

An Assessment of Challenges Primary School Teachers' Face in the Implementation of Integrated Social Studies Subject in Rungwe District, Mbeya Region-Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed challenges primary school teachers' face in the implementation of Social Studies subject in Rungwe District, Mbeya region. The study applied a qualitative study approach founded on the interpretive philosophy which believes on studying issues from the natural settings i.e. realistic environment. The study was carried out in six (6) purposive selected primary schools. The study was augmented by the social constructivism theory. Use of social constructivism theory was undermined by its principle belief that the teacher just like the learner is borne independent and that he/she needs to practice such freedom wherever he/she is. The argument is that the teacher or the learner is a social and autonomous being rich of life experience and that classroom practices need to appreciate that and see that at some point, the teacher becomes the learner and the learner becomes the teacher while the two live in a fluid relationship and not that of a cat and rate relationship. The study used classroom observation, documentary review and semi-structured interview to collect data from a group of 13 participants including six Social Studies teachers, six head teachers and one school inspector officer. Collected data were analyzed using content analysis. Based on the study findings; inadequate supply of social studies T/L resources, teaching in overcrowded classrooms, shortage of qualified and experienced Social Studies teachers, lack of acceptance level of integration body of knowledge, and lack of in-service training about implementation of the new Social Studies subject seemed to limit and adversely impact teachers' practices. As a result, Social Studies teachers rarely taught the lesson in connection to pupils' day to day life i.e. linking theories of the subjects to the students' real life experience. Actively engaging teachers in any educational or curriculum innovation was seen important for future improvement.

Key words: Social Studies subject, Challenges, fluid relationship

INTRODUCTION

Teaching of Social Studies has been evolving in Tanzania just like in any other country in Africa and across the globe. This transformation in teaching of Social Studies has been geared to ensure primary school pupils acquire the requisite knowledge and skills about their community and the environment. Whereas, the ultimate goal of promoting pupils acquisition of instructional competences in Social Studies being to produce self-reliant and good citizens who can positively contribute on the development of the country. Inclusion of Social Studies subject in the school curriculum in Tanzania was done stage wise with each stage taking different emphasis in terms of curriculum content and format. Since independence up to 1990s, Geography, History and Civics were taught as separate subjects under the social sciences in Tanzania primary schools (URT, 1995; UNESCO, 2010; Sumra, 2007).

Following the implementation of Tanzania Education and Training Policy of 1995, it was considered important to integrate the three subjects in order to provide rich and comprehensive knowledge and skills to both pupils and student teachers (Meena, 2009; Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2013; Nzilano, 2015). According to Tanzania's Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), the newly integrated Social Studies subject was to be taught in both primary schools and teachers colleges (MoEC, 1995:55). Although the integration has been adopted, it has not been implemented on an equal balance due to various reasons including disparity in number of topics across subjects; existence of limited and inappropriate Social Studies instructional competences for the teachers to connect and explore information across topics (MoEVT, 2006; Kopweh, 2014). Teachers know more about how to teach Geography, history and civics than they know how to teach Social Studies as integrated subjects (Nzima, 2016). There were a slight professional development of primary school teachers' in taking initiatives of teaching Social studies as integrated subject (Chonjo, Osaki, Murutu & Poss, 1996; MoEVT, 2006; Kopweh, 2014; Kasunga, 2019). This complexity in the integrated subject resulted in to Social Studies teachers' inability to connect the contents from the topics which were not mentioned in the syllabus (Meena, 2009). As a result, in 2006 MoEC of the United Republic of Tanzania updated the contents and number of subjects in primary school education curriculum (MoEVT, 2006). However, in 2014 revised ETP excluded Civics subject from integrated Social Studies curriculum forming integration of only History and Geography and Civics was emerged with Moral Education (Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST), 2016). Whereas the Social Studies Syllabus indicated that

teachers are advised to use social constructivism that incorporate methods that encourage the use of learner- centered instructions. The proposed teaching method was considered by those who compiled the curriculum to be effective in promoting high order of thinking. The initiative was aimed to improve the quality of the Social Studies teaching in both academic and pedagogy for enhancement of Social Studies instructional competences to pupils in primary school (MoEST, 2016).

Therefore, the preference to undertake this study was to find out various challenges faced by Social Studies teachers in the implementation of Social studies subject in primary schools. The researcher was concerned with whether primary school teachers have mastered the necessary teaching competences of the integrated Social Studies subject or not and if there were other hindrances to the effective implementation of the Social studies subject. The study was focused to assess challenges limiting primary school teachers' demonstration of instructional competences of social studies subject in Rungwe district, Mbeya region where consequently solutions against the challenges could be proposed for improved classroom practice.

