

Enhancing National Cohesion through Primary Social Studies Learning Experiences in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of educational experiences contained within the basic Social Studies curriculum that help foster the development of unity and harmony in Kenya. The study utilized a descriptive survey design for its format. The research focused on a sample population consisting of 467 primary schools in order to target the heads of those schools (467), as well as all social studies teachers (4,832) and students (98,600) from classes five, six, seven, and eight, as well as 40 Curriculum Support Officers. A technique known as proportionate stratified randomization was utilized to select 47 schools from six different sub-counties, along with four teachers and students from each of those schools. For the purpose of data collection, we made use of things like questionnaires, interview guides, observation schedules, conversations with focus groups, and document analysis. Approaches both qualitative and quantitative were utilized in the study of the data. According to the results of the research, the subject matter taught in Kenya's Social Studies classrooms plays a critical role in fostering the country's national cohesiveness and integration. It was also discovered that the curriculum for social studies provides students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for a harmonious life in society. This, in turn, fosters a sense of oneness and unity among the students who are enrolled in the program. As a result of these findings, it was proposed that the curriculum should be revised, that teachers should be taught, and that civic involvement should be promoted in order to increase the impact that social studies education has.

Keywords: Cohesion, Integration, Social Constructivist Theory, Social Studies, Society

1. INTRODUCTION

Integration and cohesiveness at the national level are essential components for the growth and preservation of any nation's stability. According to Sales (2005), one of the ways in which these goals might be pursued is through the use of the educational system, namely the main social studies curriculum. However, the effective implementation of this curriculum to promote national cohesion and integration is not without its challenges.

Sales (2005) emphasized that social studies education goes beyond the acquisition of facts and empowers students to engage with real-world issues and develop problem-solving skills. Yet, Kenya faces various challenges, including insecurity, racial inequality, and regional disparities in resource allocation, which hinder the realization of a harmonious and united nation (Edinyang et al., 2015; Jasmine and Adler, 2004). The primary school years play a pivotal role in shaping the civic education of young Kenyans, where the ideals and objectives of the nation are introduced. However, the manner in which students are taught the skills required to be active citizens who can participate in national discussions is of utmost importance (Jasmine & Adler, 2004).

While teachers are central figures in this educational process, their perceptions, teaching approaches, and the challenges they encounter when addressing sensitive and contentious topics are areas of concern (Taghreed & Fakhri, 2014). Therefore, this study delves into the role of teachers and their understanding of the curriculum in promoting national integration. By exploring how teachers can guide students in resolving conflicts amicably and fostering a more inclusive and harmonious society, we aim to shed light on the opportunities and obstacles in promoting national integration and cohesion within the Social Studies curriculum (Taghreed & Fakhri, 2014).

1.1 Objective

To assess the effectiveness of learning experiences within the primary Social Studies curriculum in promoting national cohesion and integration.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Theoretical framework

The Social Constructivist Theory is highly relevant to understanding and addressing the ways in which teachers might apply teaching strategies in the field of social studies to foster integration and national cohesion (Liu & Matthews, 2005). According to this view, people actively contribute to the formation of their own knowledge (Schreiber & Valle, 2013). Within the context of social constructivism, Vygotsky and Piaget offered different perspectives on learning (Bozkurt, 2017). Vygotsky emphasizes the significance of the social domain by stressing the relevance of social interactions and the community environment (Hahn, 2006). Piaget, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of individual cognitive development and places a strong emphasis on the individual (Bozkurt, 2017).

By implementing social constructivist theory in the context of social studies in Kenya, teachers can promote not just academic enrichment but also national cohesiveness and integration (Koh, 2013). Through collaborative learning and the development of a respect for cultural variety, students can study using this educational method, leading to the development of active, informed, and involved citizenship.

3.2 Empirical review

The nature and goal of social studies in schools place a strong emphasis on students' understanding of their physical and social surroundings and enhanced social relationships and interaction skills (Ganira et al. 2018).

