social Studies Curriculum in Promoting National Cohesion and Integration**

	SD	D	U	A	SA
SSE equips citizens to understand social and physical environment.	0	0	4 (3%)	60 (39%)	88 (58%)
SSE enhances good relationship among students of various ethnic groups.	0	0	3 (2%)	58 (38%)	91 (60%)
SSE enhances the spirit of togetherness	0	1 (1%)	7 (5%)	60 (39%)	84 (55%)
SSE helps to fight bad social behaviour like cheating.	0	4 (2%)		97 (64%)	51 (34%)
SSE promotes unity of the various ethnic groups in our society	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	98 (64%)	51 (33%)
SSE can increase interdependence and tolerance among student	0	2 (1%)	10 (7%)	104 (68%)	36 (24%)
SSE advocates for amicable approaches to settlement of disputes	0	0	3 (2%)	86 (57%)	63 (41%)
SSE yields patriotic, loyal, and committed citizens of our country	0	0	4 (2%)	74 (49%)	74 (49%)
Understanding the various cultural groups can be achieved through SSE.	0	1 (1%)	5 (3%)	52 (34%)	94 (62%)

*SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; U = Undecided; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree*

On whether the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum equips citizens with the knowledge to understand the social and physical environment, 88 (58%) and 60 (39%) of the teachers agreed, 4 (3%) were undecided. This finding shows that most of the teachers acknowledge the relevance of the Social Studies subject in equipping the citizens with the knowledge to enable them to understand the social and physical environment. When asked about the role of the Social Studies curriculum in enhancing good relationship among students of various ethnic groups, (60%) and 58 (38%) of the teachers agreed while only 3 (2%) were

undecided (see *Table 5*). The Social Studies curriculum is perceived to enhance the spirit of togetherness as indicated by 84 (55%) and 60 (39%) of the teachers who agreed on this statement, 7 (5%) of the teachers were undecided as only 1 (1%) disagreed. On whether the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum helps to fight against bad social behaviour like cheating, 97 (64%) and 48 (32%) of the teachers agreed, while 4 (3%) disagreed indicating that in most cases, the subject inculcates in the learners the need to be orderly and avoid bad behaviour in the society (see *Table 5*). The implementation of the Social Studies

curriculum is also perceived to promote unity of the various ethnic groups in our society as indicated by 98 (64%) and 51 (33%) of the teachers who agreed. However, 1 (1%) was undecided, as 2 (2%) of the teachers who participated in this study disagreed on this.

Asked about the role of Social Studies curriculum in nurturing interdependence and tolerance attributes amongst students, 104 (68%) and 36 (24%) of the teachers agreed, 10 (7%) were undecided while 2 (1%) of the teachers disagreed (see *Table 5*). The results show that the Social Studies curriculum is perceived to increase interdependence and tolerance amongst students. Results show that 86 (57%) and 63 (41%) of the teachers who participated in the study agreed that the Social Studies curriculum advocates for amicable approaches to settlement of disputes among people in the society as 2 (2%) of the teachers were undecided on this (See *Table 5*). As indicated in the findings, the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum is perceived to yield patriotic, loyal, and committed citizens of our country as noted by 74 (49%) and 74 (49%) of the teachers who agreed on this statement, 4 (3%) of the teachers were undecided. On whether the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum enhances the understanding of the various cultural groups in the society, 94 (62%) and 52 (34%) of the teachers agreed, 5 (3%) of the teachers were undecided as 1 (1%) teacher disagreed on this statement. The findings show that most teachers acknowledge that the Social Studies curriculum implementation enhances understanding of the various cultural groups.

The findings show that most of the teachers acknowledge that SSE equips citizens to understand social and physical environment, enhances good relationship among students of various ethnic groups, enhances the spirit of togetherness, and helps to fight bad social behaviour like cheating. The teachers also acknowledge that the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum promotes unity of the various ethnic groups in our society, increases interdependence and tolerance among student, and that it advocates for amicable approaches to settlement of disputes among the members of the society. The teachers also agree that the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum yields patriotic, loyal, and committed citizens of our

country and that the understanding of the various cultural groups can be achieved through the subject.

There was need to establish the head teacher's perception of the role of the Social Studies curriculum in promoting national cohesion and integration. From the interviews, most of the head teachers acknowledge that the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum enhances pupils' acquisition of morals and moulds an all-round and upright child who can be dependable in the society and towards building national cohesion and integration. The 47 head teachers acknowledged that the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum promotes the spirit of togetherness, which enhances interaction among the learners. Four of the teachers were of the opinion that to attain the goals of education, the teaching of the subject in the schools needs to be as per the guidelines from the syllabus.

On whether the implementation of the Social Studies curriculum promotes national cohesion and integration, the findings show that the 152 (100%) teachers, 40 (100%) head teachers and the 10 (100%) curriculum support officers all acknowledge the role of the subject in building national cohesion and integration. From the results of the focus group interview, all 192 (100%) pupils who participated in the study also acknowledge the role of the Social Studies curriculum and confirmed that the teachers of Social Studies teach them about good relations, moral values, how to live together in love, peace, and unity in the society. The results show that the curriculum support officers, head teachers, and teachers acknowledge that the Social Studies curriculum promotes peace, love, and unity of the various ethnic groups in our society and therefore is an important subject in promoting national cohesion and integration.