Literature Review

The implementation of integrated Social Studies subject in primary schools has been associated with debates from different viewpoints. Nevertheless, debaters' arguments rely mainly on the failure of the curriculum to produce pupils with adequate knowledge and skills of social matters as it was expected by the ETP 1995 and 2014 altogether (Nzima, 2016). According to Nzima, implementation of social studies subject has been challenged by numerous factors including those relating to application of learner –centered instructions in actual classroom practice. Caldis, (2017) suggests that a necessary condition that can lead to pupils' success in learning integrated Social studies is to use learner-centered instruction. Learner-centered instructions enable teachers to create situation in which rich diversity of uniqueness and individual differences in pupils talents can all maximized for solving complex- problems in the real life setting (Pacana, Ramos,Catarata, & Onocian, 2019). Because it has shown that in traditional educational contexts that are not learner-centered mostly teacher-centered the diversity, uniqueness and individual differences of pupils are regarded as barrier to learning. In view of the fact that, in such situation the ability of pupils to produce appreciated discourses is uncritically. For the purpose of this study primary school teachers instructional competences base based teaching, consider using learner-centered instructions in different

teaching and learning activities. Teachers distinctive and uniqueness included teaching style as suggested by educational psychologists and educators (Dewey, 1950; Freire, 1971; Vygotsky, 1978; Windschitl, 2002) who argue that, most meaningful learning take place in the pupils if the teachers can consider learners diversity and actively engagement in creating their own knowledge and understanding. In addition, the teaching and learning environment must be conducive, where pupils and teachers feel appreciated and acknowledged (Freire, 1971). More over the meaningful learning take place if the environment encourage pupils self- motivated and self- learning (Vy gostsky, 1978). The aim of the study was to use learner-centered instruction as a means of assessing challenges face primary school teachers in teaching integrated Social studies subject.

Yilmaz and Tabak (2019) study on argumentation- based Social Studies teaching in the classroom in Turkey, found that teachers believe in schooling as preparation of learners for their better future life. In the same study, it was revealed that many teachers were unable to use learner- centered instructions resulting to teachers' domination of classroom practices hence limited promotion of critical thinking skills, problem - solving skills and creativity amongst learners. Also Pacana, Ramos, Catarata, & Onocian, (2019) suggests that majority of teachers struggle in integrating pupils extensive experiences they bring to school with that of the subject content knowledge. Teaching of Social Studies subject has still remained teacher- centered and so not consistent with Social constructivist view that learning is socially constructed (Brodbelt, 2010; Mackatiani, 2017). Risinger & Frederick (2012) suggests that for pupils to understand Social studies, teachers' would need to link and utilize knowledge, attitude, skills and values from different learning experience. Teaching in this way may involve use of local and national environment, pupils' active engagement in practical activities, use of variety of teaching and learning aids and use of various strategies and not reading and answering questions from books.

A study by Heafner (2018) investigated on elementary Social Studies integration in North Carolina, USA, adding instructional time as a way of supporting Social Studies teachers to reform old - traditional marginalization way of teaching, found that such innovation was directed to learners and their curriculum ignoring involvement of teachers. The changes were not done to teachers who are the key curriculum implementers i.e. in incorporating learner-centered instructions knowledge in the exiting Social Studies learning

strategies, planning of the learning process, assessment and teaching learning materials to prepare pupils to become independent in their real life setting. As a result, Social Studies teachers not only lacked curriculum ownership, but more importantly, they were not capacitated to implement it effectively. The instructional environment remained unfriendly and class overcrowding; teacher overload remained to challenge teachers effective and efficiently implementation of an integrated social studies subject. Another significant study was conducted by Meziobi, Meziobi and Anyanwu (2017) about enhancing teachers' quality for effective teaching and learning of Social studies at the upper basic school in Nigeria involving Social Studies teachers. Their finding showed that the expectations of curriculum developers and perception and attitudes of teachers in actual classroom practice have not been encouraged the use of learner-centered methods. The study confirmed that there is a significant difference between teachers' qualifications and their application of learner-centered method among the others. Method used did not exert a power to influence on many aspect of learners real life. The investigation that have been established have provided evidence that quality of teacher have noticeable benefit on effective promoting learner-centered instruction in teaching and learning process. Howell and Say suggests add that existing professional development for development of Social studies teachers promote teachers learning, socialization and more aware of the relevance methods, materials and environment reflects favorability on the application of learner-centered instruction.

