

# ADEQUACY OF TEACHERS' TRAINING FOR EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION IN THE INTEGRATED APPROACH IN SOCIAL STUDIES: A CASE OF NDHIWA SUB COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOLS, KENYA

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**Abstract:** Studies have been undertaken on constraints towards effective teaching and learning of social studies, which have revealed that Ministry of Education and teachers are impaired in enhancing social studies instruction in their areas of jurisdiction. Despite this, no significant study has been conducted in teachers' preparedness, regarding training in content integration in social studies instruction. This study was carried out in 2010 to establish teachers' preparedness in content integration in social studies instruction in primary schools, Ndhiwa Sub-County. The study examined social studies teachers and head teachers' necessary training and skills to implement integrated social studies instruction. Innovation and implementation theoretical framework was used employed in the study. Further, descriptive research design was adopted, where simple random sampling technique was used to obtain a study sample of 40 primary schools comprising 20 schools head teachers and 80 classroom teachers. The research instruments used included questionnaires for head teachers and social study teachers. The study made use of interviews to collect data, which were then analyzed using Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS). A Pilot study was carried out in Homa-Bay County to ascertain the validity. The test-retest technique was employed to confirm the reliability of the instruments. The results were presented in the form of frequencies, percentages and bar graphs. The study established that majority of the teachers were well trained on teaching social studies as an integrated discipline. However, it was established that there is perception and attitude among teachers that linking sub-topic and/or topics is challenging in social studies instruction. Further, it was revealed that there is lack of necessary and continuing in-service training of social studies teachers. From the findings it is recommended that teachers and head teachers strive to update their teaching skills through in-service courses to enrich their skills and enable them efficiently deliver in integrated social studies teaching.

**Keywords:** Content integration; Effective teaching; Adequacy of training, Social studies.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the major educational trends of African nations in the post-independence era has been changes in curriculum from content that reflected the world views and goals of colonial powers to knowledge and attitudes that build on Nationalism, African identity and appreciation of African history, culture, and environments. The Africanization of history, geography,

and civic has been, especially an important factor in the development of social studies education (African Social Studies Programme, 1985). In many ways, today's African social studies education is rooted in the indigenous systems of traditional education in the African societies before the coming of the Europeans (Ogula, 1985). Just as traditional education grounded children in their people's history, beliefs, and ways of making a living, African-centered education today grounds children in their African heritage and prepares them for successful participation in their society (Fafunwa, 1994; Mutua, 1975).

### **The emergence of Social Studies in Kenya:**

Social Studies was introduced into the Kenya school curriculum in 1985, a period that coincided with the adoption of the 8.4.4 system of education. In the subsequent year, Social Studies was introduced into Primary Teacher Training Colleges but retained the name Geography, History and Civics (GHC). Shiundu, (1988) alludes to the fact that there was a protracted resistance to change the name GHC by Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E) senior officials and the Ministry of Education. At independence, the Kenya government took education as a priority issue. Since then it has been continuously and progressively reviewing the educational system in the country. This was witnessed by the appointment of the various commissions, committees, projects and sessional papers. The Ominde Commission of 1964 popularly referred to as the 'first Education Commission', made recommendations, which formed the basis for the reorganization and restructuring of existing curricula, syllabi and examination in the school curriculum.

The Commission Report marked a watershed in Kenya's educational history by setting a new tone appropriate to an independent nation. The most significant term of reference for the commission was that which stressed the role of education in two aspects of nation-building, promoting national unity through emphasis on cultural and social values and integrating education with overall economic planning. Other Commissions and Committees such as Bessey Committee (1971), Gachathi Committee (1976), Mackay Report (1982) and Prism Project also paved the ways for serious thinking on reform of education system so that it could cope with socio-economic problems facing the country at that time. The Presidential Working Party on Second University also known as the Mackay Report (1981), recommended among other things, the need for a diversified curriculum offering a wide range of subjects. The Gachathi Committee (1976) put emphasis on interdisciplinary approach to curriculum content. It advocated a broad field approach to curriculum planning. One of the subjects which, was affected by the reorganization of the primary syllabus was geography, history and civics (GHC). It was introduced in primary curriculum in 1985, in other countries the subject was known as social studies.