Oyibe (2015) investigated the secondary school teacher's opinion of some factors influencing social studies student performance and discovered a connection between teacher expertise and student achievement. However, the educational strategies used by the teacher give students chances to practice integration and cohesion in the classroom. Furthermore, it is important to note that in order to effectively teach social studies curriculum content in the classroom, teachers must have a basic understanding of everything that students are expected to know, be able to relate to students, and pace their work according to the instructional materials in order to improve effective communication. Oyibe (2015) went on to point out that the effectiveness of the teacher's instructional strategies and supplies in the classroom can have an impact on how important a subject is for a country's development. Since social studies are important for nation-building, they should be prioritized in teaching and learning.

Heafner (2013) asserts that the use of technology in instruction is influenced by secondary social studies teachers' perceptions of good technology practice and notes that social studies educators have been hesitant to use computers in their curricula and instruction. As a result, it is not included as a necessary curricular component and is instead considered a supplementary resource. It is the way in which teachers' pedagogy gives students the opportunity to practice integration and cohesiveness. By doing this, educators should choose a pedagogical strategy that will encourage students to think critically. The technology currently being used to teach social studies is thought to improve instructors' preparation and save time when creating materials, thus increasing teachers' effectiveness. Regular use of technology is another approach to inspiring children to learn and providing them with a more complete and relevant classroom experience. According to Heafner (2013), the students will be ready to participate as citizens in a democratic society in terms of knowledge, skills, and involvement. In addition to teaching in the classroom, teachers must also incorporate material from other subjects into their lessons.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that students' success is significantly impacted by how closely the activities they participate in match what they are meant to be learning (Wall & Higgins, 2006). They contend that a variety of social science outcomes, such as the growth of conceptual knowledge, the alteration of attitudes and behaviors, and the development of social skills, depend on the coordination of activities and resources. They show how the language, discourse, and teaching style of the instructor affect what the pupils learn. They emphasize the necessity for language that is tolerant of different viewpoints since, in their opinion, language that prioritizes the dominant group is less likely to encourage appreciation of diversity. They emphasize the importance of using teaching strategies that highlight the benefits of collaboration, as doing so is likely to change students' perspectives on it outside of the classroom (Aitken & Sinnema, 2008). Aitken and Sinnema (2008) highlighted that in order to support students in obtaining the required results, a good teacher should carefully and purposefully align educational activities and materials.

III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of a research study design, according to Ader et al. (2008), is to gather data in order to test a hypothesis or provide answers regarding the study's topic. The study used a descriptive survey approach and was conducted in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya, with a focus on Eldoret town. This design was chosen because it produces a lot of reliable information and is suitable for fact-finding in education. It also allows the collection of information at a specific period and uses it to define the nature of the conditions that are in place (Borg & Gall, 2007). The study focused on a study population of 467 primary schools to target the head teachers (467), all social studies teachers (4,832) and pupils (98,600) from classes five, six, seven, and eight, and Curriculum Support Officers (40). A proportionate stratified random technique was used to choose 47 schools from six sub-counties, with four instructors and pupils from each school. Questionnaires, interview guides, observation schedules, focus group discussions, and document analysis were used to collect data. In Nandi County, a pilot study was undertaken to validate data collection instruments, and dependability was determined using correlation coefficients. Data analysis employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The triangulation method was used to do the analysis. This was embraced because data was collected using a variety of methods.

IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Curriculum Support Officers' Perspectives on Educational Activities within the Field of Social Studies

The purpose of the study was to ascertain how social studies instructors employ their teaching strategies and how this contributes to students' development of ideals related to national integration and cohesiveness. The results are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

CSOs Views of Learning Activities that are Engaged in the Social Studies Classroom