Studies have revealed that in Tanzania teachers have limited understanding of how to teach using Learner-Centred teaching and learning approaches as proposed by the social constructivist teaching approach. For example, Mtitu (2014) conducted a study to examine learner centered - teaching among a group of geography teachers in secondary schools. Based on the findings, it was observed that many teachers were not using LCA and the majority of the lessons did not encourage LCA in teaching and learning of geography as one of the social studies subjects. Similarly, Nzilano (2018) conducted a study on teachers professional development on learner - centered teaching in Tanzania teachers colleges looking into implementation of social Science teacher education curriculum. According to Nzilano the study findings indicated tutors varied in their understanding about LCA in social studies curriculum. The variation in conception and thus practice was attributed to their differences in the type and quality of training each tutor received at different time. As a result, Social Studies teachers were likely to face a number of dilemmas in using the

approach during implementation of teaching Social Studies curriculum in Rungwe primary schools. The study by Ntara (2017), on; investigating assessment practices of science subject in primary schools in Tanzania adds that the primary school classroom practices not perfectly achieved due to inadequate teachers' instructional competences, background knowledge, training programmes and professional development. In this regard, teachers in Tanzania were trained to use teacher-centered approach which is one way communication. These science subjects are not taught in-depth and usually pupils are only acquitted with the basic concept.

Social Studies teachers' understanding of the concept of social constructivists' approaches to teaching is important prior to the implementation of the approach in the classroom. If this is not considered, there is a possibility that Social Studies teachers' will not employ the new integrative strategies and continue with the traditional teacher-centred approach by which themselves were schooled (Schweisfurth, 2011; Hamre, Pianta, Burchinal, Field, LoCasale-Crouch, Downer ...& Scott-Little (2012). Study by Demir, & Pismek, (2018) investigating the extent to which Social Studies teachers' ideologies while teaching Social Studies classroom, the result was Social Studies teachers requires more time for learning, preparation, resources, and the use of collaborative and cooperative learning strategies. Social Studies teachers' face dilemmas in negotiating between their beliefs and practices in integrating the new approach and the pupils' complex beliefs and practices in the cultural context (Schweisfurth, 2011; Stacy & Demand, 2015; Demir, & Pismek, 2018). Despite these dilemmas', there is an expectation that Social Studies teachers professional learning about social constructivist teaching could expose them to these dilemmas and creatively think about the appropriate ways to integrate the new approaches in the teaching.

Reflecting on the reviewed literature around this study one would appreciate of the existence of studies undertaken in the field. While many of those studies focused on understanding how teachers use their teaching profession to advance instructional competences to their learners, many of these studies their attention to higher institutions and secondary level of schooling. Exploration of literature indicates also that many of these studies were conducted in developed economies using mainly radical pedagogical theories such as radical constructivism and critical theories to assess learners and their learning but not challenges facing Social Studies teachers' instructional practices in the course of implementing the integrated social studies primary school curriculum. A few

studies which have been conducted in Africa particularly Tanzania (Meena, 2009; Dadi, 2015; Nzilano, 2015; Nzima, 2016; Namamba and Rao, 2017) have focused mainly on the assessment of teacher professional development vis-à-vis implementation of competence - based curriculum which is in operation across all levels of learning. Despite the perpetual challenges facing teachers in implementing the integrated Social Studies primary school curriculum, there was no study that was directed to investigate challenges especially on primary school teachers' instructional competences in teaching of Social Studies. It is from these grounds the researcher became motivated to investigate practical challenges primary school teachers' face in the implementation of Social Studies with a particular interest in Rungwe District, Mbeya region.

Methodology

The study was informed by interpretive paradigm. It believes that reality is socially constructed, each person constructs his/her own knowledge and the research is involved in the subjects where meanings are separated from facts and phenomenon are described in narrations (Terrell, 2012; Denscombe, 2014; Langtree, Birks & Biedermanin, 2019). The study's focus was based on challenges face primary school teachers' in teaching of integrated Social Studies subject in Rungwe District Primary schools.

Research Approach

The aim of the researcher was to collect a rich mass of data from the participants' feelings and experience about primary school teachers' instructional competences in the teaching of Social Studies in Rungwe District council, Mbeya region. To achieve this aim, the researcher opted to use qualitative research approach (Denzin & Lincoln (2011) and Shah and Al-Bargi (2013) who argue that qualitative research works around personal understanding in giving out meanings of observable phenomena. The study was informed by a case study approach (Creswell, 2014) helping the researcher to assess challenges face primary school teachers in teaching of integrated Social Studies subject especially in Rungwe district council, Mbeya region.