### **Integrated Social studies in Africa:**

According to Mutebi (1985) the establishment of the African Social Studies Programme in 1968 led to the development of new curricula in social studies for primary schools in Africa. The African Social Studies Programme is an organization of initially 12 but later collapsed in 2002. It was at the Mombasa conference of 1968 that the integrated approach was favoured as being more meaningful to the pupils than Geography, History and Civics, which were traditionally taught as separated subjects in school curriculum.

In 1967 an international conference held at Queens College, Oxford, United Kingdom, and the notion of social studies as a formal school subject was proposed. This conference led to the convening of another conference in 1968, in Mombasa Kenya, sponsored by Educational Development Centre (EDC) and Centre for Curriculum Renewal and Development Overseas (CREDO). At the Mombasa conference, a foundation for understanding of the meaning of social studies and its application in Africa was laid. One year later, a permanent African international secretariat based in Nairobi Kenya was created, which was known as the African Social Studies Programme (ASSP). The ASSP was renamed as the African Social and Environmental Studies Programme (ASESP) in 1990. At the Mombasa conference, participants from the Ministry of Education officials from 11 countries recommended an integrated approach for teaching of social studies.

This approach was favoured as being more meaningful to the pupils than Geography, History and Civics, which were traditionally taught as separate subjects in school curriculum. The conference emphasized on the understanding of the environment and its effect on human interaction and vice versa. Further, it developed objectives of teaching social studies in consistent with the objective of Primary Education in Africa.

**Piloting of social studies in Kenya:**

Before its implementation in Kenya, in-service and refresher courses were organized with other stakeholders in education sector to prepare teachers and education officers in readiness for piloting of social studies. In 1971, the Government of Kenya introduced social studies on a pilot basis in 26 schools in the republic of Kenya using integrated social studies kits. In early 1974, piloting reached class four. It was unfortunate that in the same year (1974) the piloting of social studies collapsed due to a number of challenges which included;

- Inadequate financial resources
- Insufficient and inexperienced personnel at the curriculum development centre
- Lack of well defined content for social studies
- Shortage of trained teachers to implement the new programme
- Lack of teaching and learning materials for use by teachers and pupils in experimental basis.

The failure of the piloting did not deter the policy makers in achieving their primary objective of redefining educational policies to conform to the needs of the country. In 1976, the Gachathi Commission came up with some far reaching recommendations which included the re-organization of subjects into broad curricula areas. In response to this in 1978, Kenya Institute of Education in Collaboration with other stakeholders developed a social studies programme for both primary school and primary teachers colleges. In 1981, another piloting was witnessed in fifty schools in lower primary classes and in a few selected teachers colleges. This was after K.I.E organized a workshop to prepare syllabus and a draft teachers' guide. By the time the government introduced 8.4.4 system of education, piloting had been done up to class seven despite the teaching problems such as shortage of trained teachers, inadequate instructional materials, and others. Social studies as a subject was part of primary school and primary teacher education curriculum. Even though, it was piloted as social studies during its implementation it was changed to GHC, a combined course. In 2002, a review on 8.4.4 curriculum which was organized by the Ministry of Education recommended the adoption of the name social studies in place of GHC. The same was changed in primary teachers' college in 2003.

**The implementation phase of social studies in Kenya:**

Kenya, where Africa Social Studies Programme secretariat was situated did not implement the integrated Social Studies until 1985 under the name GHC. Before its implementation in Kenya, a lot of piloting was done between 1970 and 1981. For instance, in 1978, Kenya Institute of Education in collaboration with other stakeholder in education started its implementation. The ASSP has kept the integrated social studies movement active in Africa through its frequent publication of social studies materials for use in the primary school of member states. Since its inception in 1968, it has helped many member states to develop and implement the integrated social studies in their curriculum. In other parts of Africa, Sierra Leone was the first country to adopt the three classes in primary schools. In Nigeria, it was introduced on experimental basis. The pilot was conducted in Northern Nigeria under special project targeting tutors of teachers colleges in 1964.