Activity	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Drama	0	2 (20%)	5 (50%)	3 (30%)	0
Role-play	0	1 (10%)	6 (60%)	3 (30%)	0
Explanation	3 (30%)	4 (40%)	1 (10%)	2 (20%)	0
Question and Answer	0	0	0	5 (50%)	5 (50%)
Discussion	0	0	1 (10%)	5 (50%)	4 (40%)
Simulation	5(50%)	5 (50%)	0	0	0
Group work	5(50%)	2(20%)	2(20%)	3(30%)	0
Imaginary visit	0	0	1(10%)	2(20%)	0
Storytelling	0	0	1(10%)	4(40%)	5 (50%)
Resource person	0	2(20%)	5 (50%)	1(10%)	1(10%)
Field trips	1(10%)	3(30%)	3(30%)	3(30%)	0
Note-taking	0	0	2(20%)	3(30%)	5(50%)
Text reading	0	0	1(10%)	5(50%)	4(40%)
Projects	0	0	3(30%)	3(30%)	3(30%)
Assignment	0	2(20%)	2(20%)	4(40%)	2(20%)
Songs	0	2(20%)	0	2(20%)	3(30%)
Dance	0	1(10%)	3(30%)	1(10%)	4(40%)
Game	0	1(10%)	2(20%)	2(20%)	5(50%)

Table 1 reveals that 3 (30%) and 5 (50%) curriculum support officers, respectively, stated that dramatization is utilized frequently by teachers and occasionally by them. On the other hand, two (20%) said that social studies teachers hardly ever employed dramatization as a teaching strategy. Six curriculum support officers (60%) reported that they occasionally used the role-play method in social studies education; three (30%) reported that they used it frequently; and one (10%) reported that they hardly ever used it. Regarding the use of lectures by teachers as a method of instruction in social studies classes to improve students' acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and values required for national integration and cohesion, four curriculum support officers (40%) stated that they seldom use lectures, three (30%) said they never use lectures, and two (20%) said they use lectures frequently.

Conversely, 1 (10%) student stated that social studies professors occasionally employ the explanation method. Five (50%) of the curriculum support officers stated that assignments are used frequently or quite frequently in the teaching and learning of social studies. The findings demonstrate that assignments are a method of instruction that affects students' development of values, information, and abilities necessary for social integration and national cohesiveness.

Five (50%) and four (40%) curriculum support officers, respectively, reported using the discussion approach frequently and very frequently in the teaching and learning of the social studies subject. One (10%) reported using discussion as a teaching approach occasionally to improve learner acquisition of knowledge and skills, as well as values for national cohesion and integration in society. The findings indicate that five respondents utilised the simulation method infrequently, while five teachers never used it when giving a presentation in class. Regarding the use of group work as a teaching strategy in the social studies subject, five curriculum support officers (50%) stated that it was never used, two respondents (20%) reported using the method occasionally, and one curriculum support officer (10%) stated that teachers in their jurisdictions use it sometimes and frequently.

Regarding the impact of games, dances, and songs on student participation in social studies classes, the CSOs held varying opinions. Regarding song usage, 2 (20%) suggested that it is not frequently done. Similarly, 3 people, or 30%, admitted that songs are occasionally used. Just 3 (or 30%) CSOs agreed that songs and dances are frequently used in social studies lessons, while 2 (20%) reiterated the usage of music. Regarding the dances, 1 (10%) indicated that they are rarely utilised, while 3 (30%) said that they are occasionally used. Additionally, 1 (10%) said that dances are utilised frequently, while 4 (40%) of the CSOs said that dances are used extremely frequently. Regarding the way CSOs perceived games, 1 (10%) of them agreed that they are used seldom, 2 (20%) of them indicated as a group that they are used occasionally, 2 (20%) claimed that they are used frequently, and 5 (50%) of them said that they are used very frequently.

These findings demonstrate that role playing and dramatisation were frequently and infrequently employed as educational strategies, respectively. Though some respondents said that the simulation approach was occasionally utilised in the teaching and learning of Social Studies courses in primary schools, the majority of respondents reported that it was never used for group work or presentations.

The findings demonstrate that the most effective teaching strategies for Social Studies that improve students' acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values for fostering integration and national cohesion are seldom or never employed.