The Study Area and Population

The study was conducted in Rungwe District Mbeya region, Tanzania. The area was selected due to the following reasons: first, the district has primary schools featuring classes for integrated Social Studies as a core subject just like many other primary schools across the regions in the country (MoEST, 2016). Second,

the challenges reported by Nywage (2007), more than 76 percent of the primary schools’ teachers in Rungwe district teach out of their specializations, a situation which accelerates the elimination of Social Studies subject to be taught as integrated subject in primary schools in 2006. Third, a paucity of research studies on teachers’ instructional competencies of teaching Social Studies to primary school pupils. It is on this ground the researcher assess primary school teachers’ instructional competences of teaching Social Studies. The study population involved the primary school teachers’ teaching Social Studies subject, Head Teachers, as well as District School Inspectors. According to Rungwe District School Inspectorate Office Report December (RDSIOR) (2018), Rungwe district has one hundred forty six (146) primary schools and one thousand four hundred sixty four (1,464) teachers. Six hundred seventy two (672) are male and seven hundred ninety two (792) are female.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The sample size included thirteen (13) participants consisting of Six (6) Social Studies teachers (one from each school); six (6) head teachers (one from each school) and one (1) Social Studies school inspector from the inspectorate department office whose main role was to provide data on quality of teaching and learning of integrated social studies subject leading to thirteen (13) participants. The major concern for using participants of different levels was to get varied experience about critical challenges Social Studies teachers faced in the implementation of an integrated Social Studies subject in primary schools in Rungwe district.

Table 1: Composition of Sample Size of Participants

Categories of Participants	Male	Female	Total
Head teachers	5	1	6
Social Studies teachers’	2	4	6
School inspector	1	-	1
Total	8	5	13

Source: Field data, (2019).

Sampling process used in this research included purposive sampling of experts virtue of their position as (Cresswell, 2012) limiting itself to Social Studies teaching, participants included only those teachers who were teaching Social Studies in standard three as well as Social Studies school inspectors. Head

teachers of the selected schools were also included in the sample mainly because they had administrative responsibilities for the implementation of the integrated Social Studies subject in their respective schools. For the purpose of adherence to ethical issues, schools were named by letters from “A”, to “F”, Teachers’ names were given letter from “TA” to “TF”, school inspectorate officer were given letter “SQ” and Head teachers were given letter from “HA” to ‘HF”. Teacher’s and head teachers names are referred to using the combination of school letter for example “TA” belongs to teacher school “A” while “HA” belongs to head teacher in school “A”.

Sampling of Primary Schools

During data collection, there were 146 primary schools (Rungwe District Inspectorate Office Report, 2018). A list of primary schools was obtained from the District Academic Office (DAO) to indicate the registration of the schools and the schools location. Based on the list being offered from the district academic office, fifteen (15) schools were classified based on their establishment the oldest were selected from the list. To assure the equal chance of school being chosen, names of the fifteen (15) schools were written on a piece of paper, and were put in one box. Thereafter, mixing them toughly and then six (6) schools picked from the box. The school selected were Katumba I, belongs to school “A” Bujinga -“B” Ikuti - “C”; Tukuyu - “D”; Kyimbila - “E” and Lupepo -“F”. Table 3.1 Describe the characteristics of the school.

Characteristics of the school

No.	Reg No	Year of Reor	School	No/ Pupils			No. Teachers			Require ment	Deficienc v	Extra
				M	F	T	M	F	T			
1.	E.M.5063	1975	B	404	379	783	3	15	18	32	15	-
2.	E.M.1077	1953	C	610	660	1270	9	10	19	32	15	-
3.	E.M.188	1934	D	520	457	977	8	17	23	24	1	-
4.	E.M.627	1949	A	167	139	306	3	5	8	8	-	-
5.	E.M.263	1932	E	113	120	233	4	7	11	7	4	-
6.	E.M.628	1938	F	632	676	1308	6	21	27	33	6	-

Source: Field Data (2019).

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through multiple methods, namely: semi-structured interview, direct observations, and documents review. The methods were useful to probe deeper understanding of participants' ideas concerning teachers' instructional competences in teaching of Social Studies to primary school pupils.