The results indicate that most of the teachers who participated in the study acknowledge the need to teach morals, mould an all-round and upright child who can be dependable in the society. Through the Social Studies curriculum, the spirit of togetherness among different ethnic groups is nurtured to enhance unity and peaceful coexistence in the community as acknowledged by the pupils who participated in the study. During the discussions, the pupils acknowledged that their teachers teach them

how to relate well in the society and that they should share what they have and learn to live in peace. This is perceived to promote responsibility, togetherness, unity, and cohesiveness in the society and therefore promote national cohesion and integration.

As found out by Nwalado and Obro (2010), the Social Studies curriculum aims to develop peoples' ability to make decisions for policy formulation and that it plays a crucial role in the development of good citizenship, national consciousness, creation of awareness, and fostering of national unity and moral development. Similarly, the findings agree with those of Njeng'ere (2014) who noted that in the four pillars learning to know, to do, to be, and to live together, Social Studies curriculum fosters national cohesion and integration. According to Ahmad (2013), Social Studies education has been pointed out as a subject that contributes to the attainment of national goals through citizenship education.

The study findings agree with those of Ogunbameru (2006) and Ahmad (2013), who identified Social Studies Education as a subject that instils in students the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions that are considered important in the relationship and interaction of man and those around him on one hand, and the entire environment. It also contributes to the attainment of national goals through citizenship education (Ahmad, 2013). Ahmad (2013) pointed out that Social Studies enables citizens to develop positive attitudes towards other people in the society. Sheshi (2002) also accepted that Social Studies contribute in making citizens understand the diversity among the people. Furthermore, leads them to see the cooperation and inter-dependence amongst them, which are among the major elements of nation building. More so plays the role of making the people appreciate and respect the cultural diversity and to realize the need for cooperation, unity, and peace in the country. With this, the nation will be able to learn from the past errors to draw inspiration from worthy past efforts and to strategize for the future developments.

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Summary of Findings**

The findings of the study are as outlined below:

- Teachers acknowledged that the Social Studies Curriculum has an important role in fostering national cohesion and integration.
- Teachers' pedagogical practices in implementing the Social Studies curriculum have an impact on promotion of national cohesion and integration.

The findings show that teachers acknowledge that the Social Studies subject has a role to play in fostering national cohesion and integration. The teaching of Social Studies subject promotes togetherness and integration of various groups of people in the society promotes peace, love, and unity. Teachers teach how to relate well in the society in the Social Studies lessons, they teach pupils about moral values, the need to live together in love, peace, and unity with others. Teachers engaging varied methods and resources that are learner centred in teaching Social Studies have a significant influence on national cohesion and integration.

Social Studies Curriculum as used in elementary schools promote National Cohesion and Integration by enhancing unity, togetherness, and brings a sense of respect hence build the spirit of cooperation among various ethnic groups. Gender responsiveness, child and human rights, social responsibility, integrity, moral values, and rights and responsibilities of citizens are important components of the Social Studies curriculum that promote national cohesion and integration. However, the teachers reported that there are omitted areas in the curriculum of Social Studies such as citizenship that would otherwise educate on how people can live together in peace and harmony and foster national cohesion and integration.

Social Studies curriculum takes part in equipping learners with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that facilitate national cohesion and integration. The Social Studies subject promotes in learners the understanding of the need to live harmoniously, conflict resolution, cooperation, respect for human rights and privileges, love, peace, and unity amongst other issues that foster national cohesion and integration.



## Conclusions

Teachers perceive Social Studies Curriculum as having a role in fostering national cohesion and integration. Instructional methods that are engaged by teachers during the implementation process of Social Studies curriculum influences pupils' learning and serve to inculcate in them ideal values of harmony, honest and unity, which enhances national cohesion, and integration.

The challenges to implementation of the Social Studies curriculum include gradual subordination of Social Studies teachers that results in demoralization of teachers and poor teaching practices. The context in which the curriculum is implemented is biased and the wide theoretical content does not provide much practical oriented work. What learners are taught in school contradicts what they see in the community especially political differences and ethnicity.

There is therefore, need for teacher training, workshops, and seminars with more emphasis on human rights, moral values and responsibilities, games and sports and citizenship during implementation of Social Studies Curriculum towards foster national cohesion and integration.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been made: First, based on the teachers' perception, Social Studies curriculum has an important role in fostering national cohesion and integration. It is important for teachers to be supported with the necessary instructional resources and opportunities for ease implementation of professional skills provided to them.

It was found out that the curriculum support officers, head teachers, subject teachers, and pupils all acknowledge the role of Social Studies curriculum in equipping learners with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that facilitate national cohesion and integration. The preparation of learners towards the realization of the living together in harmony as depicted in love, peace, and unity in the society, can be achieved through equipping pupils with knowledge on conflict resolution mechanisms, cooperation, and respect for human rights and privileges. Therefore, I recommended that Social

Studies subject to be used as a main source in realizing cohesion and integration.

Lastly, Multi-disciplinary approach to be incorporate regular trainings, workshops, and seminars with emphasis on the Social Studies teachers' acquisition of new knowledge and information on the current trends on citizenship. Teachers and pupils to be exposed to opportunities on regular basis where they can interact, appreciate one another, and embrace citizenship as an ideal for promoting national cohesion and integration.

## Suggestions for Further Research

The following areas are suggested for further research:

- To find out how teachers prepare to use pedagogical knowledge for effective implementation of Social Studies Curriculum in promoting national cohesion and integration.
- A study on the methodology and use of instructional resources in enhancing achievement of the objectives of the Social Studies curriculum.
- An investigation should be conducted on the use of modern Technologies in enhancing learning in primary schools to promote awareness in communities in fostering national cohesion and integration.
- An exploration on the potential opportunities within Social Studies Curriculum in fostering national cohesion and integration.

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