4.2 Teachers' Views of Learning Activities Engaged in Social Studies Lessons

This study aimed to determine which teaching strategies social studies instructors use to improve students' understanding of concepts related to national integration and cohesiveness. The responses of teachers are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Teachers' Views of Learning Activities Engaged in Social Studies Lessons

Activity	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Drama	13 (6%)	29 (19%)	61 (40%)	37 (24%)	12 (8%)
Role-play	9 (6%)	21 (14%)	60 (39%)	40 (26%)	22 (14%)
Explanation	13 (6%)	12 (9%)	21 (14%)	48 (32%)	58 (38%)
Question and Answer	0	7 (5%)	35 (23%)	49 (32%)	61 (40%)
Discussion	0	3 (2%)	21 (14%)	66 (43%)	62 (41%)
Simulation	42 (28%)	42 (28%)	33 (22%)	16 (11%)	19 (13%)
Group work	2(1%)	18(12%)	32(21%)	50(33%)	50(50%)
Imaginary visit	0	0	40(26%)	52(34%)	60(39%)
Storytelling	0	0	40(26%)	52(34%)	60(39%)
Resource person	79(51%)	66(43%)	7(5%)	0	0
Field trips	79(51%)	66(43%)	7(5%)	0	0
Note-taking	0	0	9(6%)	65(43%)	78(51%)
Text reading	0	0	12(8%)	54(35%)	84(55%)
Projects	0	5(3%)	15(10%)	72(47%)	60(39%)
Assignment	0	8(5%)	36(24%)	68(45%)	40(26%)
Songs	0	10(7%)	50(33%)	46(30%)	46(30%)
Dance	50(33%)	15(10%)	60(39%)	20(13%)	7(5%)
Games	30(20%)	40(26%)	25(16%)	20(13%)	37(24%)

Table 2 presents the results, which indicate that 12 and 37 instructors, respectively, reported using dramatization as a method of education very often, whereas 61 teachers reported using the technique occasionally. On the other hand, 13 (6%) and 29 (19%) said they hardly ever or never employed dramatization as a teaching strategy. The findings indicate that the majority of schools used dramatization as a mode of instruction. Regarding the role-play method's application in the Social Studies classroom, 60 (39%) instructors said they use it occasionally, 40 (26%) said they use it frequently, and 22 (14%) said they use it very frequently. On the other hand, nine (6%) and twenty-one (14%) educators said they hardly ever or never employed role play as a social studies teaching strategy. This demonstrates that although role play is used in most schools, its acceptance is limited.

The findings indicate that 58 (38%) instructors use the lecture method very frequently, 48 (32%) teachers use it frequently, 21 (14%) teachers say they use it occasionally, and 12 (9%), 13 (6%), and 12 (%) teachers say they use it infrequently or never. Thus, according to the majority of the study's participants, social studies training should be enhanced by using the lecture method to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed for integration and national cohesion. The findings support the Social Studies curriculum's use of lectures as a teaching strategy.

The findings indicate that when it comes to teaching and learning Social Studies courses, 61 (40%) and 49 (32%) employ the assignment technique most frequently. 35 teachers, or 23% of the total, said they occasionally used the method. Conversely, seven teachers (5%) stated that they hardly ever employed this technique. 66 (43%) and 62 (41%) of the instructors, respectively, reported using the discussion technique frequently and very often when teaching and studying social studies courses. 21 (14%) of the teachers reported using the method occasionally. Conversely, three teachers (2%) stated that they hardly ever employed the method of instruction.

The findings indicate that 33 respondents occasionally used the simulation method to teach social studies. Among the educators who took part in the research, 16 (11%) and 19 (13%) teachers reported using the method frequently and very frequently, respectively, while 42 (28%) and 42 (28%) teachers, respectively, said they used it rarely or never when teaching social studies. The findings demonstrate that social studies teachers do not frequently employ the simulation approach, which is excellent for encouraging learning and gaining the information, abilities, and values required for national cohesion and integration.