Interview Procedures

The researcher used semi-structured interviews and reflective interview which allowed focus and probing of the general area of interest to gather information from six head teachers, one School Inspectors and six Social Studies teachers. Bhattacharjee (2012) and Alshenqeeti (2014) assert that semi-structured interview has the advantage to maintain focus of the study, while a reflective interview is flexible when probing responses from participants (Brockington, Chandra, Bramante, Dubow, Fakher, Garcia-Esteve & Shieh, 2017; Brown, 2019). Therefore, in some areas the researcher used guideline (semi-structured) to allow the focus of the study, while a reflective interview was set to allow flexibility of opinion when probing questions were delivered. The required maximum time for each interview session was 60 minutes. Free environments and conversations were ensured in all aspects related to the teaching of Social Studies in primary schools. Useful information was recorded by a tape recorder since it was not easy to write down all the information in the notebook during the exercises.

Interview with Head Teachers

Six head teachers from six schools were interviewed in respective offices during the study. The researcher employed semi - structured interviews and reflective interview (see appendix B). With the use of the introduction letter from District Administrative Secretary (DAS) the researcher made an appointment with the head teacher and conducted interview in office. The interview schedule had eleven items' and was conducted within 30 minutes to one hour long depending on the issues that emerged. With the use of interview checklist and through face to face interview session, the information under this section helped the researcher to identify how the head teachers viewed to as instructional challenges teachers faced during implementation of integrated Social Studies subject and the way they were directly involved in supporting teachers by directing, monitoring and evaluating particularly in their respective schools. A notebook was used to record useful information and a tape recorder,

recorded participant conversation since it was difficult to write down all information.

Interview with School Inspector

One school inspector was interviewed using semi structured interview and reflective interview (see appendix B) schedule for 60 minutes. Through their monitoring and evaluation teaching of teachers in the school, the information helped the researcher to find out how the inspector helped Social Studies teachers to intervene the challenges existed during implementation of the Social Studies subject. The researcher recorded the participants' conversation using a notebook and a tape recorder to support data analysis process.

Interview with Social Studies Teachers

Six social studies teachers from six schools were interviewed to obtain information from social studies teachers. Semi- structured interview and reflective interview were used to collect information about the views on challenges faced Social Studies teachers in the implementation of integrated Social Studies subject in Rungwe district primary schools.

Classroom Observations

The researcher used classroom observation methods to collect data on how Social Studies teachers taught Social Studies. The researcher used classroom observation rubric as data collection instrument where all information relating to teachers' teaching practices noted. The researcher employed a non-participant observation which according to Sekaran & Bougie (2016) and Cooper (2015) is also termed as a quality style call for heavy investigation time and efforts with careful consideration of the resources. In this context, the researcher used the observational rubric to note down activity related to the study. The researcher went and did two classroom observations for every case study across the research sites. Twelve (12) lessons were observed from six sampled schools. In this process, Social Studies teachers were observed in the whole process of lesson interaction. Specifically, during classroom observation, the study was interested in gaining an understanding of: How Social Studies teachers make connections between pupils' prior experiences and the subject matter; How teachers help pupils link the subject matter with other related disciplines; How teachers involve pupils in the lesson as determined by the range of pupils' activities; group or individuals, usage of teaching and learning resources such as teacher and pupils developed instructional models or materials, for example maps, diagrams, concept maps and assessment of the

types of questions asked for both teachers and pupils and how teachers evaluate their classroom instructional practices and how the evaluation process reflects pupils difficulties. At the end of each observation session, followed a short reflective interview session (between five-ten minutes) to clarify some classroom instructional competencies. Administration of two reflective interview sessions from each participating teacher was done to collect information that would triangulate the interview responses. Data collected through observation were simultaneously analyzed together with those collected through interviews. The aim was to see if what the participants experienced reflected what they actually did. Likewise, classroom observation data were used to compare and contrast with those collected from interviews and teachers' teaching document reviews. Data from classroom observations informed the data from other instruments by presenting the actual teachers' practice.

Documentary Review

Documents such as Social Studies curriculum were used to scrutinize the details of instructional competences aimed to be achieved by pupils in the specific topic. Scheme of work, lesson plan including Social Studies teachers developed instructional resources were reviewed to explore information about teachers preparedness on specific instructional process specifically activities, teaching and learning method, relevant teaching and learning materials and assessment planned to be used. Understanding of resources develops an awareness of type of evidence that available for use and context of the events (Salevouris, 2015). The documentary review aimed to enrich the data collected by other data collection methods including interview and observation data to see if the documents is driven by professional thought to prepare and implemented relevant Social Studies instructional competencies because at the end of the day, the learners assessed based on the curriculum taught (Duruk, Akgün, Dogan, & Gülsuyu, 2017). The researcher, therefore decided to use night hours to review teachers' teaching schemes of work, lesson plans to understand the step made by teachers if meets the requirements of teaching Social Studies. After each review, the researcher gave back the schemes of work, lesson plans to the respective participant. Throughout the fieldwork, ethical consideration regarding access to, or exposure of, schemes of work, lesson plans documents was at the forefront of the researcher's. The documents were always kept in the researcher's secure locked suitcase after each review stage before returning to the participant. The data collected through interview, review of documents and classroom observation were analyzed using content analysis.