In Kenya, integrated social studies has been a subject in primary schools and teachers college since 1985 and 1986 respectively. Prior to its introduction in all primary schools, the subject was piloted in a few schools under the name social studies and in the process new syllabus was developed more or less in line with African Social Environmental Studies programme conception and approach (Shiundu and Mohammed 1996). Since its implementation in Kenya, the course is still handled by teachers who have little idea or no idea of what integrated social studies is all about. Those people who are supposed to equip teachers with the rationale, approaches, content and methods of social studies are not trained in those areas (Shiundu, 1996).

Social studies is now part of the Kenya primary curriculum. The primary education social studies handbook (K.I.E, 2006), states that the general objectives for primary school social studies syllabus is to:

- i) Provide learners with knowledge to recognize and appreciate the family as an important social institution.
- ii) Enable learners acquire knowledge of and show appreciation for historical background of our communities.
- iii) Enable learners acquire knowledge of available natural resources and demonstrate ability and willingness to utilize them properly.

- iv) Provide learners with knowledge to understand the structures and function of the government of Kenya and demonstrate ability to participate in its operations.
- v) Provide learners with knowledge and skills necessary to understand and analyze population issues whilst affect the quality of life of the people of Kenya.
- vi) Provide learners with opportunity to identify and promote economic activities in society.

Therefore the goal of any teacher of social studies is to provide the best opportunity for his/ her learners:

- ❖ The skills for productive problem solving, decision making, assessing issues and making of balanced value judgment.
- ❖ Sense of belonging to the society through gradual widening of his mental horizon from his home and school to the wider world.

## II. SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study was carried out in Ndhiwa District, Homa Bay County and it was based on teachers' preparedness towards content integration in social studies instruction. It drew its sample population from primary schools from the 6 divisions within the spatial extent of the district. The data was drawn from 81 teachers, which included head teachers and teachers of social studies from the sampled schools. The analysis, interpretation and recommendation of the study were solely based on the responses obtained from sample population. However, despite the limitations, this study provides a frame, from which identification of social studies preparedness can be improved and challenges overcome.

## III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research instruments used to collect data included questionnaires for teachers and head teachers. Oral interview was also used to elicit responses on areas which were not captured in the written questionnaire. It is hoped that the findings of the study will apply to some other areas in Kenya. The researcher only worked with a limited number of teachers and head teachers (81) due to vastness of the study area, limited funds and time constraints. The researcher used questionnaires and interviews to collect data from the respondents. The criterion to participate in the study was limited to social studies teachers because they were more likely to provide reliable information in the area under study. Interviews were mainly conducted to the head teachers of the sampled primary schools. However, it is believed that the findings of this study would give almost conclusive information on the teachers' preparedness towards content integration in social studies instruction.

There are 140 primary schools in Ndhiwa Sub-County. These schools formed the population from which a sample of 40 schools were randomly selected for participation in the study. A simple random sampling method was used to select social studies teachers in the sampled schools. Two teachers from each of the sampled schools were included in the study. Further, simple random sampling procedure was used to obtain 20 head teachers in the sampled schools, who were included in the study. Structured questionnaires were the primary mode for data collection used. The questionnaires were distributed to social studies teachers to fill and return to the researcher. An interview schedule comprising open-ended questions was developed and administered to the head teachers. The data collected was organized, input, analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics entailed the use of frequencies and percentage in interpreting the respondent's perception of the issues raised in the questionnaire. All these were done through Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS).

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Level of education of the respondents

The research tried to find out the respondent's level of education and the findings revealed that 65.0% of the respondents did KCE/KCSE Examinations. Those with university education were 11.3%, while the remaining 1.3% had CPE/KCPE as their highest level of education. The result showed that majority of primary school teachers were of form four level of education.