Furthermore, 50 (33%), 32 (21%), and other teachers indicated using group work and presentations as a very often and often utilized technique of teaching social studies, respectively. In the teaching and learning of the Social Studies topic, instructors reported using the approach occasionally, whereas two percent (1%) and eighty-six percent (12%) of teachers said they used it seldom or never. Accordingly, the findings show that group projects and speeches are regularly employed in social studies classes to improve students' learning of the knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and values necessary for social integration and national cohesiveness.

Regarding the use of songs as a teaching and learning tool, 10 teachers, or 7% of the total, stated that they are rarely used to teach. 50 teachers, or 33%, unanimously agreed that songs are occasionally used to teach; 46 teachers, or 30%, loudly declared that the songs are used quite often. Regarding dances, 50 (33%) of the teachers in the study stated that they are never used, 15 (10%) agreed that they are seldom used, 60 (39%) told the researchers that they are occasionally used, 20 (13%) claimed that they are often used, and 7 (5%) said that they are used very often. When it comes to games, thirty (20%) of the instructors said that they are never used, forty (26%) said that they are used seldom, twenty (13%) said that they are used often, and thirty-six (24%) said that they are used very often in teaching and learning activities in social studies sessions.

These findings demonstrate that most primary school social studies instructors reported using techniques including role playing, dramatization, group projects, assignments, and presentations in their instruction on a sometimes 60, sometimes 40, and very often 22 basis. Teachers of social studies in the elementary schools that took part in the study stated that they used lectures and simulations as little as 42 or never to teach the subject.

One can conclude that the substance of social studies instructional practices that improve students' acquisition of information, skills, and values fosters integration and national cohesiveness. The study's participants, primary school teachers, often employed instructional strategies. Sometimes, teachers don't employ practical techniques like simulation very often. In this instance, there is virtually little encouragement of national unification and togetherness. This is made worse by the fact that teaching methods that have a high chance of success are not used to set the stage for these principles at any cost. By using instructional methodologies to promote national cohesion and integration, these values are realized.

From the focus group discussion and interviewing the head teachers on whether teachers of social studies foster national cohesion. One of the head teachers said that:



There is a link between the pedagogical approaches used in teaching social studies and fostering national cohesion and integration (Teacher Respondent 1).

This claim emphasises the relevance of the instructional strategies in the context of social studies as well as their possible influence on the advancement of integration and national cohesiveness.

The study asked students what they thought about the strategies teachers used to encourage integration and national cohesiveness. Some stated:

We use role-play, dramatisation, and debate approaches with our professors. Our teachers also exhort us to share our course materials (Pupil Respondent 2).

Another pupil responded that:

The teachers always encourage them to avoid destructive behaviours such as discrimination, corruption, segregation, nepotism, and ethnicity. Our teachers say that these attitudes are detrimental to integration and national cohesiveness (Pupil Respondent 3).

4.3. Teachers’ Views on how Social Studies promotes National Cohesion and Integration

Furthermore, the survey also sought to find out how social studies instructors in primary schools view their role in fostering national integration and cohesiveness. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Teachers’ Views on How Social Studies Promotes National Cohesion and Integration

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
SSC equips citizens to understand the social and physical environment.	0	0	4 (3%)	60 (39%)	88(58%)
SSC enhances the good relationships among students of various ethnic groups.	0	0	3 (2%)	58(38%)	91(60%)
SSC enhances the spirit of togetherness	0	1(1%)	7(5%)	60(39%)	84(55%)
SSC helps to fight bad social behaviour like cheating.	0	4(2%)		97(64%)	51(34%)
SSC promotes the unity of the various ethnic groups in our society	1(1%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	98(64%)	51(33%)
SSC can increase interdependence and tolerance among student	0	2(1%)	10(7%)	104(68)	36(24%)
SSC advocates for amicable approaches to the settlement of disputes	0	0	3 (2%)	86 (57%)	63(41%)
SSC 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 SSC.	0	1(1%)	5(3%)	52(34%)	94(62%)