Findings, Analysis and Discussion

Challenges Facing Primary School Teachers' in Teaching Social Studies

These objectives assess challenges faced Social Studies teachers in the implementation of integrated Social Studies subject in Rungwe district primary schools. The data were collected through interviews, observations and documentary review from Social Studies teachers, head teachers and school inspectors. Based on the study findings, it was found that Social Studies teachers were not well equipped with relevant instructional competences to prepare and practice Social Studies T/L activities, strategies, materials and T/L assessment processes. The challenges were examined into specific sections as follows:

Social Studies Teachers' Instructional Competences to Preparing T/L of Social Studies

This sub-theme understands the instructional competence of Social Studies teachers in preparing T/L activities, strategies and assessment. The data were gathered through interview and documentary review of the scheme of work and lesson plan. The findings from interview of six (6) Social Studies teachers indicated that preparations of T/L Social Studies had influenced by experiences of Social Studies' teachers but not integrated in the subject. Social Studies teachers were unable to describe the rationale of teaching Social Studies contents that appeared in the syllabus. Social Studies teacher TF from school F agreed that:

Since the introduction of Social Studies in 2016, I have never attended seminars of preparing to teach Social Studies activities, strategies and assessment. Those who were privileged to attend such seminars and workshops did not disseminate knowledge learned to us. Therefore, to think appropriate ways of integrating a lesson is very complicated. (Interview response from TF)

Also, teacher TE in school E said:

Teaching Social Studies is difficult as I was trained to teach history and geography in the Teachers' Training College as separate subjects. Now I am required to teach them as integrated subjects of Social Studies with few concepts of geography and History. (Interview response from TE)

Teacher TA from school A was quoted saying;-

I really face difficulties in understanding the appropriate ways of integrating contents in the syllabus. I just teach Social Studies contents

directed in the textbooks because the contents will be tested in the standard four examinations. (Interview response from TA)

The teacher TD from school D also noted:

I attended seven days of Social Studies teaching seminar, but I did not acquire the required knowledge and instructional competences of the subject as a duration of the training of seven days had no much impact on me to cover knowledge and instructional competences of Social Studies (Interview response from TD)

Furthermore, head teachers and school inspectors expressed the same challenges which were mentioned by Social Studies teachers regarding to the irrelevant knowledge of teaching Social Studies. As the head teacher HD in school D noted that;

The Social Studies teachers in my school encounter a lot of challenges in the teaching. This is because they lack strong foundations to teach geography and history as an integrated subject of Social Studies. (Interview response from HD)

Furthermore, the school inspector SQ added that:

Out of 1,464 Social Studies teachers in Rungwe District, 292 which are about 20 percent attended a seven day's Social Studies training. This means majority of them did not attend the training, and the duration of the training of seven days had no much impact on the knowledge and instructional competences of Social Studies teachers to teach a new subject. Therefore, Social Studies teachers need enough time of training in aspects of contents knowledge and instructional Pedagogies (Interview response from SQ)

Documentary review of scheme of work and lesson plan revealed that Social Studies teachers were directly copying activities in the Social Studies syllabus and textbook without considering prior knowledge, experiences, skills and observations discourse of the pupils. The following teaching activities from TD's scheme of work and lesson plan were confirmed to be directly extracted from the syllabus:

"The teacher to guide pupils to clean school environment and to collect and burn wastes" (extracted from teachers activities in TD'S lesson plan and scheme of work)

Also, Social Studies teachers did not specify between Social Studies activities in the lesson plan which are usually specific and scheme of work which are broad nature. They stated that;-

To facilitate pupils' understanding of school environments through questions and answers TC's lesson plan reads as "pupils to form projects and explore school environment (Extracted of learning activities from TC's Scheme of work and lesson plan).

The results show that Social Studies teachers lack the required instructional competences to teach Social Studies. They do not have clear knowledge and experience of understanding preparing teaching of Social Studies activities, strategies and assessment processes. This implies that subject specializations and training of Social Studies which need to start from Teachers' Training College are not well harmonized. In the other hand, Social Constructivism Theory opines that the teacher to prepare healthier classroom T/L activities needs to be developed tandem with prior knowledge, skills, information, experiences and attitude of their pupils. Therefore, missing such a link and considerations of Social Studies teachers could not expose pupils in creative and critical thinking.