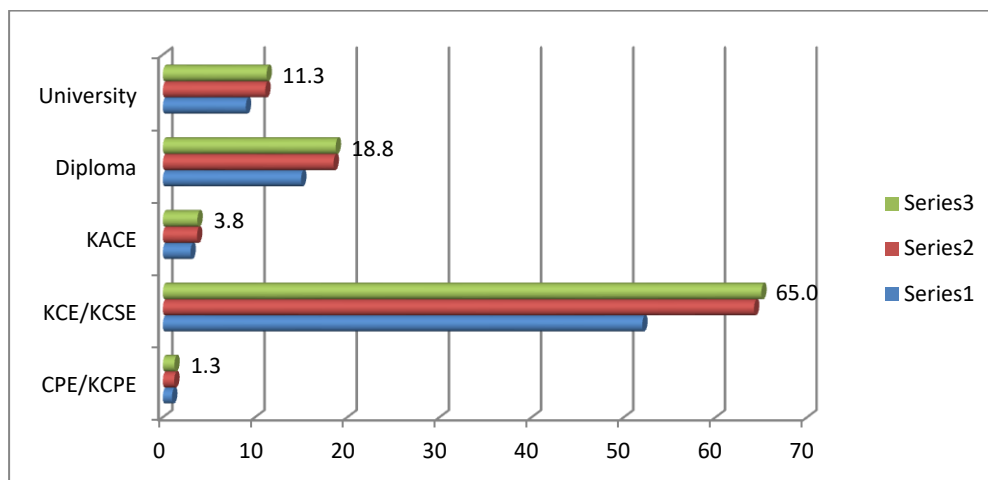


Fig 1: Level of education of the respondents

### Level of training of the respondents:

This section was meant to elicit data on the level of training of the respondents. The level of training in the teaching profession affects teachers' performance in terms of content delivery/pedagogical skills. Teachers qualification play an important role in teaching and therefore highly qualified teachers would have a thorough knowledge of subject matter and practical experience on the subjects. This could only be attained through proper education and training. From the finding, it could be deduced that most of the teachers, 74.1% were P1. This showed that most of the teachers were qualified to prepare and teach social studies effectively. The 12.3% of the respondents had university training while 8.6% were S1/ATS I, II and only 4.9% were untrained. The 4.9% respondents were from four school leavers who were hired by the PTA, to fill the gap left by the shortage of trained teachers.

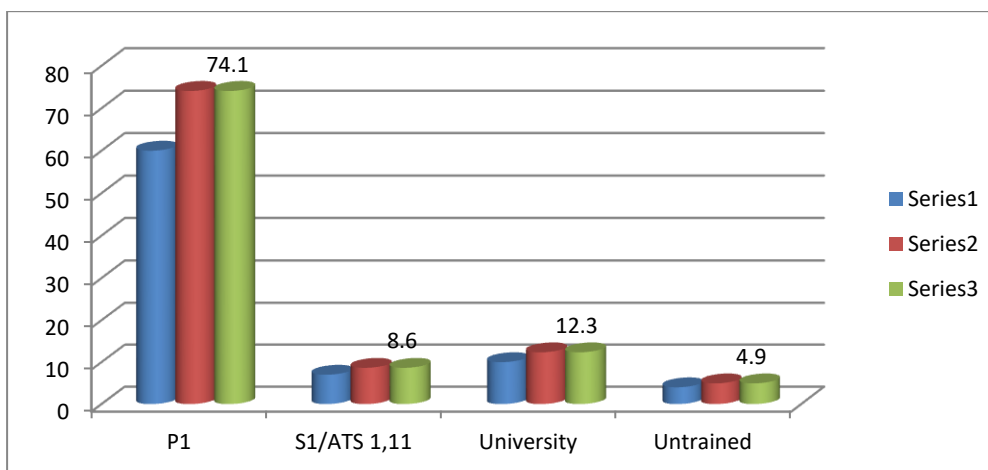
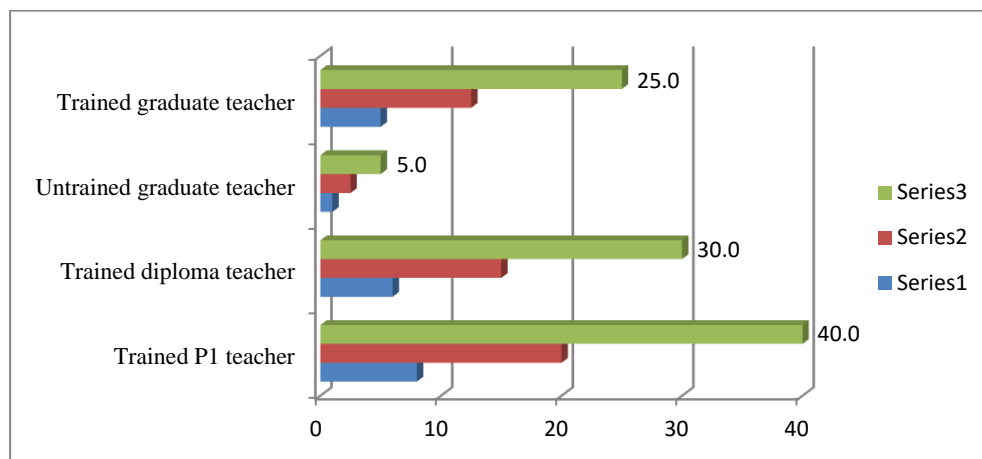