Table 3 demonstrates that 88 (58%) and 60 (39%) teachers were in agreement, with 4 (3%) remaining unsure. This research demonstrates that the majority of educators recognise the value of social studies in providing individuals with the knowledge necessary to make connections between their social and physical environments. Regarding the contribution of the Social Studies curriculum to the development of positive connections between students from different ethnic backgrounds, 60 (39%) and 58 (38%) of the teachers expressed agreement, with 3 (2%) remaining unsure. Seven (5%) of the teachers were unsure, while 84 (55%) and 60 (39%) of the teachers agreed that the social studies curriculum fosters a sense of community. Merely 1 percent disagreed. Teachers agreed, 97 (64%) and 48 (32%), that applying the social studies curriculum helps combat negative social behaviours like cheating. Comparatively, 4 (3%) disagreed, showing that the topic generally instills in the students the need of maintaining order and abstaining from disruptive activity in society. According to 98 (64%) and 51 (33%) instructors who agreed, implementing the social studies curriculum is also thought to foster the unity of the diverse ethnic groups in our community. However, 2 (2%) teachers disagreed, and 1 (1%) was unsure.

The Social Studies curriculum has a significant role in fostering tolerance and interdependence among pupils. Of the instructors surveyed, 104 (68%) agreed, 36 (24%) disagreed, and 10 (7%) were unsure. The findings demonstrate how the Social Studies curriculum fosters student tolerance and interdependence. The study's findings indicate that while 86 (57%) and 63 (41%) of the instructors who took part agreed that the Social Studies curriculum promotes peaceful methods of resolving conflicts amongst members of society, 2 (2%) of the teachers were unsure.

The results show that instructors believe that the social studies curriculum produces individuals who are devoted, loyal, and patriotic. Of the teachers surveyed, 74 (49%) agreed with this statement, while the remaining 3 percent were unsure. Regarding the question of whether the Social Studies curriculum improves students' understanding of the various cultural groups in society, 94 and 52 teachers agreed, 5 (3%) were unsure, and 1 (1%) disagreed. According to the statistics, the majority of teachers agree that implementing the Social Studies curriculum improves students' understanding of different ethnic groups.

The results demonstrate that the majority of educators acknowledge that SSE helps citizens comprehend their social and physical surroundings, improves positive connections between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, fosters a sense of community, and combats inappropriate social behaviour like cheating. The educators acknowledged that the Social Studies curriculum encourages harmony among the different ethnic groups in our society, fosters student interdependence and tolerance, and supports peaceful means of resolving conflicts within the community. Teachers concur that Social Studies is a subject that may help students understand different cultural groups and that its application produces citizens who are committed, patriotic, and loyal to our nation.

4.4 Curriculum Support Officers' views on Social Studies in fostering National Cohesion and Integration

In order to find out what Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) thought Social Studies did for promoting national unity and integration, questions about how the curriculum teaches people to understand the social and physical environments were posed. The findings were recorded and are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

CSO's Views on Social Studies in Fostering National Cohesion and Integration

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
SSC equips citizens to understand the social and physical environment.	0	0	0	6(60%)	4(40%)
SSC enhances good relationships among students of various ethnic groups.	0	0	0	6(60%)	4(40%)
SSC enhances the spirit of togetherness	0	0	0	4(40%)	6(60%)
SSC helps to fight bad social behaviour like cheating.	0	3(30%)	0	7(70%)	0
SSC promotes unity of the various ethnic groups in our society	0	0	0	3(30%)	7(70%)
SSC can increase interdependence and tolerance among student	0	2(20%)	0	5 (50%)	3(30%)
SSC advocates for amicable approaches to the settlement of disputes	0	0	0	8 (80%)	2(20%)
SSC 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 SSC.	0	2(20%)	1(10%)	4(40%)	3(30%)

Table 4 shows that all the curriculum support officers agreed, as 6 (60%) indicated that they agreed and 4 (40%) strongly agreed. On whether SSE enhances good relationships among students of various ethnic groups, all the curriculum support officers agreed, as indicated by 6 (60%) and 4 (40%) who said they approve and strongly agree, respectively. 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%) strongly agreed and 4 (40%) agreed. 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.