Teachers' Instructional Competences in T/L Materials

This segment intends to understand whether the teachers' instructional competences to prepare T/L materials are adequately demonstrated in the scheme of work and lesson plans. Data were collected through interview and documentary review from Social Studies teachers, headteachers and inspectors. The findings from interview schedules indicate that Social Studies teachers were not equipped with integrated Social Studies T/L materials. It was noted that Social Studies teachers prepared T/L material reflecting Social Studies as separate contents of Geography and History. Teacher TD noted that;-

The new Social studies syllabus has combined Geography and History topics. They have integrated the two subject to form Social Studies subject. It becomes so difficult to prepare T/L materials that reflect Social Studies as an integrated subject. It is difficult in the sense that there are no reference books in the new syllabus indicated for teachers to use. They have integrated the subjects but in teaching the topics of geography and that of history appear separately (Interview response from TD).

Despite having few and different Social Studies textbooks as it was observed in schools surveyed, for example, school D, still effort has not made to rectify the situation as elaborated by the head teacher of school D:

The government is planning to develop textbooks and manual to guide Social Studies teachers to integrate subject knowledge and instructional competences. This would enable Social Studies teachers to prepare and use T/L materials to the topic and assess pupils according to the curriculum (Interview response from HD).

In school B teacher TB said that:

There are no enough Social Studies books here. No one oriented us on how to use the syllabus which does not show the integrated books for the recommended topics. Thus, we are forced by head teachers and education officers to read various books elsewhere for the pupils to get wide knowledge (Interview response from TB).

This implies that there are a lot of challenges in T/L Social Studies in primary schools. Social Studies teachers were confused to integrate textbooks equivalent to Social Studies curriculum that reflect their environments and pupils' knowledge, experiences, skills and attitudes. However, Social Studies teachers and heads teachers need to review and work collaboratively with MoEST and other experts and make Social Studies T/L aspects are of quality. This would in line Social Constructivism Theory which emphasizes teachers to improvise T/L materials that recognize pupils' cultural aspects.

Applications of T/L Strategies

This part understands Social Studies teachers' exposure in applying T/L strategies grounded on Social Studies. Data were collected using interview and observations. The findings from interview sessions indicated that Social Studies teachers preferred lecture, and questions and answer methods. It was revealed that T/L techniques were not applied because of the heavy workload, overcrowded classes and limited time. For example, teacher TC from school C said:

It is difficult to use some recommended T/L strategies such as participatory and learner centered teaching due to a large number of pupils. I use mostly lecture since my class have up to 86 pupils. (Interview response from TC)

A similar view was noted by teacher TD from school D as follows:

In my class, the number of pupils ranges from 76 to 84 so it is difficult to manage to cover the lesson plan of the day when using recommended participatory methods like discussions and role play. (Interview response from TD)

Also, it was observed that most of the Social Studies teachers started their lesson presentations by directly defining the concepts and asking pupils one or two general questions. Pupils were answering questions they understood and if not they remained quiet. The teachers continued to ask for alternative answers, concluded by correcting the answers and writing it on the chalkboard for the pupils to take notes. The new knowledge development stage was mostly dominated by presentations of the teachers. Pupils were taking notes and listening to the teachers' presentations. At the application stage, the pupils continued writing notes and in the conclusion stage, the teachers made their general conclusions of the lesson and instructed the pupils to do some exercises from text books. Finally, pupils were informed of the next lesson. This implies that Social Studies teachers lack instructional competences in at least all lesson stages as they were not involving pupils in the T/L processes and enable them to construct their own knowledge.

Social Studies Teachers' Assessment Technique on Pupils' Understanding

This sub-theme observed challenges faced by Social Studies teachers to assess pupils' understanding during the teaching and learning of Social Studies. The question wanted to explore how Social Studies teachers assess the course of pupils' learning process. Data were collected from teachers, head teachers and inspectors using interviews. The results are presented as follows:

These were the comments from the teachers' interview:

Comments from Social Studies teachers during interview sessions with teacher TA revealed that;-

I use oral questions to assess pupils' understanding of Social Studies in order to know if I can proceed with the next or repeat the subtopic. (Interview response from TA)

Similarly, teacher TB stressed that:

I do ask the pupils if they enjoyed the lesson, ask them different oral questions, give them assignments and mark their individual assignments. Fortunately, most of the pupils remembered what I taught them (Interview response from TB)

Teacher TC responded as;-

I asked pupils if they have understood the lesson, I give them exercise then mark in order to assess if the objectives are achieved and if not I repeat the topic (Interview response from TC).