Fig 2: Level of training of the respondent

### Head and regular teachers' highest professional qualification:

The research sought to find out the highest teaching qualification of the teachers. The findings indicated that P1 who were head-teachers comprised 40% of the respondents; trained diploma teachers were 30%, whereas 25% of the respondents indicated that they were trained graduate and only 5.0% revealed that they were untrained graduate teachers. Head-teachers deal with administration policy making in primary schools and supervision of the implementation of curriculum of their various schools. They were therefore selected in order to contribute to information on the preparedness of teachers towards the implementation of social studies curricula. Head teachers are the agent of the Ministry of Education at the school level. Their core duty is to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum. They can give accurate information on the challenges faced by teachers in the process of the implementation of social studies curriculum.



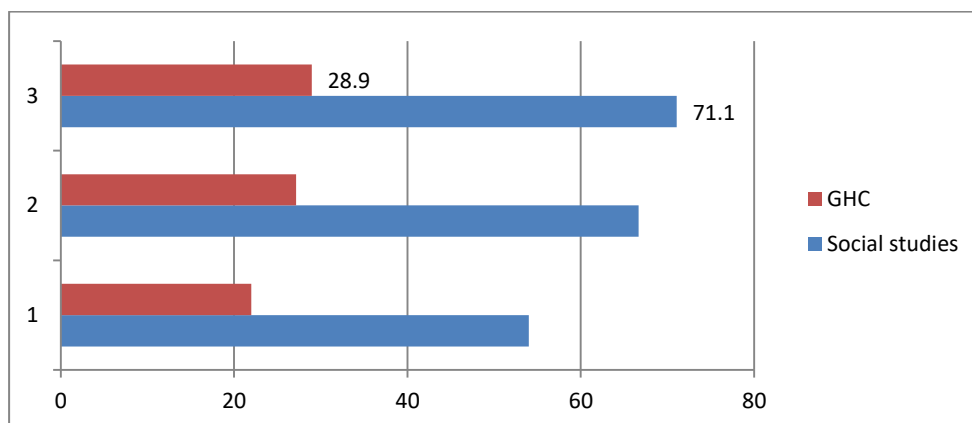
**Fig 3: The highest professional qualification of the respondents**

#### **Respondents' training and experience in implementing integrated social studies instruction:**

If teachers have an ambiguous understanding of the objective of the subject then they will be unclear about what is expected of them. Further, if they have an erroneous interpretation of the objective, then it follows that their effort during implementation is likely to be misguided. Gross, et al(1971) suggested that capability of personnel is very important hence if they lack skills that are essential to perform their duties they will not succeed in achieving instructional objectives.

#### **Subject trained in and respondents' experience in teaching social studies:**

Respondents were required to indicate the subject they were trained to teach from a choice of social studies and GHC. This question was asked because there were teachers in those primary schools who were trained long before social studies was introduced in teachers primary colleges in Kenya. Based on the data obtained from the research finding, majority of teachers, 71.1% were actually trained to teach social studies while they were in college. This is in itself makes them more capable to teach the subject with ease. The training could have equipped them with relevant teaching skills. Only 28.9% were trained to teach GHC. These were teachers who underwent training before the reintroduction of social studies in primary schools in Kenya 2002.