The social studies promote the 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 and 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 agreed and strongly agreed, while 2 (20%) of the curriculum support officers disagreed. Asked whether SSE advocates for amicable approaches to the settlement of disputes among members of 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 strongly agree, two (20%) agree, two (20%) disagree, and two (20%) were

undecided. The results show understanding the various cultural groups can be achieved through SSE. An agreement was reached by 4 (40%) and 3 (30%) that they strongly agreed, 1 (10%) was undecided, and 2 (20%) disagreed.

All of the curriculum support officers who took part in the study agreed, as shown by the study's findings, that the Social Studies subject plays a function in giving citizens social and physical environments. It also enhances good relationships among students of various ethnic groups and the spirit of togetherness, and it helps fight against bad social behaviour like cheating. After analysing the content of CSO's from the preceding information, it is noted that most of the curriculum support officers acknowledged that the Social Studies curriculum promotes unity among the various ethnic groups in our society and increases student interdependence and tolerance. They also conceded that the Social Studies subject curriculum advocates for amicable approaches to settling disputes, yields patriotic, loyal, and committed citizens of our country, and enhances understanding of the various cultural groups. From the focus group discussion, the curriculum support officers reported that there is a link between the pedagogical approaches employed by teachers and the principles of national cohesion and integration.

4.6 Discussion

The findings of the study clearly indicate that the Social Studies curriculum, with its meticulously developed content and instructional strategies, is essential in fostering a sense of unity among people of different ethnic backgrounds. Throughout the conversations, the students came to understand that their professors educated them on how to live in harmony with society, share what they had, and learn how to interact with others. This is thought to encourage accountability, unity, coherence, and connectedness within society, which in turn fosters national integration and cohesion.

The findings of this study support those of Taghreed and Fakhri (2014), who found that teachers are thought of as a way to encourage students to stay out of conflict and look for peaceful solutions. Children, it is said, should learn to speak properly, be tolerant and appreciative of other people's opinions, make critical and educated judgements, and expand their worldview. Teachers' personal histories and educational experiences shape their perspectives about how to use the curriculum to foster national unity. Martin and Chiodo (2007) reported that social studies should be used to support moral development, good citizenship, and the expansion of national awareness in accordance with the study.

According to Martin and Chiodo (2007), the goal of the social studies curriculum is to improve people's capacity for making decisions that will lead to the formulation of policies. It also plays a significant role in the development of moral development, good citizenship, national consciousness, awareness, and national unity. The results also corroborate those of Njeng'ere (2014), who pointed out that the four pillars of learning to live together, know, do, and be together Social studies promote integration and national cohesion. Education in social studies has been identified as a discipline that helps achieve national goals through citizenship education, claims Ahmad (2013).

The study's conclusions support the choices made by Ogun-Bameru (2006) and Ahmad (2013) about social studies as a topic that improves students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours. Social studies education is seen as crucial for understanding how people interact and relate to one another as well as to their surroundings. Additionally, it promotes civic education, which helps to achieve national objectives (Ahmad, 2013). Ahmad further asserts that social studies support those who have altruistic dispositions. Sheshi (2002) asserts that social studies do aid locals in appreciating the diversity of individuals.

Acknowledging interdependence and collaboration are crucial elements in the process of constructing a nation. More significantly, integration contributes to teaching students the importance of cultural diversity and the need for peace, harmony, and national cohesion. This will allow the nation to reflect on its past missteps, draw inspiration from its remarkable accomplishments, and make plans for future advancements (Sandburg, 2009).

The results of Edinyang, Tandou, and Gimba (2015) were supported by these findings. They discovered that the social studies curriculum is used by society to instill in children the knowledge, principles, and behaviours that are seen to be critical to fostering social interactions in their surroundings. Similar to this, social studies professors instruct their students on how to live in harmony with society, according to Okoro et al. (2018). Discipline is imparted to students via classes on human rights, cooperation, conflict, and conflict resolution. Furthermore, they argue that peace education is the cornerstone for developing better interpersonal relationships in homes and schools, which in turn promotes peaceful coexistence in society, and that it is best taught through subjects like social studies, government, history, civics education, and religious studies (Okoro et al., 2018).