On assessment techniques used by Social Studies teachers, teacher TA responded that:-

I assess my students' achievement through questions and if the results are positive I write as follows: pupils were able to answer the questions, the lesson was understood, 98% of the pupils answered the questions well, the lesson helped to achieve objectives, 99% of pupils answered the questions correctly.(Teacher TA records of lesson evaluation as extracted from the lesson plan).

Also, teacher TB highlighted that:

I do assess pupils' performance by asking if they enjoyed the lesson and participated well during the period. I also demonstrate that about 83% have understood the lesson, there were more questions from pupils, all methods were used (Teacher TB records of lesson evaluation as extracted from the lesson plan).

The general findings from interviews with teachers, head teachers and school inspectors revealed that most of the Social Studies teachers had some challenges in organizing assessment strategies of the pupils' performance. Social Studies teachers assessed the pupils qualitatively in which the assessment statements were not specific. They did not explicitly describe pupils' actual competence achievements. Besides, Social Studies teachers assessed more on pupils' ability in procedures than pupils' actual knowledge, skills and application in their really- life about Social Studies. This implies that what Social Studies teachers assessed does not reflect what is demonstrated in the syllabus. Also, the concept of assessing active independent thinking for pupils is not given the priority of real life. Social Constructivists belief that, for the teacher to be able to assess the pupils' achievements teachers should encourage pupils to learn and strive to build a positive climate inside the classroom and mistakes are made for improvement and not individual failures.

Therefore, Social Studies teaching encounter challenges to include: lack of knowledge and skills for teachers to integrate contest, inadequate T/L materials to facilitate Social Studies learning and large classes as per the agreed standards which hinder Social Studies teachers to teach Social Studies. Other challenges emanate from curriculum and syllabus. For example, the study by Ni Shuilleabhain and Seery (2018) observed that the introduction of a new curriculum and syllabus pose a range of challenges with regard to the underlying goals, the subject contents, teaching and learning materials, teaching strategies, the assessment and evaluation methods. Also, Social Studies teachers

fail to accommodate new changes in educational innovations. Nguyen and Hunter (2018) highlighted that if teachers' current practices do not side with the intended educational innovations and changes it causes tensions during the implementation stage. The findings correlate with Maro (2013), Mtitu (2014), Nzima (2016) and Makunja (2016) who found out that teacher in Tanzania are not well equipped with enough knowledge, skills and information to implement the curriculum requirements. These are contrary to the study by Bonner, Warren and Jiang (2018) on; 'Social Constructivism and teaching of social science' which acknowledges that teaching should encourage pupils' culture of inquiry in the classroom that reflects prior knowledge of pupils. This is because knowledge is viewed as a co-constructed between the teachers and pupils in the light of pupils' engagement, communication and question posers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the study findings, Social Studies teachers did not fully demonstrate the instructional competences required for enhancement of pupils as recommended by Social Studies curriculum and the literature. According to the findings, Social Studies teachers were not competent enough to identify the important tasks to accomplish, examine alternative ways to accomplish the objectives, establish adequate resources to assist in achieving goals and process of assessing the outcome of the plan to help pupils acquire the expected Social Studies competences. As a result, pupils had limited opportunity to participate in instructional activities during the teaching and learning processes. Besides, Social Studies teachers failed to plan and prepare different learning activities through which pupils could construct new knowledge to acquire the expected subject competences. Social Studies teachers face various challenges including shortage of teaching and learning materials, lack of preparation, teaching in overcrowded classes, and lack of in-service training about curriculum innovation which hindered their ability to demonstrate instructional competences which embracing learner-centred teaching and/or competence based instructional approaches.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends that stakeholders including the government to make plan to provide primary school teachers with in-service training on the integrated social studies subject and support the schools with necessary resources. The professional development initiatives should be undertaken to support Social Studies teachers with instructional competences in the integrated social studies subject. There is a need for MoEST to ensure teachers are

equipped with relevant pedagogical and content knowledge demonstrated in the curriculum to build teachers' pedagogical competences, creativity and interest. Studies should be conducted around this study not only to widen the coverage but also to find context based intervention responses against the challenges raised. It is also recommended that a more comprehensive study be conducted to include more schools, districts and the use of both public and private schools to have reliable information on the effective implementation of Social Studies curriculum in the context of limited resources, overcrowded classrooms and tight syllabus.

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