**Fig 4: The subject the respondent was trained in (social studies or GHC)**

Head teachers are required to have the necessary skills and training to enable them teach and supervise the implementation of the curriculum. The required skill will enable them to continuously oversee and evaluate the work and end product in their respective schools. From the research findings, 89.5% of the respondents revealed that they were trained to teach social studies while 10.0% were not trained to teach the subject. From the twenty head teachers interviewed, 36.8% said they had taught social studies for over 10yrs, 47.4% had taught it for between 3-10yrs, 10.5% had taught it for less than one year and the remaining 5.3% have taught social studies for years ranging between 1-3yrs.



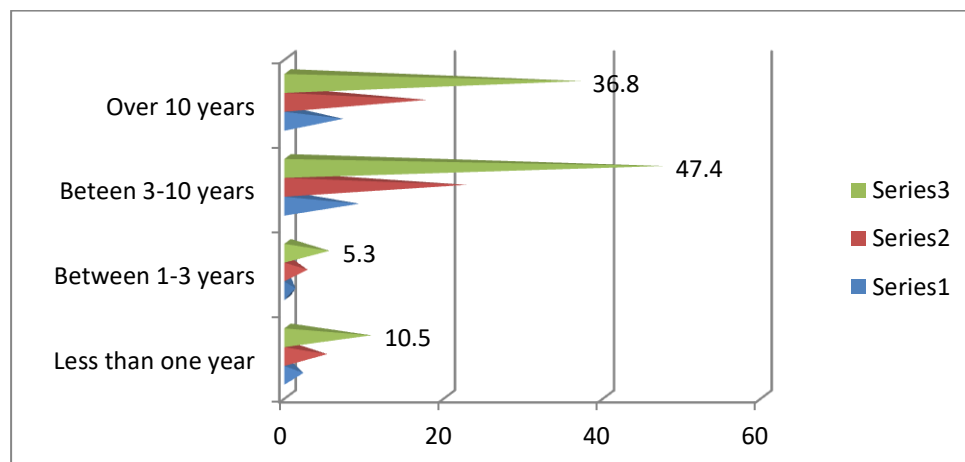


Fig 5: Respondent's experience in teaching social studies

## V. CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it was established that majority of teachers, were trained to teach social studies. Among the teachers interviewed some reported that they were trained to teach GHC when in college. This research revealed that most head teachers were trained to teach social studies and only a small number were not trained to teach the subject. With regard to teaching experience, it was evident that out of 20 head teachers who participated in the research, a majority have taught the subject for over 10 years. The study therefore established that most teachers were trained and had long teaching experience in the subject. This study further sought to establish the respondents' understanding of the objectives of integrated social studies. A majority of the teachers who were interviewed indicated that they had a clear understanding of the objectives. The result obtained thus, revealed that most of the teachers were well trained on teaching social studies as an integrated discipline. Fragmented knowledge makes it difficult for the child to see the relevance of what he/she learns in one subject to the solution of a problem in another subject. This is why teaching social studies as an integrated discipline should be encouraged.

The study further sought to establish the teachers understanding of various teaching methods as an aspect of the integrated social studies curriculum. They were required to indicate how frequently they use story telling, observation method, question and answer resource persons and role play. With regard to the use of story telling most of the respondents indicated that they rarely use story telling to teach the subject. Among those interviewed a few reported that they often use story telling to teach some of the lessons. Of the teachers involved in the study majority agreed that they rarely used observation method to teach integrated social studies. The study further revealed that a minority of the teachers often use observation to teach the subject. Further, teachers who indicated that they use questions and answer method were the majority. This shows that this was the common method used in teaching social studies. The study aimed to establish from them how frequently they use resource persons and it was revealed from the findings that a majority do not use resource persons to teach integrated social studies. Similarly, the study showed that role play was rarely used by majority of the teachers.

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