Teachers say the social studies programme is essential for encouraging national unity and integration. After the content was examined, it was clear that the social studies curriculum encourages moral growth, responsible citizenship, and a sense of national identity. The content of the social studies curriculum is essential for understanding

significant family issues, providing pupils with an economic and sociopolitical perspective, and encouraging their creative thinking. It is more crucial than ever to fulfil the goals of empowering students to gain knowledge and skills, boosting self-reliance, and getting them ready for future difficulties and uncertainties in life. The social studies curriculum will contain a focus on citizenship education. They can therefore coexist as prominent and successful members of the same community. Additionally, the social studies curriculum gives pupils the tools they need to promote socially desirable concepts, opinions, behaviours, and attitudes. Students have the opportunity to engage with and debate a variety of viewpoints through social studies curriculum content, which promotes polite and private lifestyles for a democratic society.

The teaching of social studies has been linked to the development of the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that promote national integration and cohesiveness. Head teachers asserted that there is a relationship between the ideas of national unity and cohesiveness and the teaching tactics employed by teachers. Both this study's and Nickerson's (2011) findings support the idea that social studies education helps students develop respect as a transferable value. Okoro et al. (2018) assert that the social studies curriculum helps pupils grow in class manners. Students will be able to respect the thoughts and feelings of others when they learn how to manage their emotions, show appreciation for others, and speak politely. Pupils who are respectful to one another refrain from being crude to one another and maintain the standards of decency that are necessary for society to function (Mertens, 2007). Respecting your family, your neighbours, the elderly, your friends, and your own rights, convictions, and well-being are all part of being polite and considerate (Akumanyi, 2007). The goal of the social studies curriculum is to instill in students the universal values necessary to behave respectfully in a democracy (Nickerson, 2011). Students are more likely to demonstrate empathy, tolerance, senior recognition, courtesies, and independent decision-making as responsible citizens when social studies curriculum content is taught correctly. They stressed the importance of instilling moral values in kids so they won't use derogatory, nasty, or filthy language around other people.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, social studies instruction in Kenya is essential to ensuring that people have the information and abilities to understand and successfully navigate the complex social and physical situations in which they live. It gives people a deep comprehension of the complexities of human communities, including their histories, cultures, and the interactions between the physical environment and human society. Social studies emphasises critical thinking, empathy, and a wider perspective, which equips people to make educated decisions, participate meaningfully in civic life, and improve both their local communities and the larger globe. It is a vital instrument that helps people become responsible and engaged members of society.

Education in social studies also promotes harmony among Kenya's many ethnic groups, going beyond merely transferring knowledge. Social studies promote a more cohesive community and a deeper sense of national identity, which facilitate peaceful coexistence between people of different ethnic backgrounds. It contributes to a more cohesive and inclusive society by acting as a catalyst for tearing down barriers and erecting bridges. Social studies encourage people to look for peaceful resolutions to conflicts by placing a strong focus on communication, critical thinking, and diplomacy. This leads to the eventual goal of a more equitable and peaceful society.

Furthermore, social studies education fosters a strong commitment to preserving national values and ideals, producing responsible and involved citizens who actively contribute to the advancement of their nation. It acts as a pillar for raising obedient and committed citizens, which is crucial for Kenya's development and prosperity.

5.2 Recommendations

To keep the social studies curriculum current and adaptable to the changing requirements of society, on-going improvements should be undertaken. In order to address current challenges, improve cultural awareness, and support national cohesion and integration, content must be updated on a regular basis.

Effective social studies teaching strategies should be continuously provided to teachers through professional development and training. This ought to involve methods for advancing inclusive education, empathy, and critical thinking. For teachers to provide high-quality social studies instruction, they must be well-prepared.

All students should be able to access and participate in social studies education, regardless of their language preference, background, or ability. This can entail offering resources in several languages and modifying instruction to take into account different learning preferences.

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